

EUROPEAN MEETING CENTRE — **NOWY STAW FOUNDATION**

POLISH-CZECH COOPERATION INCUBATOR

The public task co-financed by Poland's Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the framework of the competition **Polish-Czech Forum 2019**.

Polish-Czech Cooperation Incubator



Ministry
of Foreign Affairs
Republic of Poland

The public task co-financed by Poland's Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the framework of the competition **Polish-Czech Forum 2019**.

This publication expresses views of its authors and is not to be considered as presenting the position of the
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland.



European Meeting Centre — Nowy Staw Foundation
realizes a project named **“Polish-Czech Cooperation Incubator”**
— the public task co-financed
by Poland's Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in the framework of the competition **Polish-Czech Forum 2019**.

European Meeting Centre — Nowy Staw Foundation realizes a project named “Polish-Czech Cooperation Incubator” — the public task co-financed by Poland's Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the framework of the competition Polish-Czech Forum 2019.



The aim of the project was to strengthen the cooperation between young people from Poland and the Czech Republic. The goal of the project was to demonstrate benefits which are provided to the citizens of these two countries due to membership in NATO and the European Union. The project assumed also the implementation of specific objectives. Project participants created new ideas for cooperation between young leaders from Poland and the Czech Republic. With respect to the growing number of fake news they also learned how to carefully analyse the content that is posted on the Internet. Moreover, they showed the areas on which Polish-Czech cooperation is implemented, and they presented numerous benefits resulting from it. Additionally, they developed new areas on which this cooperation will certainly be improved in order to establish new partnerships in the future. Participants also focused on the promotion of good practices in international cooperation and the implementation of joint partner projects.

An important element of the project was to show Poland as a country where young professionals, leaders of social life and young entrepreneurs from all over Europe can meet, make contacts and debate on issues related to establishing and building cooperation, as well as on the problems of the modern world and modern Europe. The role of the host country — Poland was also an important issue, project participants focused on its promotion. They wanted to show that Poland is a country with its own vision of development of the European Union and NATO membership.



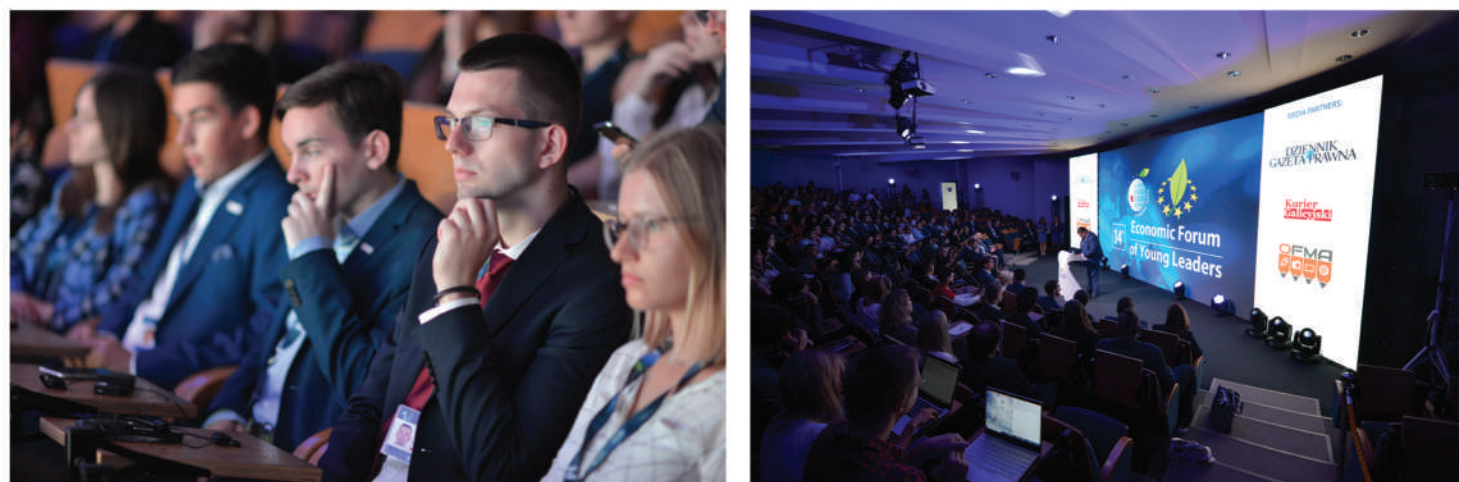
As part of the project, participants took part in the 14th Economic Forum of Young Leaders, which took place on 2-6 September 2019 in Nowy Sącz, and they had the opportunity to participate in the 29th Economic Forum in Krynica-Zdrój.

