

interview _____

H.E. Mr. Marek Szczygiel

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Poland in Romania



Your Excellency, ten years after Poland's accession to the EU, could you share with our readers the main challenges and success stories of the Polish experience within the Union?

Ten years ago, on 1 May 2004, the EU enlarged from 15 to 25 Member States. This brought stability and reunited Europe after years of artificial division during the Cold War. It's worth remembering that the whole process started more than 25 years ago. It is a commonly held belief in Western Europe that the era of Soviet dominance over our part of Europe ended with the collapse of the Berlin Wall in November 1989. Yet the tearing down of the Iron Curtain was merely the culmination of a process set into motion nearly a decade before by the Solidarity movement. A domino effect in the countries of the so-called Eastern Bloc was triggered by the power-sharing agreement that Solidarity peacefully negotiated with the Communists at the Round Table, which led to the practical handing over of power in Poland to the democratic opposition in the aftermath of the elections on 4 June 1989.

From a new member state Poland has advanced into an important actor in the EU, with impact on the decisions made at the European level. We are glad that during those years Poland has proved that it is not only a large European country, but also an important member of the European family and that we can bring something valuable to this common project... **p.2**

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event _____

Krynica Economic Forum

The **Economic Forum** is the most important economic conference in Central and Eastern Europe, gathering presidents, heads of cabinets, ministers, EU Commissioners, representatives of the biggest corporations and analytical centers.

The **Foundation Institute for Eastern Studies** (Warsaw) has been organizing the Economic Forum for the past 23 years. One year after another, the Forum has become an important platform of exchange of views and experience among academic, political... **p.9**



“Poland has built a strong position for itself in the EU and has a reputation as a predictable and responsible country.”

...Poland has built a strong position for itself in the EU and has a reputation as a predictable and responsible country. This was possible because of its very good economic situation, political stability in the difficult times of the economic crisis and the staunch support for European integration among the Poles.

The anniversary offers a good opportunity to present a handful of figures to illustrate the path we have covered over the last decade. The evolution of the average wealth level in Poland since accession to the EU has been a success story. In 2004 it was less than half of the EU average, but it has grown to 2/3 of the average by 2012. Moreover, according to a report by the Polish MFA, accumulated GDP growth in the years 2004-2013 reached ca. 49% in Poland, compared to the EU average of 11%!

Such fast economic growth in Poland would not have been possible if Polish companies had not been able to access the EU single market. Unemployment in Poland has decreased by half over the last 10 years, mainly thanks to Polish entrepreneurs and the new jobs they created. The EU has been the destination for more than 3/4 of Poland's exports. Compared to the 2004 level, trade with the EU has increased significantly and Poland is now reporting a surplus in trade with the other Member States. Thanks to the experience gained in the demanding EU market, the Polish economy proved resilient when the crisis hit, despite its close ties with the other EU economies. In the difficult period between 2007 and 2012, Poland's GDP increased by more than 18%, while that of the EU decreased by 0.8%.

Thanks to Poland's membership in the EU, the country has been able to attract additional capital from abroad, which meant a nearly fourfold increase throughout the decade, and resulted in a total of 100 billion EUR of foreign direct investments (FDI). Meanwhile Polish companies have themselves started to explore opportunities for expansion, especially in the EU market. This clearly shows that Polish companies have been making good use of the opportunities offered by the internal market.

Since 2004, within just 10 years, Poland has made tremendous civilization progress, which it largely owes to the inflow of structural funds under the EU Cohesion Policy. Poland had been allocated EUR 68 billion of cohesion funding for the last 7-year period. The current multiannual EU budget till 2020 will be even more generous. Naturally, whether or not these funds are fully used will depend on the efficiency and skill of the Polish institutions and companies applying for financing.

What are the Polish citizens' perceptions regarding the European integration process? To what extent have the benefits surpassed the general costs?

Data on the real economy demonstrate more than sufficiently that Poland has benefited in many ways from its membership in the EU, and this fact is well-grounded in public awareness. Most Poles are aware of the changes taking place and support European integration. The EU is commonly accepted

and approved of, in practically all social and age groups, irrespective of political views and sympathies. A recent opinion poll shows the record high level of support for the EU membership - 89 %. Poles not only consider themselves to be Europeans, but also show more confidence in the EU and its institutions than people in other countries. In response to the growing "euro scepticism", we promote sober Polish EURO-OPTIMISM.

As far as the Eastern Partnership (EaP) initiative is concerned, how do you estimate the recent events in Eastern Europe will shape a new European Neighbourhood Policy?

Recent events in Ukraine have been a stark reminder of the fragile nature of stability and security in Europe. They have also brought the relationship between Russia and the West into uncharted waters, with consequences potentially affecting all areas of cooperation. Confronted with this fresh crisis and Russian military aggression against Ukraine, Europeans must reassess their strategic situation, the usefulness of their security toolbox, and the validity of the institutions that guarantee freedom on their continent.

Recent developments proved that there is a constant need for building an area of stability in the neighbourhood of EU. The best method is to encourage our Partners to make reforms and strengthen the state institutions. Weakness could encourage the external powers to challenge the existing order. Reforms and democratic process are the key to the Partner states' future. Today we are facing probably the most crucial moment in the contemporary history of international relations in Europe, when one neighbour - Russia - is changing borders using brutal military force in Ukraine. EU is among those whose responsibility is to protect key values of international order. EU must play a constructive role in the crisis by all means. It is crucial to the credibility of Europe.

