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ANNA UMIŃSKA-WORONIECKA
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CULTURAL PROGRAMME OF THE POLISH PRESIDENCY: STRATEGY AND REALITY

The cultural programme constitutes an integral part of each and every Presidency of the Council of the European Union. Drawing on experiences of other Member States, it follows that the cultural programme presented by the presiding state is often perceived as "the flagship of the state, and is often considered to be a means of promoting the country both in the European Union and in the world".[1] Moreover, it plays a crucial role in shaping the image of the presiding state.[2] The Cultural Programme of the Polish Presidency was to a large extent a promotional and image-enhancing tool integrated with Poland's public and cultural diplomacy.[3]

"Using the Presidency" to carry out an image-enhancing campaign was strongly underlined during the preparations for the Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union. At a meeting of the Sejm [Parliamentary] Committee, Government Plenipotentiary for the Polish Presidency in the EU, Secretary of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Mikołaj Dowgielewicz emphasised that: "the Polish Presidency is the greatest campaign promoting Poland since 1989". Events presenting Polish culture, politics and objectives of Polish foreign policy were organised by 159 Polish diplomatic and consular outposts worldwide, including 21 Polish Institutes.[4] The Ministry of Foreign Affairs was very active and other Polish ministries also underlined that the Presidency was first of all a political project, an unprecedented opportunity to promote Poland and Polish culture beyond its borders. For this reason the Cultural Programme was judged very important. The approach was that it "is not some additional element of preparations and then of the Polish Presidency of

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[1] *Strategiczne założenia programu kulturalnego polskiej prezydencji w drugiej połowie 2011 roku*, Warsaw 2009, p. 2.

[2] M. Zuber (2010), *Rola Prezydencji Rady Unii Europejskiej*, Warsaw, p. 41; K. A. Wojtaszczyk, *Prezydencja w Radzie Unii Europejskiej z perspektywy Traktatu Lizbońskiego*, in: K. A. Wojtaszczyk (ed.) (2010), *Prezydencja w Radzie Unii Europejskiej*, Warsaw, p. 14.

[3] B. Ociepka, *Akcja czy reakcja? Dyplomacja publiczna i kulturalna w Europie*, "Res Publica Nowa" 15.12.2011, http://wszechnica.org.pl/?p=11&id–content=589&id–keyword=120. Accessed 12.01.2012.

[4] Joint meeting of the Commission for the European Union and the Commission for Culture and Media held on 31 March 2011 – information on the Cultural Programme of the Polish Presidency, its promotion in Poland and abroad, and visual identification.

the Council of the European Union, but its integral element complementing political activities that are and will be undertaken".[5]

It is no surprise that the Cultural Programme was part of Polish public and cultural diplomacy. Putting aside the multiplicity of meanings of public and cultural diplomacy[6], one of its basic objectives is to build a positive attitude toward a country and its policies.[7] In order to create positive attitudes among the very broadly understood foreign addressees (this group encompasses governments, political decision-makers and non-governmental bodies: organisations, the media, corporations and even individuals), it is necessary to develop a network serving long-term cooperation. Culture, in its broad sense, is a means serving that purpose.[8]

Assuming that a presentation of the cultural heritage is an effective instrument of modern public and cultural diplomacy, the Cultural Programme of the Polish Presidency played an indisputably important role in the promotion of Poland abroad and in shaping its positive image.[9] Culture is also an instrument impacting its native audience. Therefore events organised in Poland were an important component of the Presidency's Cultural Programme.

OBJECTIVES OF THE CULTURAL PROGRAMME OF THE POLISH PRESIDENCY

All cultural events that took place during the Presidency were organised under the document titled *The Strategic Priorities of the Cultural Programme of the Polish Presidency in the Second Half of 2011* adopted by the Polish government at the meeting of the European Committee of the Council of Ministers on 28 September 2009. The document, drafted by the Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, contained the goals and priorities of the Programme, types of projects, and the division of tasks between particular entities. Under this document, the Cultural Programme of the Polish Presidency was to strengthen Poland's image as a dynamic modern state with its own traditions and history. It was to serve Poland's promotion in the

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[5] M. Smoleń, Undersecretary of State at the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, joint meeting of the Commission for the European Union and the Commission for Culture and Media held on 31 March 2011 – information on the cultural programme of the Polish Presidency, its promotion in Poland and abroad, and visual identification, shorthand report.

[6] B. Ociepka, *Public Diplomacy* (encyclopaedia entry), in: W. Donsbach (ed.) (2008), *The International Encyclopedia of Communication*, Blackwell Publishing Ltd., Malden-Oxford-Carlton, vol. 9, pp. 3956-3960. B. Ociepka (2008), *Dyplomacja publiczna jako forma komunikowania międzynarodowego*, in: *Dyplomacja publiczna*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, Wrocław, pp. 11-12. M. Leonard, C. Stead, C. Smewing (2002), *Public Diplomacy*, Foreign Policy Centre, London, pp. 7-11.