Economic Forum of Young Leaders

Economic Forum of Young Leaders (EFYL) is the annual and the biggest international social and economic meeting of young leaders in Europe. The Host City of Economic Forum of Young Leaders since 2006 is Nowy Sącz. Economic Forum of Young Leaders is a partner event of Economic Forum in Krynica-Zdrój.



The forum is a meeting of young social, economic and political leaders from the European Union, Eastern Europe and the Caucasus. Every year, Over 350 people participate in Economic Forum of Young Leaders: representatives of non-governmental, social and economic organizations, young journalists, scientists and start-ups from over 30 countries. The forum is a place of discussion and reflection on the important problems and challenges of Europe, in particular on the role of the young generation in currently social and economic changes on the European continent. The forum is a platform for establishing cooperation between Eastern and Western Europe organizations. Young Leaders also participate in the meetings of Economic Forum in Krynica. In addition, the program of Economic Forum of Young Leaders in Nowy Sącz includes meetings with the most important people in Europe, panel discussions, group workshops, action programs and study visits.



Polish-Czech Cooperation Incubator



The guests of Economic Forum of Young Leaders are prominent politicians, economists, leaders of social movements. First of all, the forum is a tribune of views, opinions and visions of the young generation of Europeans concern the most important issues of the present day.

It was the 14th Economic Forum of Young Leaders that was the place to exchange experiences and views for participants of the “Polish-Czech Cooperation Incubator” project from Poland and the Czech Republic. During the Forum, they could use the theoretical knowledge acquired during the workshops. The project enabled both participants of this year's edition of the Forum and participants of the project to exchange experiences related to international cooperation and enabled them to establish new partnerships.

This year's Forum program was built around the thesis “Future Skills for Future Leaders”. The organizers of the Economic Forum of Young Leaders are the European Meeting Center — Nowy Staw Foundation, Foundation for the Development of the Education System — the Polish National Agency of the Erasmus+ Programme and Foundation Institute for Eastern Studies.

Polish-Czech Cooperation Incubator

Project activities and implementation

Study visit in FAKRO

Project participants had the opportunity to visit one of Nowy Sącz companies — FAKRO. Over the past 28 years, from a small, family company, it has developed into an international corporation, which today occupies the position of the viceleader in the global roof window market.



In the next part of the visit, participants learned about the production of roof windows from scratch.

Moreover, they visited production halls in which small window elements, frames and glass panes are created. They were also quality testers, they checked the quality of tempered glass from which the windows are made and their tightness.



During the visit, young leaders listened to a presentation about the company's activities and reach, they also learned about the history of the company. The visit of the exhibition hall, which completed the theoretical part of the study visit, gave participants the opportunity to see different types and shapes of windows produced by FAKRO.



Opening Session of the 14th Economic Forum of Young Leaders

The opening ceremony of the 14th Economic Forum of Young Leaders is a moment that all project participants, young leaders and invited guests are waiting for. Participants had the opportunity to listen to interesting speeches given by various special guests.



This year's edition of the Forum was opened by Paweł Poszytek, Ph.D — CEO, Foundation for the Development of the Education System, Grzegorz Chrobak — Member of the Board, European Meeting Centre - Nowy Staw Foundation, Marta Mordarska - Deputy of the Council of the Lesser Poland Voivodship, Patryk Wicher — Deputy of the Council of the Lesser Poland Voivodship, Ludomir Handzel — Mayor of Nowy Sącz, Dariusz Woźniak, Ph.D — Rector of National Louis University.