EaP is not directed to challenge anyone, it is about building trust, good neighbourly relations, developing economic ties and helping in reforms. Of course some reforms are already being done, but there is need for more. EU will support the Partners in their actions to modernize but without the real effort on their side the results will not be spectacular. The main bulk of the work is to be done by the Partner countries themselves - "no pain no gain". But we have to offer to our Partners a clear vision that doors to Europe should remain open to all willing to enter. Signing AA/DCFTA is not the final goal of cooperation with EU. Poland consequently supports bringing the partners as close as possible to EU. However, those Partners who have chosen the path of AA/DCFTA will certainly be better prepared to engage in even closer cooperation when the time comes.

It's important to develop the contacts between people, including increased mobility, programs supporting people-to-people contacts, enhancing student and youth exchanges, scholarships. One of the goals is visa free regime with EU for all EaP members.

Ambassador Marek Szczygiel was born in 1969 in Poland. After graduating in law and international relations, he began his career in Foreign Service as desk-officer for Romania and Bulgaria in the European Affairs Department of Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Career diplomat, he worked between 1995-2000 at the Polish Embassy in Stockholm. He later on specialized in security policy and held twice the post of Deputy Director in Security Policy Department, MFA, in charge of regional security (2002-2004) and non-proliferation, disarmament and export control issues (2008-2011), as well as the position of Deputy Head of the Polish Mission to the OSCE and UN Office in Vienna (2004-2008).

In the past he used to head the Interagency Coordinating Committee on Combating Proliferation of WMD. He was also a lecturer at the Diplomatic Academy in Warsaw.

Since June 2011 he has been accredited as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Poland in Romania.

The current crisis proved that the energy sector is becoming a key element of cooperation with our neighbours. The recent situation in Ukraine, where conditions of gas supplies have become an element of political pressure, has convinced us that there is an urgent need to continue the work on strengthening the energy security of our region and the EU as a whole.

How do you envisage the further consolidation of the Polish - Romanian relations?

The strategic partnership is not only a privilege, it is a commitment. During recent years we have established an intensive political-military dialogue devoted to security issues - the 4th round having taken place just last month - increasingly important in the context of the current situation in Eastern Europe. We had also reached out to another regional player, to start a trilateral format of Poland-Romania-Turkey consultation that has recently been enriched with a parliamentary dimension. Reinvigorated bilateral parliamentary cooperation is a positive sign too and a confirmation of the interest of all the decision centres in developing deep partnership between Poland and Romania.

On bilateral and EU track we do appreciate the ongoing cooperation in the field of economic growth, climate policy and energy security. The idea of creating an Energy Union in Europe, introduced by PM Donald Tusk and supported by

PM Victor Ponta, might be a milestone in further European integration and the solution to a number of problems bothering Europe in terms of economy and foreign policy.

We hope to continue the cooperation in the field of European funds absorption. Poland has achieved good results in this area and is ready to continue sharing our experience with our Romanian partners. Close attention will be further paid to economic cooperation. Trade exchange exceeded 3.6 bln EUR in 2013 and Poland is the 5th biggest exporter to Romania. We note a growing interest of Polish companies to be present on the Romanian market.

Continuingly, we want to stimulate non-governmental cooperation, people-to-people contacts, further develop well established cultural exchange. Polish Institute of International Relations' and the European Institute of Romania's leadership in coordinating the think-tanks' community contacts is highly appreciated. I am proud to announce Poland will be the guest of honour at the upcoming Bookfest Fair in Bucharest. The great interest that we have enjoyed at Polish stands during celebrations of Europe's Day at the Politehnica metro station, bearing the name "Poland" for one day, and in Cismigiu Park confirms the need of bringing more Poland to Romania and - we hope - more Romania to Poland.

Interview by **Oana Mocanu**

analysis

Poland's 10 Years in the European Union

– Report prepared by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland,
submitted to EIR Newsletter by courtesy of the Polish Embassy in Romania –

Main findings

In the course of the last ten years, Poland has become a significant political player in the European Union. In 2004, we joined the EU as a "new" Member State, full of hope, but also fearful of losing our sovereignty. In 2014, we will celebrate our first decade in the EU as a strong and influential Member State that knows how to pursue its interests but also acts with responsibility for the process of European integration.

Over the years, Poland has learned to influence and impact the EU in line with Polish interests and needs. We have supported the idea behind the internal market, fully understanding how much Poland stands to gain from it. We have been actively engaged in the eurozone reform debate, acting on the assumption that we will be part of this project in the future; we



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economic crisis, and to the high public support for integration, unlike in many other European societies. The successful Polish Presidency of the EU Council in the second half of 2011 - a good investment in a more effective implementation of Poland's interests in the years ahead - has also contributed to it.

Poland's experience in cooperating with different institutions and Member States, and the fact that our country has become deeply "rooted" in the European process have also added to the favourable political net result of Poland's EU membership. Thanks to a strong presence of Polish MEPs in the European People's Party, Poland has been able to effectively influence the position of this biggest political group in the European Parliament and to get its members to vote in favour of issues it considers crucial. The presence of Polish MEPs in the second biggest political group of the EP was also of importance in the context of effectively representing Polish interests.

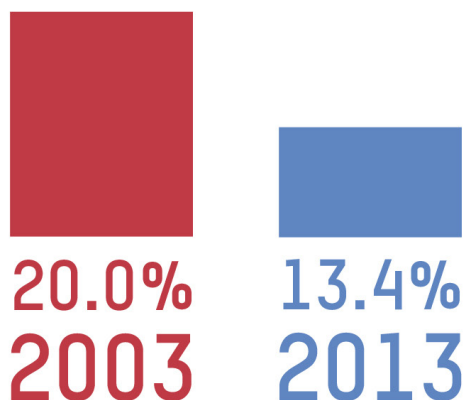
have been very much engaged in key debates on the European system, convinced that it is our business. For years we have been investing in the EU energy policy, to better protect our energy security. This process is being continued and has been gaining strategic momentum since the crisis in Ukraine and Europe's response in the form of an energy union. We have applied our EU membership to shape our neighbourhood, specifically by actively pursuing the EU's Eastern policy.