[7] *Cf.* J. Nye (2007), *Soft Power, jak osiągnąć sukces w polityce światowej*, Warsaw, pp. 146-148; J. Melissen (2005), *Wielding Soft Power: The new public diplomacy*, Clingendael.

[8] B. Zdrojewski, *Podsumowanie Prezydencji w kulturze*, 2 January 2012.

[9] P. Potoroczyn (Director of the Adam Mickiewicz Institute) in an interview for the Polish Radio said that "Culture is a product, and as such it is subject to trading and exchange. And still, it elicits emotions." http://www.polskieradio.pl/8/402/Artykul/339108,Chca-sprzedac-polska-kulture. Accessed 02.04.2011.

EU, promote Poland and the EU on a global level (Poland as an EU ambassador) and promote the EU in Poland.[10] One ought to underline that the Programme was to be closely related to the priorities of Polish foreign policy and their implementation.[11]

The above is a clear indication that the Polish government, the patron of cultural events and projects, tried to achieve particular political goals. The necessity to correlate the Cultural Programme with the priorities of the Presidency was emphasised at the very early stage of preparations to EU leadership, i.e. already in 2008. At the time, it was underlined that

> The Cultural Programme of the Presidency should correspond to the priorities of the Presidency and focus on the main motto of the Presidency. The events do not have to be numerous. What is important is that their quality will make them the flagship of the Polish Presidency.[12]

The need to integrate the Cultural Programme with Poland's long-term promotion strategy in general, including economy and tourism promotion objectives, was pointed out in the abovementioned *Strategic Priorities of the Cultural Programme of the Polish Presidency in the Second Half of 2011*. In the opinion of their authors, the Cultural Programme was be treated as an element of Poland's general strategy, and thus its own cohesiveness was not the objective.[13] Cooperation was another key assumption in line with which the Cultural Programme was to be designed. This referred to "emphasising the promotion of Polish culture through projects realised in cooperation with artists and artistic/culture organisations from other EU Member States and non-EU countries".[14]

It was the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs which coordinated all the events organised during the Polish Presidency. This Ministry was also responsible for choosing 10 capital cities where the Polish foreign cultural programme would be presented.[15] As a result, five EU capitals were chosen: Berlin, Brussels, London, Madrid,

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[10] *Strategic Priorities of the Cultural Programme...*, p. 2.

[11] In the *exposé* presented to the Sejm on 13 February 2009, Minister of Foreign Affairs Radosław Sikorski, among the four priorities of Poland's foreign policy, mentioned public diplomacy. This term embraces the broadly understood promotion of Poland and activities aimed at persuading foreign public opinion to recognise Poland's point of view and the Polish understanding of international issues. Response of Secretary of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Jan Borkowski, upon authorisation of the Minister, to interpellation no. 9511 on the activity of Polish Cultural Institutes in Europe and in the world, 3 June 2009.

[12] Document of the Department of Coordination of Preparations for the Presidency of the Council of the European Union, Office for the Committee on European Integration, Warsaw 2008.

[13] Such postulates might seem slightly "over the top", as both in documents issued by state institutions and academic publications attention is drawn to the lack of a long-term strategy of the state in the area of promoting Poland abroad (in the area of culture, tourism, economy, etc.) that would be adopted by all ministries and coordinated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

[14] *Strategic Priorities of the Cultural Programme...*

[15] Initially, the following cities were listed: Brussels, Paris, Berlin, London, Rome, Madrid, Beijing, Tokyo, Moscow, New Delhi, Washington, Seoul and Ankara.

Paris, and 5 non-EU capitals: Kiev, Minsk, Moscow, Beijing and Tokyo. They were selected owing to their relevance to Polish economy and/or Poland's political interests.[16]

Under an agreement reached among Polish Ministries, the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage (MCNH) was the coordinator of the Cultural Programme abroad and in Poland. That Ministry was responsible for the implementation of a twofold task: coordination of National and Foreign Cultural Programme of the Polish Presidency and organisation of events in the area of culture, audiovisual affairs and copyright.[17] The Minister of Culture delegated some of his competences to two subordinate agencies. Under the Minister's decision of 9 August 2009, the programme and coordination of cultural events in Poland were carried out on behalf of the MCNH by the National Audiovisual Institute (NInA). The coordination of the tasks connected with the preparation of and carrying out the Foreign Cultural Programme was delegated to the Adam Mickiewicz Institute (AMI). Both entities were obliged to prepare the programme of cultural events and projects accompanying the Polish Presidency.