Special guests also welcomed the users, including Dariusz Piontkowski — Minister of National Education, Marzena Machalek — Secretary of State, Ministry of National Education, Małgorzata Jarosińska-Jedynak — Undersecretary of the State, Ministry of Investment and Economic Development, Anna Paluch — Member of Parliament and Piotr Dardziński — President, Łukasiewicz Research Network.



Banquet in the Nowy Sącz Town Hall



An attraction organized by the authorities of Nowy Sącz was a banquet prepared for the participants in the town hall.



During the banquet, participants were welcomed by the event's hosts. The main attraction of the banquet was the performance of the folk band 'Sądeczoki', thanks to which the project participants had the opportunity to see part of the local cultural heritage.



“Incubator of International Cooperation”

The meeting of project participants from Poland and the Czech Republic in Nowy Sącz was a great opportunity to conduct the workshop named “Incubator International Cooperation”. Due to the fact that Poland is the most pro-EU country among the Visegrad Group countries, and the citizens of the Czech Republic are eurosceptics (source: CVVM Sociological Institute, 2017), gave participants the opportunity to exchange experiences, opinions and discussions on topics related to the membership of both countries to structures such as the European Union and NATO.

During the workshops, young leaders from Poland and the Czech Republic learned how international cooperation should look like, what skills are needed to make cooperation effective, and how to move from an idea to an implementation.

Workshops and exercises conducted during the Forum enabled to increase participants' knowledge about the activities of their countries on the international arena. An important aspect for the participants was to show the benefits of cooperation between Poland and the Czech Republic and the membership of both countries in structures such as the European Union and NATO. As a result, they can strengthen existing cross-border cooperation, and partnerships established in this way may positively affect the implementation of joint international projects in the future.



“Fake news -Don't Get Caught!”

So-called fake news — false information that comes from social media to classic media are partly responsible for the scepticism of the Czechs towards such structures as the European Union and NATO.

Verifying the accuracy of the information posted on the web is a huge challenge for young people, politicians, journalists and celebrities. It is important to counteract and fight against Russian disinformation among the member states of the European Union, hence the idea to create workshops on this subject. In connection with the growing number of fake news on the web, it was important to show project participants a careful way of analysing content posted on the internet. A special role during international activities and cooperation is played by reliable information transfer between partners from different countries.

Due to the growing need for education on false information online, during the project participants took part in a workshop called “Fake News — Don't Get Caught!”. The internet is full of misinformation — fakes are on social media, on portals and blogs. During the workshops, participants learned what a deep fake is and what are dangers connected with fake news, how fake news is created, how to recognize misinformation, who creates it and what is its purpose and why the media provides false information. During the meeting participants played not only the role of a detective tracking down disinformation, but they were also creators of fake news!



“Opportunities and Challenges for Economic Cooperation in Europe, with Particular Reference to the Visegrad Group Countries. Future of European Project.”

The fall of Communism and the so-called economy centrally planned in 1989 enabled the opening of a completely new chapter of multidimensional cooperation between Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary. The Visegrad Group has proven its effectiveness many times in influencing decision-making processes within the European Union. The format of the Visegrad Group has established its position in the political space of Central and Eastern Europe in recent years.

Participants in the debate on the future of Europe and the Visegrad Group were Jan Mládek — Director of Czech Institute of Applied Economics, former Minister of Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic, František Ružička — Secretary of State, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic, Cyril Svoboda — former Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, Director of Prague Diplomatic Academy. During the debate, invited guests talked about the greatest successes and failures of the Visegrad Group over the last decade. It was stated that the biggest failure of the Group are ineffective actions regarding illegal immigrants and the lack of a clear position in this matter. However, according to the speakers, the success is undoubtedly the fact that the Visegrad Group exists, conducts joint activities that are effective on many political levels. Strong cooperation between member countries, which led to the creation of the International Visegrad Fund also plays an important role. The Group's success confirms also the fact that Member States have been admitted to the European Union.