Negotiations of the Multiannual Financial Framework for 2014-2020, a key to Poland's long-term development prospects, have been one of Poland's most important and hardest-won political achievements. Poland has successfully negotiated PLN 441 billion (up by PLN 19 billion compared with 2007-2013) despite major EU budget cuts. Our well thought-out and consistently implemented strategy was based on an alliance with European institutions and on cooperation with countries belonging to the Friends of Cohesion group. Poland came out of these tough financial negotiations without burning any bridges.

Poland has won a strong political position and a reputation of a country that is predictable and responsible. This was possible thanks to Poland's very good economic performance and political stability in the hard times of

IMPROVEMENT ON THE LABOUR MARKET

UNEMPLOYMENT

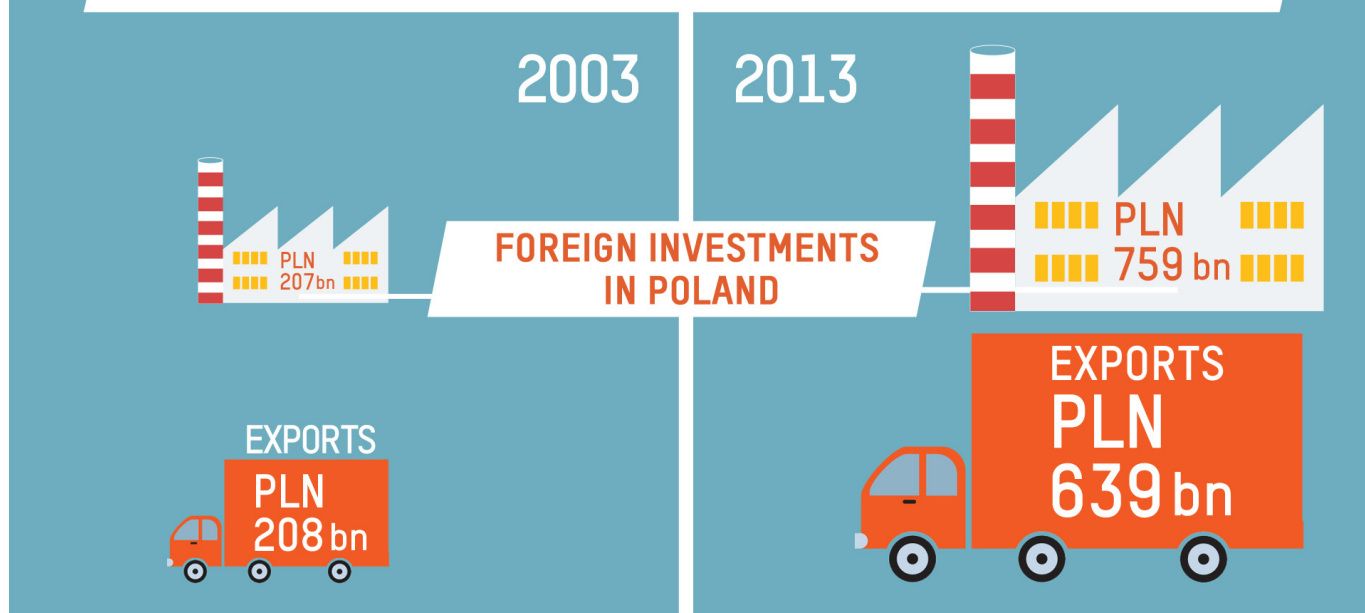


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As a team player, we have been building effective coalitions, knowing that in a Union of 28 states not much can be achieved single-handedly. The Visegrad Group, which together has the same number of votes as France and Germany combined, is a particularly effective instrument for pooling influence. Today, the Visegrad Group is the most successful regional group in the EU. Since 2012, we have also witnessed reinvigorated cooperation in the Weimar Triangle, which has become a very important forum of consultations and development of Poland's, Germany's and France's common positions on key European policy issues.

Poland's EU membership has had a positive impact on our country's economic performance. If our country had not joined the EU, in 2013 our GDP per capita in purchasing power standards would have been at the 2009 level, i.e. it would have been

POLAND'S GROWTH THANKS TO EU MARKET



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lower by 11% relative to the EU-27 average. In 2013, the value of Polish exports would have been lower by PLN 164 billion (i.e. by 25%). Our capital expenditures, in turn, would have been lower by PLN 36 billion (i.e. by 12%) in 2013, and throughout the 2004-2013 period – by PLN 200 billion (i.e. by 7.8%). Last but not least, employment would have been lower by 10%, and unemployment higher by almost 38%. In other words, the number of unemployed would have been higher by over half a million! To recap, if Poland had not entered the European Union, many more people would be out of work, we would be earning less, and the Polish economy would be developing at a much slower pace¹.

Poland's accession to the European Union on 1 May 2004 marked the beginning of an important stage in the country's economic development. Now that our presence in the EU is already taken for granted, and the absence of borders and unrestrained access to studies and work in all the EU countries has become a fact, it is worth looking back at the past ten years. On the eve of Poland's EU accession, the majority of Polish citizens looked at the European Union as a gate to a better world. However, our joining the EU was accompanied by serious concerns - the critics of enlargement painted a grim future for our country, while some parts of the society were readying themselves for years of hardship and sacrifices. It seemed that it would take one or more generations before Poland could enjoy a higher standard of living.

Yet, EU accession's positive effects became apparent much earlier. Within a decade, Poland's key social and economic indicators improved significantly, although changes did not always occur as quickly as might have been expected. But the concerns expressed by Polish citizens before Poland entered the EU - that Poland would become a net payer, that it would not be able to effectively spend EU money or would become a market for EU Member States' goods and services - proved unfounded.

