



Chapter II

PROMOTING POLISH CULTURE IN THE COUNTRIES OF CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE AND THE CAUCASUS

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Get to know about Poland – Training Materials for Trainers and Teachers

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Linguistic editing of the publication: Steve Jones

Composition/graphics: DoLasu | art studio, www.dolasu-pracownia.pl

ISBN: 978-83-938388-2-0

Published by:

© Institute for Eastern Initiatives (Instytut Wschodnich Inicjatyw)

ul. Salwatorska 5/10, 30-109 Kraków

www.iwi.org.pl | www.aboutpoland.iwi.org.pl

Kraków 2015

The article is part of the publication *Get to know about Poland – Training Materials for Trainers and Teachers* which was created during the project coordinated by the Institute for Eastern Initiatives.

The project is co-financed by the Department of Public and Cultural Diplomacy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs within the framework of the “Cooperation in the Field of Public Diplomacy 2015” competition.

The publication expresses the views of the authors only and cannot be identified with the official position of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland.

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1. Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Culture and National Heritage



A scheme for promoting Polish culture abroad was established after 1989 based primarily on the actions undertaken by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych, MSZ) and the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage (Ministerstwo Kultury i Dziedzictwa Narodowego, MKiDN). Promoting Poland through culture, especially in recent years, has become an important element influencing the image of our country abroad. Currently, actions undertaken to promote Poland not only include supporting national cultural initiatives taken by Polish communities and promoting the Polish language abroad, but are also an element of creating public diplomacy and developing a national brand. Both public diplomacy, which is the creation of favourable opinions and attitudes towards a given country on the international arena, and national branding, understood as creating a coherent image of the country abroad, use the promotion of culture. Changes in Polish diplomacy, which occurred mainly after Poland's accession to the European Union in 2004, increased the possibilities of cooperation between cultural institutions in the country and abroad, and at the same time enhanced the need for the conscious creation of Poland's image, especially among our neighbours and in countries which have political, economic or cultural relationships with our country.

This chapter is an attempt to characterise Poland's institutional scheme of promoting its culture abroad. In addition to the analysis of the activities undertaken by the centres of power and culture, this chapter will include a brief overview of the key events and initiatives promoting Polish culture which took place in the past five years in selected countries in Central and Eastern Europe and the Caucasus.

As stated in the introduction, the institution primarily responsible for promoting Poland abroad is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and particularly the Department of Public and Cultural Diplomacy. Public diplomacy, *including informative activities which aim at shaping external public opinion favourable to Poland (...), strengthening the prestige of our country on the international arena (...) and enhancing its position as a valuable political, economic, scientific, social and cultural partner*, creates and initiates actions aimed at building a positive image of Poland¹. In the *Polish Foreign Policy Priorities for 2012-2016*, objectives and activities related to promoting Polish culture were defined for the diplomatic corps and cultural institutions operating in the country and abroad. The most important tasks include, for example, several challenges related to creating cultural policy such as *developing slogans and a campaign promoting Poland abroad, the single communication policy, maintaining consistency of promotional activities, creating an effective system (economy, culture, education, tourism, etc.) of Poland's promotion abroad and introducing the rules of its coordination, for example through strengthening interdepartmental cooperation in this regard*². The Ministry of Foreign Affairs attempts to achieve these goals through an annual competition entitled *Cooperation in the Field of Public Diplomacy*. The competition announced by the MSZ aims to boost the image of Poland among the international community, for example through the formation of its positive image and recognition of the *Polska* brand. The competition is open to non-governmental organisations and various cultural institutions that wish to be involved in public diplomacy. It is worth noting that in 2014 a document containing the rules for communicating the *Polska* brand³ was developed, which includes guidelines for the creation and use of the *Polska* brand to promote

1 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland: https://www.msz.gov.pl/polityka_zagraniczna/dyplomacja_publiczna/

2 Polish Foreign Policy Priorities for 2012-2016, <http://www.msz.gov.pl/resource/aa1c4aec-a52f-45a7-96e5-06658e73bb4e:JCR>

3 Rules for Communicating the Polska Brand, <https://www.msz.gov.pl/resource/c65db42c-a89f-44df-a5d2-dc56d3813ec8:JCR>

Polish projects on the international arena. The activities undertaken by the MSZ aim to raise the recognition of Poland in the world and increase access to Polish culture, thus building an understanding of and support for the Polish *raison d'État* and policies of the Polish authorities. For this purpose, the interdepartmental cooperation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage would appear to be advantageous.