When asked about the future of the Visegrad Group whether the Group should still exist or should it be replaced by another, better structure, the speakers answered that the Group should continue its activity. Despite many differences between Member States, there are also many issues that unite and strengthen the Group. It was said that the Group's development can be divided into two phases. The first phase focused on activities that were to help Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Hungary join the European Union. This phase ended several years ago. In turn, the second phase of cross-border cooperation among the Member States of the Group should focus on European integration. The speakers stated that further extension of the borders of the European Union is currently impossible, due to the existing problems that EU countries are facing.



“A Young Man and Challenges Surrounding him in the 21st Century”

During the 14th Economic Forum of Young Leaders, the issue of the future of Europe and the role of young people in shaping its future appeared many times. The recurring question about whether the vision of young people becomes true cannot be left without answer. Participants of the 14th Economic Forum of Young Leaders and project participants listened to the debate entitled “A Young Man and Challenges Surrounding him in the 21st Century”.



The participants of the debate were Barbara Łabędzka — Youth European Union Ambassador in Poland, vice-president of RDiM at the Ministry of National Education, Piotr Synowiec — President of the Land of Creativity, Anna Wolska — Deputy Director for Integrated Qualifications System, Educational Research Institute and Kamil Wrzos — Program Director of “PROJEKTOR - wolontariat studencki”. The debate began with the answer to the question that worries young people the most, namely, what competences and skills are crucial in finding a job, and what awaits a young person in the 21st century. The answer to this question is not easy, because the only thing that is certain is that there will be changes. As far as the labor market is concerned, it is already known that graduates who have started studying now will work in professions that have not yet been defined. It is very difficult to predict what the labor market will look like in the future. It is easier to define those skills that will be useful. Many people want to manage other people, they want to be leaders. Soft competences such as communication skills, problem solving skills and negotiation



skills will be important, but not more important than technical ones. Young people should “invest” in the ability to search for information and how to learn. Graduation does not guarantee getting a job, but the higher education will teach young people how to learn and where to look for knowledge.



It is important that future employees look for their interests and develop them from an early age. An important issue is also a combination of passion and work. Passion is important because it makes us want to

do something and train in this direction, but passion is sometimes disastrous, because not passion but work is money. However, money is not everything, and work should allow us to be fulfilled. Passion can be a hobby, a break away from work. Young people choose fashionable and popular activities. Volunteering is something additional, after work activity, something like a passion that we realize after work. Volunteering in Poland is not as popular as in the United States of America or Scandinavia, where commitment and faith in volunteering is much higher. In Poland volunteering is just beginning. Volunteering gives a lot and thanks to that we can learn a lot. It is a place for a young person to acquire many qualifications, which can be confirmed, for example that a person can manage people, budget or organize events. This can be transferred into real professional skills.



“Three Seas Initiative — an Idea or Business?”



Poland is a great place to invest and develop business. It is a country whose economy and politics are stable. Poland has strengthened its position not only in the region of Central and Eastern Europe, but also on the entire continent. Our country is the initiator and active participant of the Visegrad Group, the Eastern Partnership Program, the Council of the Baltic Sea States and the Three Seas Initiative. The role of Poland in shaping the present world and the future of Europe was an important issue that repeatedly returned during discussions between

participants. They had the opportunity to actively participate in the debate named “Three Seas Initiative — an Idea or Business?”. The participants of the debate were Szymon Szykowski vel Sęk — Secretary of State in Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland, dr hab. Piotr Bajda — Lecturer at Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw, Przemysław Żurawski vel Grajewski — Lecturer at the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Henryk Litwin — Deputy Director of the European Policy Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



problems in countries from which migration comes in and move away from inefficient relocation systems.