The last ten years have shown that joining the European structures does not automatically translate into a country's better economic performance and improved standard of living. **EU membership presents itself as an opportunity, not as a guarantee of development.** Whether a country can fully capitalise on this opportunity depends on how it decides to conduct its economic policy.

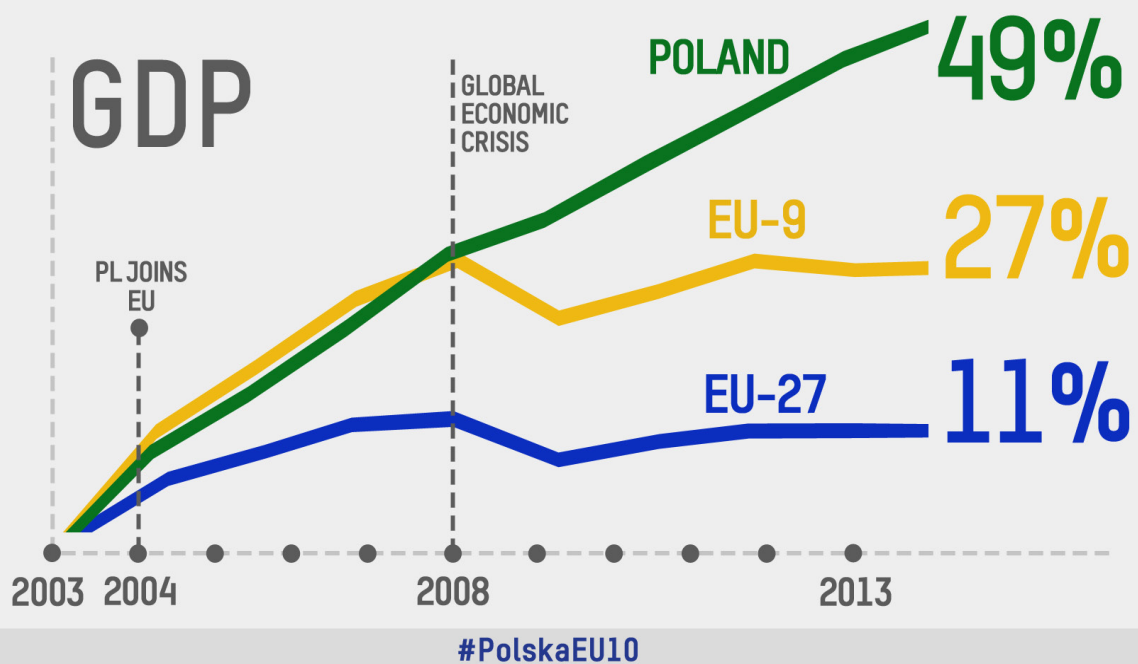
Compared with other countries of the region that joined the EU in 2004 and 2007, on balance Poland has made better use of the opportunities offered by EU membership. We have become a leader of economic growth - after joining the EU, our GDP grew 48.7%. Poland (together with Slovakia) outperformed not only other countries in the region, but also in the EU as a whole. Besides, Poland's economy has passed the most important test - the global economic crisis. In 2009, Poland was the only country in the EU to avoid a recession. In 2008-2013, Poland's total GDP increased over 20%. It was by far the best performance in the EU.

Our pace of growth, which was faster than in other countries, made Poland reach two-thirds of the EU's average level of economic development. After 10 years, Poland has overtaken Hungary, a country that was wealthier than us upon EU accession. In 2003, Poland's GDP per capita in purchasing power standards amounted to 48.8 percent of the EU-27 average, while in 2012, it had already amounted to 66.9 percent, an increase by 18.1 percentage points.

Economic growth has been accompanied by major changes in the labour market. **Within the first 10 years of our presence in the EU two million jobs have been created:** members of all social groups, including half a million economically inactive people, have been employed. The economic growth has significantly improved the situation of the Polish people: in 2005-2012,

¹ Own report based on estimates by P. Kowal, J. Kuskowski and J. Zawistowski from IMAPP Foundation using the DSGE Unified Macro Framework 1.0 (UMF 1.0) model, December 2013.

WE ARE BEST AT SEIZING EU OPPORTUNITIES



the number of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion decreased by 7 million, and 1.3 million people were lifted out of poverty.

Before Poland's accession to the EU, economists had expected that our economy would see rapid economic growth thanks to an increase in the scale of public and private investments and of their share in the GDP, a more rapid modernisation of the economy, and higher confidence of global markets resulting in a more rapid inflow of foreign direct investments. Changes in the structure of the economy had been expected in a mid-term perspective. Economists had predicted that sustainable positive effects of EU enlargement would come gradually and over a long period (after 20-30 years). The underlying economic assumptions turned out to be true. In the first years of EU membership, Poland saw an investment and consumption boom, followed by structural changes. The most important of them were a higher share of services and a lower share of agriculture in the generation of Poland's GDP; higher productivity of the economy spurred by technological progress and greater competition on the domestic market; the inflow of FDIs; increased production of medium- and highly processed products; a higher share in world trade. The outcome of these changes is visible in annual rankings of competitiveness in which Poland has been rising gradually, but systematically. For instance, Poland has moved up from the 48th position in 2004 to the 33rd position in 2013 in the IMD World Competitiveness Center ranking.

The good net result of Poland's EU membership would not have been possible without a consistent and responsible economic policy that eased business cycle fluctuations. Poland has managed to establish efficient institutions that guarantee economic stability, such as an independent central bank, the Financial Supervision Authority or the Bank Guarantee Fund. An effective prudential oversight of the banking sector has saved us from the pitfalls of the free movement of capital. The Polish Constitution has placed a ceiling on public debt, which has effectively protected our country against overspending. An effective model for implementing the country's development policy using EU funds has also been put in place.