The Ministry of Culture and National Heritage conducts its tasks related to promoting Polish culture abroad through the specialised Department of International Relations whose main job is to coordinate international cultural cooperation between Poland and other countries as well as international organisations (in particular the United Nations, the European Union and the Council of Europe). The Department initiates international activities, for example through institutional and financial support for initiatives and projects promoting Polish culture abroad, as well as through initiating and implementing bilateral and multilateral agreements in the field of cultural cooperation. One of the main tools used by the MKiDN to implement this policy is 'The Minister's Promise Grant Programme', which aims to create a positive image of Poland abroad and a permanent dissemination of awareness of the artistic and intellectual achievements of Poland and the Poles. Various projects on a European and intercontinental scale were completed within this programme. The list of projects funded under the programme is available on the website of the Ministry.

2. International Cultural Centre and Adam Mickiewicz Institute



In order to promote Polish culture abroad, the MKiDN cooperates with two cultural institutions operating in the country which aim to promote Polish cultural heritage in the world. The institution which was the first to support national initiatives for the promotion of Polish culture abroad was established in 1991 – the International Cultural Centre (Międzynarodowe Centrum Kultury, MCK) in Krakow. This is a state research, educational, publishing and exhibition institution, which accomplishes a mission of public diplomacy through international dialogue in culture. A cultural area of particular importance for the MCK since its establishment has been Central Europe. One of the main activities carried out by the MCK is the 'Thesaurus Poloniae', a scholarship programme addressed to foreign scientists conducting research on the culture, history and multicultural heritage of the Republic of Poland and Central Europe⁴. Thanks to the cooperation within the Visegrad Group, an annual specialised summer course 'Management of UNESCO World Heritage Cultural Sites in Visegrad Countries' is organised by the MCK, and every two years it is the host of the international 'Heritage Forum of Central Europe' conference, which is an arena for sharing experiences on cultural changes in the region⁵. A similar role is played by the scientific journal *Herito* issued by the MCK, which is largely devoted to culture in Central Europe. MCK is also a vibrant academic and publishing institution. Publications issued by the MCK constitute a valuable source of information on the state of research of Central European culture.

Since 2000, the activities of the International Cultural Centre have been supported and complemented by the Adam Mickiewicz Institute in Warsaw (Instytut Adama Mickiewicza, IAM) – it is an institution which comprises specialised departments cooperating with the MKiDN which coordinates 10 major projects. All IAM activities are aimed at developing cultural cooperation between Poland and other countries. The Institute accomplishes its strategic objectives – namely to increase the value of the *Polska* brand, raise the efficiency and effectiveness

4 Thesaurus Poloniae: <http://mck.krakow.pl/thesaurus-poloniae>

5 Management of UNESCO World Heritage Cultural Sites in Visegrad Countries: <http://mck.krakow.pl/management-of-unesco-world-heritage-cultural-sites-in-visegrad-countries>.

of communicating the *Polska* brand in terms of culture and maintain the position of the fifth largest player in the European cultural exchanges – for example via international cultural projects addressed to the majority of European countries, as well as the Americas and Asia. One of the main programmes promoting Polish culture is *Polish Culture Worldwide*, allowing artists to apply for funding for their international projects. Every year, reports are issued by the IAM with information on the most important activities undertaken by Polish artists promoting their creative activity worldwide⁶.

3. Polish Institutes and teaching Polish abroad



Polish Institutes play a significant role in promoting Polish culture abroad. Acting in many countries, the various Polish Institutes actively disseminate knowledge about Poland through the implementation and support of cultural events. The most important tasks executed by the institutes include not only promoting Polish culture, but also analysing areas of cooperation in the cultural field between Poland and other countries. As many as 13 of 23 Institutes operate in Central and Eastern Europe with their headquarters in Leipzig, Dusseldorf, Berlin, Prague, Bratislava, Kiev, Minsk, Vilnius, St Petersburg, Moscow, Budapest, Bucharest and Sofia⁷.

A system of teaching Polish as a foreign language is of particular importance in terms of promoting Polish culture abroad. Activities aimed at promoting knowledge of Polish are taken primarily by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education (MNiSW) and the Centre for the Development of Polish Education Abroad (Ośrodek Rozwoju Polskiej Edukacji za Granicą, ORPEG)⁸. Every year, Polish courses are organised in many countries not only for the Polish Diaspora and Poles living abroad, but also for anyone interested in learning Polish. It is worth noting that the task of the ORPEG include assigning teachers to work in educational institutions abroad. In this way the institution promotes the learning of Polish outside Poland.