During the debate, the issue of the Visegrad Group, its importance and its specific offer of activities for the European Union was raised. Particular attention was paid to issues related to migration policy. The tough position of the V4 group and the coherence of the presentation of this position allowed the European Council to take decisions in June last year. It allowed, in the spirit of the expectations of Poland and the entire Visegrad group, to create a migration

The creation of the Three Seas Initiative, which was initiated during the meeting of the UN General Assembly in September 2015, was also presented. It was a presidential initiative because it was initiated by the presidents of Poland and Croatia. Initially, it aroused very diverse emotions within the European Union. This initiative was viewed as an initiative that can divide the EU and be competitive with the countries of the old European Union. Meanwhile, the idea of the Three Seas initiative was to make up for deficits resulting from the shared historical experience of Central and Eastern European countries. Many years of Communism resulted in many infrastructure delays, such as lack of road and rail connections, but also delays in the North-South energy infrastructure. The Three Seas Initiative today accounts for 40% of EU member states, about 1/3 of the territory of the entire European Union.

Attention was also paid to the need to develop Poland's effective competitiveness on the international stage. Which is why the Three Seas Initiative were created and it was initiated as direct meetings at the level of Heads of State. Three Seas Initiative Summits bring effective results.



“10 Years of Cooperation with the East”

Poland is a country that is an active member of many regional and global organizations focusing on areas such as economic, social and security cooperation with the region and the world. Thanks to its geographical location, Poland can not only mediate, but it also can be a leader in many activities.



Project participants took part in the debate named “10 Years of Cooperation with the East”, during which they discussed what the ideas for cooperation look like and what are the ideas for international cooperation, how should new paths of international cooperation look like, and what contribution the Eastern Partnership countries have to these activities. The guests of the debate were Oleksandr Yarema — Deputy Minister of Youth and Sports of Ukraine, Jacek Multanowski — the former Polish Ambassador to Georgia and Macedonia, Olga Khabibulina — Expert in youth policy and international cooperation, Giorgi Agirbaia — Chairman in ProActive Group Georgia.



Currently, the European Union is facing many problems, including Brexit, but the topic of regional and global cooperation is not overlooked. The debate focused on the role of youth in the coming years in the context of the Eastern Partnership and the European Union. The speakers pointed out that the importance of young leaders on the political scene is increasing, and an example of this is the Ukrainian government, whose head is 35-year-old Oleksij Honczaruk. The situation of Belarus and times when cooperation, trips and foreign exchanges were limited by visas were also mentioned. The situation has changed thanks to cooperation and the Eastern Partnership, and the prospects for the coming years are optimistic. Young people in the Eastern Partnership are the future and strength. Thanks to cooperation with young people, new ideas and solutions are created for volunteering and youth exchange programs.



Each of the speakers noted the improvement in international cooperation that has taken place over the last 10 years. It was found that thanks to the Erasmus+ Program, youth exchanges and opportunities that the current world gives young people, the regional work is starting to take on a global dimension of cooperation.

European Meeting Centre

— Nowy Staw Foundation

European Meeting Center — Nowy Staw Foundation, which organizes Economic Forum of Young Leaders and realizes the project entitled “Polish-Czech Cooperation Incubator”, was established in 1993. The Foundation supports all social initiatives aimed at building civil society, cooperation and solidarity between nations. It supports the processes of democratic changes in Belarus and Ukraine, as well as the process of Poland's integration with the European Union. It promotes Lublin and the region of Lublin as a meeting place for various cultures and nations.



In its activities, the Foundation is guided by Christian values. Through the education of all generations, it strengthens the ideas of democracy, self-governance, social market economy, solidarity between nations and understanding of cultures across all borders.



Polish-Czech Cooperation Incubator

Foundation's goals:

- promotion of civic attitudes,
- supporting Eastern European countries in their efforts towards democracy and building civil society,
- mobilizing citizens, especially the young generation, to become active, to be responsible for their own communities,
- substantive and organizational support of institutions operating for the local labor market, activation of the unemployed, especially from rural areas,
- promotion of the idea of a knowledge-based society using modern multimedia tools and techniques,
- work for the conscious and effective membership of Poland in the European Union.



"We invite everyone who identifies with the Foundation's goals to cooperate. We want nobody in the Foundation to feel alien, that our environment is a friendly place for anyone who wants to contribute to the implementation of initiatives for civil society, solidarity and cooperation between nations".

Agata Dziubińska-Gawlik, Chairman of the Foundation

Polish-Czech Cooperation Incubator