During Poland's ten years of EU membership, we did not run a current account deficit that would have exceeded safety thresholds. Our economy remained competitive thanks specifically to moderate increases of labour costs. Also, EU accession did not have a major impact on inflation in Poland. Thanks to effective and prudent measures, Poland's economy only experienced a slower growth during the crisis' critical years, at a time when almost all the other EU Member States went into recession.

Thanks to EU membership, Poland's image and financial credibility have improved. In 2007, credit rating agencies (Standard and Poor's and Fitch) upgraded Poland's rating from BBB+ to A-.

Increase in credibility of Poland in the aftermath of the accession to the EU led to a lower rate of return of treasury securities. Now the Polish government pays less to service its public debt. Poland's interest rates are now at 2.5 percent (a level that could not have been reached before June 2013), which has contributed to the country's development by reducing investment costs. **Poland has also made very good use of the opportunities offered by the EU's common market and its four pillars: the free movement of goods, persons, services and capital. We have become part of the world's biggest free trade area that is home to 500 million consumers and 20 million firms.** As recently as 2003, it seemed improbable that Polish entrepreneurs would join and make their impact on the common market. Our EU membership has lent Polish products, in particular agricultural products, more credibility. Poland has effectively increased its exports to EU countries, as well as to third countries. During the last decade, Poland's share of exports within the EU grew twice up to 4%. It is the highest increase of all the countries in

the region and the second highest in the EU (after the Netherlands). In 2013, we exported to the EU almost three times as many goods as before joining the EU. Poland has consolidated its leadership position as the biggest exporter of all the EU Member States that joined the EU in 2004 and in 2007: almost 27% of goods exported from Central and Eastern Europe originated in our country.

Since the accession, our country's investment attractiveness has increased significantly. As from 2004, the aggregate value of foreign direct investments inflow to Poland has exceeded PLN 405 billion. In the last decade, Poland has been the most desired investment destination in Central and Eastern Europe (in particular among investors from the rest of the EU). In fact, every third euro they have invested has ended up in our country.

Assessing Poland's achievements, in particular those resulting from Poland's presence on the internal market, note should be taken of the following facts:

- Thanks to the free movement of goods, we have seen an unprecedented success of Polish companies, which have exported goods worth almost PLN 3.5 billion to the EU in 10 years. This is twice the value of Poland's GDP! Moreover, Poland has become one of the leading European producers and exporters in key industrial sectors (such as the automotive industry, the electronic and home appliances sectors or the furniture sector), and an important service provider on the EU market.
- Polish entrepreneurs have turned a PLN 13.5 billion trade deficit with EU member states in 2003 (-2 percent of GDP) into an impressive trade surplus of almost PLN 100 billion in 2013 (6 percent of GDP).
- Since Poland's EU accession in 2004, Polish firms have made a profit of almost PLN 550 billion (EUR 135 billion) on exports of services to the EU. The positive balance exceeds PLN 37 billion (over EUR 9 billion). Thus, Poland has become the leader among countries that joined the EU in 2004; almost 30 percent of services delivered to the EU by Central and Eastern European countries in 2012 came from Poland. After 2004, Poland has seen the most rapid growth in the export of its services (an increase in value by 160 percent) of all the countries in the region. This trend was especially visible in the transport, business support and tourism sectors.
- Poland has seen an export boom and an increase in productivity: right after accession, the number of firms exporting their products and services grew twice as fast as the total number of companies. As a result, in 2013, Polish companies earned one fifth of their revenues from exports. Since 80 percent of these exports were to the EU, most of the revenues were generated thanks to our presence on the internal market. However, after ten years of EU membership, many Polish companies are still not present on the EU's common market. This means that they have not yet tapped into the significant development potential offered by this market.
- In the framework of the Erasmus program more than 120,000 Polish students studied or were trained in other EU Member States and 37,000 academics lectured or were trained at universities in those States.
- Thanks to the possibility offered by the free movement of services in the EU, Polish companies delegated approximately 230,000 workers abroad, creating jobs for 100,000 people back home.
- In the past ten years, Polish direct investments in EU Member States have increased a few dozen times from PLN 4.6 billion in 2003 to PLN 137 billion in 2012.
- Although in 2005 the CEO of one of the largest low-cost airlines in Europe said: "Who wants to go to Gdansk? There isn't a lot there after you've seen the Shipyard Wall"², in the past ten years, foreigners have made over 630 million trips to Poland, of which over 140 million as tourists. Foreign travellers to Poland have spent a total of PLN 284.3 billion³. In 2014, one hundred cities in the world have direct flight connections to Warsaw, four times as many as before Poland's EU accession.
- Liberalisation of air transport services has contributed to the dynamic development of air traffic (in 2004-2013, 185 million passengers passed through Polish airports); enabled the entry of low-cost airlines into Poland; and made travelling in Europe easier for millions of Poles. In 2004-2013 as many as 82.8% of all Polish tourists travelled to EU Member States (Poles made 80.6 million trips, of which 66.75 million represented travel to EU Member States)⁴.
- Thanks to the implementation of EU legislation, phone and data roaming rates dropped fourfold in Poland. In 2007, only 9.2 percent of Polish citizens travelling to the EU used roaming services. By 2013, this number increased to as high as 60 percent.

Over the past decade Poland has become a construction site. EU funds have played a major role in helping the country modernize faster.