4. Cultural events aimed at promoting Polish cultural heritage



The changes taking place in building a coherent strategy for promoting Polish culture abroad have created the possibility for a series of promotional activities to be undertaken in Central and Eastern Europe and the Caucasus. Over the past years throughout the world, especially in the immediate vicinity of Poland, in Central and Eastern Europe as well as in the Caucasus, a number of cultural events aimed at promoting Polish cultural heritage have taken place. Among these could be mentioned the so-called 'years of Polish artists', which means that each year is devoted to a different figure. Hence, Polish culture can be identified with particular artists. One of the most intense in terms of the number of cultural events was the year 2011 – called Miłosz Year. There were, for example, scientific conferences and poetry readings in three homelands of Czesław Miłosz: Lithuania, Poland and the United States⁹. Events describing the achievements of Miłosz also took place in Russia, Romania, Ukraine and Hungary. In 2011 alone, 50 new translations of the works of the Polish Nobel Prize winner were published, including translations into the languages of Central and Eastern Europe countries.

6 All reports are available on the IAM website: <http://iam.pl/pl/o-instytucie/raporty/raport12-13>

7 The List of Polish Institutes is available at: <http://www.instytutpolski.org/>

8 The activities of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education: <http://www.nauka.gov.pl/jezyk-polski-zagranica/lektoraty-jezyka-polskiego-za-granica.html> and ORPEG: <http://www.orpeg.pl/>

9 Miłosz Year 2011: <http://culture.pl/pl/wydarzenie/2011-rokiem-czeslaw-milosza>

One of the most interesting initiatives of the Adam Mickiewicz Institute was to establish, in 2011, a band called I, CULTURE Orchestra¹⁰ made up of young musicians from Poland and Eastern Partnership countries, that is Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. The aim of the project is to build a dialogue between the countries of Eastern Europe and the Caucasus through musical activities. Since its establishment, I, CULTURE Orchestra has played 29 concerts, for example in the UK, Germany, Belgium, Spain, France, Sweden, Iceland, Denmark, Lithuania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine.

The year 2011 saw the greatest promotion of Polish theatre in Russia. During one of the most prestigious theatrical events, that is Golden Mask Festival in Moscow, 26 events were held connected with Polish theatre (among other performances and meetings with authors). Two years later, the Adam Mickiewicz Institute organised the DA!DA!DA! Festival, where eleven Russian performances¹¹ were held in Poland at the same time.

In 2012 a series of international events promoting the work of Bruno Schulz took place. The Festival of Bruno Schulz in Drohobych in Ukraine was of considerable importance during which young Ukrainian writers debated the impact of Schulz on Ukrainian contemporary literature¹². This was accompanied by celebrations of Schulz Year during the Book Fair in Lviv.

In 2012, Polish culture was promoted not only in Ukraine but also in Germany. During Klopsztanga, a festival of contemporary Polish culture in twenty German cities, seventy Polish cultural events took place¹³. The festival was an independent cultural event which met with great interest. The name referred to Silesian culture, which is a fusion of Polish and German culture (in the Silesian dialect 'klopsztang' means 'beater' and is associated with a meeting place for neighbours).

In 2013 there was an annual event entitled *The Rise of Eastern Culture* linking the Polish culture and the cultures of the countries of the Eastern Partnership¹⁴. Three Polish cities: Rzeszow, Lublin and Białystok started cooperation in dance, music, photography, theatre and literature with organisations and groups operating in the Eastern Partnership countries. The project, which has been in operation since 2011 under the name European Stadium of Culture (up until 2013 without Białystok), aims to support local initiatives of cultural institutions and artists, an exchange of artistic projects between cities, as well as joint ventures carried out by artists from the Eastern Partnership countries. In 2014 alone, during the *Rise of Eastern Culture*, 200 cultural events were attended by 1,000 artists from 32 countries.

An initiative which will soon open up new prospects for promoting Polish culture in western Ukraine, is already underway – the Centre of Polish Culture and European Dialogue in Lviv, a place which is to become a modern multimedia centre of culture, science, promotion of the Polish language and national traditions. Intensified efforts to set up a permanent institution since 2012, and the culmination of often arduous negotiations between representatives of the Polish minority with the city authorities culminated in the start of the project in 2013. In November 2015, the construction was officially inaugurated and the opening of the Centre of Polish Culture and European Dialogue is planned for the 11th November 2017.

¹⁰ I, CULTURE Orchestra: <http://www.orchestra.culture.pl>

¹¹ DA!DA!DA! Festival: <http://culture.pl/pl/wydarzenie/rosjanie-w-warszawie-dadada>

¹² Bruno Schulz Festival in Drohobych: <http://www.brunoschulzfestival.org/>

¹³ Operacja: Klopsztanga. Polska ofensywa w Niemczech [in:] "Dziennik Zachodni", <http://www.dziennikzachodni.pl/artykul/546721,operacja-klopsztanga-polska-ofensywa-w-niemczech,id,t.html>