The total investment volume grew by 75% in 2004-13. Between 2009 and 2011, the cohesion policy funded 51.6% of Poland's public investments. Despite fears, from the first year of our membership in the EU Poland has received more from the EU budget than it has contributed to it. Since 2009 Poland has been the principal net beneficiary of the EU budget. After deducting Polish contributions, we have received PLN 250.5 billion (EUR 61.4 billion) since our accession ten years ago⁵. This means that for every zloty it paid to the EU budget from PLN 125.4 billion (EUR 31 billion), Poland received three zloty out of it for a total of PLN 375.9 billion (EUR 92.4 billion)⁶. Outcome of the Multiannual Financial Framework negotiations shows that

² K. Done, "Polish low-cost airlines set to expand into UK and Irish markets" *Financial Times*, 8 December 2005

³ "Turystyka w Polsce w latach 2004-2013. Oszacowania wskaźników ekonomicznych," Department of Tourism of the Ministry of Sport and Tourism, (as at 14.03.2014).

⁴ The total number of tourist trips takes into account both travel to one country, as well as multi-country trips. The total number of tourist visits, without taking into account the total number of visits in respective countries, amounts to 76.95 million.

⁵ Data based on "Zestawienia transferów finansowych środków unijnych w ciągu 116 miesięcy członkostwa" (as at 31 December 2013) of the Ministry of Finance; for the sake of comparison, euro amounts have been converted into zloty at the NBP average annual exchange rate for that year.

⁶ *Ibid.*

Poland is likely to remain the biggest net beneficiary in 2014-2020 as well. No other country in the history of the cohesion policy had ever received as much funding within one financial perspective as Poland under current framework.

Funds received in 2004-2013 were well spent by Poland:

- Thanks to EU funds in 2004-2013 over 160,000 projects were implemented⁷, some of which are still in progress. **673 km of motorways have been built; 808 km of expressways** have been built or modernised⁸, 36,000 km of sewage network and 683 sewage treatment plants have been constructed⁹.

Companies also benefited from EU funds. Since 2004 **entrepreneurs have carried out 62,600 projects** for which they received approximately PLN 85.5 billion in EU funding¹⁰. In 2007-2013 the implementation of just one programme¹¹ produced the following results: the implementation of 551 new technologies in enterprises, as well as 215 results of R&D work. In addition, as part of the so-called incubators, 972 innovative ideas were supported and 2960 e-services were introduced¹².

- In 2004-12, Polish farmers received PLN 53.7 billion in direct payments from the EU budget. During that time, an average of 1.4 million farms benefited from direct payments. This means that one beneficiary was eligible, on average, for PLN 38,362¹³. Poland's agriculture and the agri-food sector were considerably modernized - over 1.5 million farmers received nearly a third of EU funds, i.e. more than PLN 117.7 billion (EUR 29 billion)¹⁴.
- EU funds have also helped to change the education system - **over half of Polish schools** (close to twenty thousand) **have been equipped with computer labs**. In total, around 250,000 computer workstations have been created. Furthermore, over 2,800 preschools have been set up, with a further 2,200 units generating additional preschool places¹⁵.

Thanks to Poland's EU membership, **Poles have access to the labour markets of other EU Member States and may benefit from European social security**. The free movement of workers within the EU has led to migrations from Central and Eastern Europe, a phenomenon whose scale proved bigger than had been anticipated prior to the 2004 enlargement. A large number of Poles have taken advantage of the free movement of persons, which is a fundamental principle of the internal market. The possibility of taking up legal employment in EU Member States has reduced the natural risk relating to emigration in the pre-accession period. This, in turn, has led to a positive change in the way people thought about the European labour market, which has become just as accessible as the Polish labour market. Today it is perfectly natural to choose between a job in Rzeszow and one in London, while before 2004 many feared that Western Europe would run out of jobs for new EU Members States' citizens.

Migrations of Poles have certainly had a big impact on the country's socio-economic situation, but seen from today's perspective their net result is relatively difficult to assess and by no means conclusive. In the short run, the opening of Europe's labour markets no doubt helped reduce tensions on the Polish market. A drop in the economically active population was offset by migrants' money transfers back home (in 2004-2013, money transfers amounted to approximately PLN 145.2 billion¹⁶ (EUR 36 billion) and were equivalent to 60% of net EU budget transfers). Compared with other countries of the region, the scale of emigration was not as big as in Lithuania, Latvia, Romania and Bulgaria, which have recently seen more of their citizens leave the country.

The report would not be conclusive without mentioning Polish Euroenthusiasm - another Polish achievement in the EU which is no less important than good economic performance. Ten years ago, Poles could hardly be labeled the Community's most pro-European members. Shortly before the accession as few as 42% of Poles believed that EU membership was good for Poland. Polish Euroenthusiasm grew steadily each year as Poles became increasingly aware of the benefits of EU accession for Poland.

Today, when there is a very clear support for the EU among all Polish social and age groups, we often fail to realise the long road that we have travelled as a nation during the past decade. Thanks to the openness and trust of millions of Poles, pro-European sentiments are now a valuable capital that many other EU Member States could only envy Poland for.

Report prepared by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland

⁷ See <http://www.mapadotacji.gov.pl/statystyki-i-porownania> (as at 24.03.2014).

⁸ Based on information provided by the General Directorate for National Roads and Motorways dated 22 January, 2014.

⁹ Based on evaluation study "Ocena efektow inwestycji srodowiskowych finansowanych w ramach NPR 20042006 oraz danych z KSI (SIMIK 07-13)" drafted by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Development dated 21 March, 2014.

¹⁰ Based on information provided by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Development dated 17 December, 2013.

¹¹ "Innovative Economy" Operational Programme.

¹² Based on information provided by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Development dated 17 December 2013.

¹³ See http://www.arimr.gov.pl/uploads/media/20012014_Platn_bezp.7-13.pdf (as at 24 March, 2014).

¹⁴ *Zestawienia...*, *op. cit.*

¹⁵ Based on information provided by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Development dated 24 January, 2014.

¹⁶ Based on information provided by the NBP, as at 24.03.2014; for comparative purposes, euro amounts have been converted into zloty at the NBP average annual exchange rate for that year.

Krynica Economic Forum

The Economic Forum is the most important economic conference in Central and Eastern Europe, gathering presidents, heads of cabinets, ministers, EU Commissioners, representatives of the biggest corporations and analytical centers.

The Foundation Institute for Eastern Studies (Warsaw) has been organizing the Economic Forum for the past 23 years. One year after another, the Forum has become an important platform of exchange of views and experience among academic, political, economic and cultural elites, as well as the media from all European countries. The ever-increasing number of participants bears witness to the success of the Forum. After Poland's accession to the European Union, the annual meetings in Krynica gained a fresh impulse for development, being the only place where the 'old' East meets the West.

In recent years, the debates in Krynica have been attended by: the President of the European Commission, Jose Manuel Barroso; the presidents of Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Croatia and Estonia; the prime ministers of Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine; the EU commissioners for health, regional development, financial programming and budget; and also the representatives of governments from more than ten European countries, among others.

Debates of the Forum have been reported by more than 500 journalists, and speeches and opinions of participants have been quoted by the major global media and widely commented by groups of experts. The Forum in Krynica also gives the opportunity for key players to meet, influencing the economy in the region.



"The Post-Crisis World: Time for New Leaders"

This will be the motto of this year **24th Economic Forum in Krynica-Zdroj**, scheduled to take place from **2 to 4 September 2014**. The agenda includes *more than 120 debates within the scope of 12 thematic blocks*, such as macroeconomics, international politics, new economy, state and reforms, energy, business and management, European Union and its neighbours, among others. Within the Economic Forum Program, the debate ***EMU Reform from the Perspective of Non-Eurozone Member States*** is organized in cooperation with the **European Institute of Romania**, partner of the Foundation Institute for Eastern Studies for the third year in a row.

Florentina Costache

Launching the EIR Strategy and Policy Studies (SPOS 2013)



On 24 April 2014, the European Institute of Romania (EIR) held a press conference on the **Strategy and Policy Studies (SPOS) 2013** Project. The conference was attended by personalities of the political scene and academic milieu. The SPOS series is a follow-up of the Pre-Accession Impact Studies (PAIS) conducted between 2000 and 2005, and provides a blueprint for Romania as part of the European Union.

The research topics of SPOS 2013, as highlighted in the opening by Ms. **Gabriela Drăgan**, Director General of the European Institute of Romania, offer an integrated perspective, necessary in the decision-making process. Approximately 90 studies have been drawn up so far, relevant from a multiple perspective:

economic, political, social and institutional. The SPOS 2013 studies addressed four complementary dimensions: energy, Roma inclusion policies, free movement of Romanian workers in the EU and competitiveness.

Ms. **Iulia Matei**, Deputy General Director with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, presented the message of Mr. George Ciamba, Secretary of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It was considered that the SPOS studies have a substantial impact, especially in shaping new strategies of action. The speaker noted that the year 2014 is important in terms of completing the European energy market. In this context, she highlighted the beneficial contribution of the first study of 2013 series to understanding the process of liberalization and analysing its impact on Romanian society.



Mr. **Leonard Orban**, President of EIR's Board, announced the topics to be addressed in the SPOS 2014 study - the Banking Union and the problematic of shale gas exploitation. He stressed the role of the EIR studies, as they meet specific needs through impact analysis, strategic approaches and predictions of scenarios in the context of the decision-making process.

The gradual liberalization of the electricity and gas markets and the impact of this process on the Romanian economy study, presented by Mr. Aureliu Leca, PhD professor, Polytechnic University of Bucharest, coordinator of the research team, aimed to analyse the liberalisation of electricity and gas markets, aiming to achieve a competitive European internal market, as well as its impact on the Romanian economy and society, to identify risks and opportunities and develop recommendations. Among the authors are Virgil Mușatescu, Victor Ionescu, Florin Tobescu and Eugenia Gușilov.

The *Roma inclusion policies in EU Member States* study, presented by Mr. **Sorin Cace**, Senior Researcher with the Research Institute for Quality of Life of the Romanian Academy and coordinator of the research team, proposes a multi-faceted approach, from both social and economic perspectives. The study provides an analysis of key policy issues of the Roma minority in the European context, highlighting examples of good practice in Romania and other EU countries, but also pointing out limitations that undermine the effectiveness of inclusion programmes. One proposed solution is to prioritise certain issues and to develop an integrated approach, as well as to indicate instruments that can be used by both public institutions and non-governmental organizations. The research team also included Gabriela Neagu, Ana Nichita Ivasiuc and Cristina Raț.

The third study, *The estimation of the impact of free movement of Romanian workers in the EU from 01.01.2014; realities and trends from economic, employment and social perspectives, at national and European level*, coordinated by prof. **Valentina Vasile**, Scientific Director of the Institute of National Economy of the Romanian Academy, offers a unitary vision of free movement of Romanian workers in the EU. The study offers a manifold perspective: legal, economic, the social impact and related policies, associated to portability of social security system, pensions and other issues related to the mobility of workers. The focal points are statistical and qualitative approach of Romanian workers' mobility and highlighting their impact on the countries of destination, given the need to stimulate workers to remain in the country. Research team also includes Silvia Pisciă, Cristina Boboc și Romana Cramarenco.


Mr. **Valentin Cojanu**, PhD. professor, Bucharest University of Economic Studies (member of the research team), presented the study *Romania's competitive advantages on the EU internal market*, carried out by Geomina Țurlea, PhD (coordinator), Alina Alexoaei, Georgiana Neculau and Ioan-Radu Petrariu. The paper analyses the competitive advantage and added value creation of the Romanian economy over the decade 2001-2011. Among the findings of the study, it is worth mentioning that in recent years there have been structural changes of values and that the cross-border effect, as result of reduction of trade and administrative barriers, has become very important. The paper also contains two case studies on the automotive industry and creative industries.