¹⁴ The Rise of Eastern Culture: <http://wschodkultury.eu>

A Report on the Promotion of Poland Through Culture¹⁵ issued by the Ministry of Culture in 2008 includes recommendations for shaping Poland's promotional policy abroad. Among the most significant recommendations which were implemented by 2015 include the need for a comprehensive mechanism for communicating the *Polska* brand via the adoption and implementation of the aforementioned *Rules for Communicating the Polska Brand* as well as the need to support individual culture-shaping entities via a system of grants, enabling both individual and institutionalised cultural activity. The challenges still facing the state institutions that promote Polish culture abroad include, for example, the need to develop a coherent image campaign and establish effective interdepartmental cooperation. Public assessment of the actions undertaken by the Polish state and cultural institutions remains ambiguous. On the one hand, the importance of recent documents, which help to boost the promotion of Poland via culture, is emphasised. Experts and commentators emphasise the value of measures such as developing rules for communicating the *Polska* brand abroad and combining activities in the sphere of culture and tourism. The weaknesses still include: the problem of insufficient funds for the implementation of projects relating to promoting Polish culture and the lack of innovation in creating Polish cultural solutions or financial constraints on the promotion and export of Polish achievements within the culture¹⁶.

15 Reports on the state of culture in 2008, [http://www.kongreskultury.pl/library/File/RaportPromocja/promocja\[1\].kult_raport_w.pelna.pdf](http://www.kongreskultury.pl/library/File/RaportPromocja/promocja[1].kult_raport_w.pelna.pdf)

16 The diagnosis of promoting Polish culture abroad is available on the Culture Congress website:
<http://www.kongreskultury.pl/title,pid,590,oid,1236.html>

5. The proposed literature and films

Websites:

- The quarterly Herito (PL, EN): <http://www.herito.pl/>
- Adam Mickiewicz Institute (PL, EN): <http://iam.pl/pl>
- Ministry of Culture and National Heritage (PL, EN): <http://www.mkidn.gov.pl/>
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs (PL, EN): <https://www.msz.gov.pl>
- International Cultural Centre (PL, EN): <http://mck.krakow.pl/>
- A list of Polish Institutions abroad (PL, EN): <http://culture.pl/pl/artykul/instituty-polskie>
- Portal culture.pl (PL, EN, RU): <http://culture.pl/pl>
- I, CULTURE Orchestra (PL, EN, RU): <http://www.orchestra.culture.pl>

Books:

- *A survey to determine the image that Poland should promote abroad*, Laboratory for Social Research, Warsaw 2013: <https://www.msz.gov.pl/resource/972c041f-58a2-4119-bc2a-a54a1d896f63:JCR>
- Florek Magdalena, Jankowska Marta, *Eye on Poland. Promocja i wizerunek Polski w oczach międzynarodowych ekspertów marketingu miejsc*, European Place Marketing Institute, Warsaw 2012: <http://bestplaceinstytut.org/www/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Eye-on-Poland-raport-w-pol.-wersji.pdf>
- Jurkiewicz-Eckert Dorota, *The Polska Brand as a Challenge for Polish Cultural Diplomacy. Old Determinants, New Strategies*: <http://www.ce.uw.edu.pl/pliki/pw/d-jurkiewicz-eckert.pdf>
- Kugiel Patryk, *Corporate Cultural Responsibility and the Promotion of Polish Business Abroad, The Polish Institute of International Affairs*, Warsaw 2015: http://www.pism.pl/files/?id_plik=19247
- Maćkowska Renata, *Kształtowanie wizerunku Polski w krajach Unii Europejskiej*, Colloquium Wydziału Nauk Humanistycznych i Społecznych, II/2012: <http://colloquium.elsite.eu/images/numery/VI/RM.pdf>
- *Promocja Polski. Narzędzie wspierania konkurencyjności?*, red. Alojzy Nowak, Krzysztof Opolski, Jarosław Górski, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Wydziału Zarządzania Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa 2010.
- *Promocja języka i kultury polskiej na świecie*, red. Jan Mazur, Pub. UMCS, Lublin 1998.
- *Report on the activities of the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage in years 2008-2015*, Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, Warsaw 2015: http://www.mkidn.gov.pl/media/_img/raport/Raport_MKiDN_MINISTERSTWO.pdf
- *Rules for Communicating the Polska Brand*, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Warsaw 2013: <https://www.msz.gov.pl/resource/f188d84a-2c10-4ebb-8055-d88eb669c70a:JCR>

Films:

- *Advert of Poland* (EN): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eOyASS2Ecvc>
- *Poland is beautiful*: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qbu_FRg8vuU
- *Poland seen from the air*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ms25ntlIVUw>
- *Polish seen from eagle eyes. 10 years in European Union* (PL):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=37tGTpOg0hk>.
- *Poland – an amazing and beautiful dream* (EN): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qMNMeJ-qG7U>
- *Poland – Feel invited* (EN): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jXPeofkW-Pw>