The SPOS 2013 research programme took place from June to December 2013, involving a total of 18 specialists, researchers and academics.

The studies are available at: http://www.ier.ro/publicatii.html?categorie_publicatii_id=417346

Anca Mihalache, intern

Europe Day Celebrated with a Colourful Event

We  Like *Europe!* - this was the title of the event organized by the Europe Direct Bucharest Information Centre hosted by the European Institute of Romania, on 9 May, for the celebration of Europe Day. The activity, which lasted approximately 3 hours, took place outdoors, in University Square, and was organized in partnership with the European Commission Representation in Romania, European Parliament Information Office in Romania, CaleaEuropeana.ro and the Bucharest-Ilfov Regional Development Agency. The event enjoyed the participation of numerous students, alongside their teachers, from Bucharest and Ilfov schools and high schools.

Taking into account the main objectives of the Europe Direct Bucharest Information Centre and the EIR, namely to stimulate an active citizenship and to promote the spirit and the European values in the Bucharest-Ilfov community, many European thematic activities were organized. The artistic creation contest “My Europe...how I see Europe”, saw a confrontation between School nr. 194 and School nr. 47 and between “Sf. Pantelimon” Technological High School and Media Technical College, and the contest “What do you know about the European Union?” included general questions about the EU addressed to all the members of the audience. Also, School nr.1, Happy Children Academy Voluntari, “Octav Onicescu” National College Bucharest and “Ioan Petrus” Highschool Otopeni gave a dancing, singing and poetry performance. The students and teachers who participated in the event received diplomas and small gifts for their involvement.



In the context of a particularly important year for the construction of the European Union, dedicated to the citizens and the European elections, which will take place on 25 May, through this event, the Europe Direct Bucharest Information Centre brought the European information closer to the citizens making available for the public many information leaflets and brochures on the EU institutions, EU policies, the rights and freedoms of European citizens and the European elections to be held this year.

Photographs from the event and additional information can be accessed at: <http://europedirectbucuresti.ier.ro/evenimente/9-ne-place-europa/>.

Diana Filip

Promo

A Guide to Assist Romanian Public Officials

At the 1178th meeting, the Ministers' Deputies of the member states of the Council of Europe adopted, on 13 September 2013, a **Toolkit to inform public officials about the State's obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights**.

This Toolkit will be enforced by Romania, a member of the Council of Europe since 7 October 1993 and it is aimed mainly to officials in the justice system, to those responsible for law enforcement as well as to prison system officials. This Toolkit is not designed for practitioners in the legal system such as judges, lawyers or high representatives of the State; it is rather addressed to “any official who interacts with the public in ways which raise potential issues of Convention rights”.¹

This document is structured in three parts, the first providing information about the rights listed by the Convention and its Protocols and the positive or negative obligations that the States are bound to in order to avoid possible violations of the Convention. Thus, Part I represents a guide useful to the officials for understanding the concepts introduced by the Convention such as the right to life, the prohibition of torture and inhuman and degrading treatment, the prohibition of slavery, the right to liberty and security, the right to a fair trial or the freedom of expression.

Part II of the Toolkit contains technical aspects, checklists and a flowchart to help the officials decide if a certain situation falls under the scope of the Convention. Part III includes texts of the Convention and its Protocols.

This text has been translated into Romanian by the European Institute of Romania and it can be found on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs² website and the European Institute of Romania website³.

Daniela Rădulescu

¹ <https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?id=2103595&Site=COE>

² http://www.mae.ro/sites/default/files/file/2014/agent_guvernamental/2014-03-18_set_de_instrumente_pentru_informarea_functionarilor_publici.pdf

³ http://www.ier.ro/webfm_send/121314

Romanian Journal of European Affairs

A publication with a focus on the European Union debate



The European Institute of Romania would like to invite contributors interested in European affairs to submit articles for evaluation and publication in the **Romanian Journal of European Affairs**, a journal indexed in various international databases (ProQuest, EBSCO, SCOPUS, Index Copernicus, DOAJ, HeinOnline, Cabell's Directory etc.).

Romanian Journal of European Affairs (RJEa) is a quarterly publication that covers a wide range of topics, from top issues in EU (economic and monetary affairs, energy, migration, security, neighbourhood policy etc.) to the impact of the European integration process on the member states (with a particular focus on Romania), as well as EU's relations with other global actors.

Guidelines for authors:

Articles (written in **English** or **French**) should be between **4,000 and 8,000 words**, followed by a **200-word abstract** in English, a very brief autobiographical note, keywords and JEL classification (if applicable). Book reviews should be no longer than **2,000 words**.

Articles will be submitted in Microsoft Office Word format, Times New Roman 12, line spacing 1.5 and will be sent to the address rjea@ier.ro mentioning "For RJEa". Oxford citation system is highly recommended.

Please send your contribution by 1 August 2014 or 1 October 2014.

The submission of an article implies commitment from the author to comply with the copyright policy of the Romanian Journal of European Affairs. The **Copyright Agreement** is available online.

More details can be found here: <http://rjea.ier.ro/en/page/guidelines-authors>

Selection of articles:

Each article received for publication enters a selection procedure before being accepted or rejected. All articles under analysis are made anonymous and handed over to two referees whose reports will provide the basis for acceptance or rejection.

Within the evaluation procedure, there are several factors, both quantitative and qualitative, that are taken into consideration. The main selection criteria are: scientific excellence, originality, novelty and potential interest for the journal's audience.

The editors reserve the right to ask for changes, both in form and content, to decide upon publication, to edit the articles or to modify/eliminate some fragments, observing the original sense.

For more general information on the journal and the previous issues, please visit: <http://rjea.ier.ro>

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