Of course, other national and foreign institutions were also directly involved in the realisation of the Cultural Programme. In the case of its national part, it is worth mentioning that the programme was co-designed and implemented by local governments of major Polish cities (e.g. Lublin, Cracow, Warsaw and Wrocław), regions, and non-governmental bodies and cultural institutions. In addition to events endorsed by the Polish and European cultural institutions, "niche" artists also put forward their proposals.[18] Volunteers also played an important role in the organisation of events and meetings.[19]

The foreign programme was organised in cooperation with Polish diplomatic and consular outposts, mainly Polish Institutes (in Brussels, London, Madrid, Minsk, Moscow, Berlin, Kiev) and Embassies (particularly cultural counsellors and attachés of Polish embassies, e.g. in Beijing and Tokyo). Most events were prepared in cooperation with foreign partners, mainly with institutions that are part of the established cultural infrastructure in their countries, which was undoubtedly in line with the more general concept of using the instruments and tools of Polish public and cultural diplomacy. Polish projects were presented in places recognised and appreciated in their respective countries, for instance at BOZAR (Brussels), Royal Festival Hall, Whitechapel Gallery, Barbican (London), Palacio Real, Teatro Real (Madrid), Pid Inn Club, Ahashi Concert Hall (Tokyo), Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing

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[16] M. Smoleń, *op. cit*.

[17] Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union, The Double Task of the MCNH, http://www. mkidn.gov.pl/pages/pl2011/pl/gora/prezydencja.php. Accessed 24.09.2011.

[18] Press release, Attention Culture!, National Cultural Programme of the Polish Presidency, Warsaw, 2 January 2012, pp. 3-14, http://www.nina.gov.pl/docs/zam%C3%B3wienia-publiczne/kpk-pp-2011- podsumowanie---informacja-prasowa.pdf.

[19] More than 550 volunteers were involved in the organisation of the European Culture Congress in Wrocław.

(Beijing), National Philharmonics (Kiev, Minsk), The Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts, the Meyerhold Centre (Moscow). In accordance with the objectives of public diplomacy, some projects were presented in public spaces in central locations in the abovementioned cities, and even in the underground railway facilities, thanks to which wide and numerous audience was reached. The cooperation networks established with local partners might prove useful in the future.

Both institutions: NInA and IAM, when planning the cultural setting of the Polish Presidency, proposed ideas and catchphrases that inspired the implemented series of cultural events. The main message of the 2011 National Cultural Programme of the Polish Presidency was expressed in its motto "Art for Social Change". This motto was to express the conviction that nowadays culture is an integral part of social processes and an important element of every-day life. In the opinion of the authors of the programme "Participation in culture notably influences the establishment of interpersonal relations by providing a sense of identity and belonging both at the local, national and international levels". The Programme was to encourage its recipients and artists to adopt an approach that increases artistic and social awareness and critically reflects on culture and civilisation.

The motto of the foreign programme was different and read "I, Culture", which in the opinion of the AMI director underlined that each and every individual plays an important role as each of us creates, experiences, and questions culture, and thus we all create culture and participate in it: "There is no 'I' without culture. 'I' without culture makes no sense".[20] This sort of "promoting the state through culture" was to create an image of Poland as "a creative hub of Europe".[21]

COMPONENTS OF THE CULTURAL PROGRAMME OF THE POLISH PRESIDENCY

As part of the Cultural Programme of the Polish Presidency held from 30 June to 31 December 2011, 1,400 events were delivered: 1,000 in Poland and 400 abroad. Such a high number of events organised might provoke questioning their quality and purposefulness. Another question to be asked is whether it is possible to evaluate such a large-scale undertaking. Finally, it is important to consider if such an eventful programme did not overshadow the Presidency's strategic goals, especially in the face of the fast changing circumstances on the international arena (mainly the economic crisis and the "Arab Spring" events). In press releases issued by both agencies

[20] I, Culture, Made in the EU, Powered by Poland, http://www.culture.pl. Accessed 29.01.2012.

[21] The AMI Director presented his point of view on the opportunity of "using culture" to promote Poland at the first Culture Congress held in Cracow. At the time, he indicated that "nowadays, cultural promotion is an especially important element shaping international economic and political relations. The role of culture in the overall exchange of goods and values of civilisation is on an increase and is *per saldo* one of the economically cheapest and most effective means of such an exchange". *Raport: Od wymiany kulturalnej do nowej inteligentnej siły, Promocja Polski przez kulturę*, ed. P. Potoroczyn (2009), *Raport o promocji kultury polskiej za granicą*, Polish Culture Congress, Cracow, p. 4.

coordinating the Cultural Programme it was underlined that the programme was "the greatest all-encompassing cultural campaign in history" and "the largest programme promoting Polish culture abroad delivered by the Adam Mickiewicz Institute".

To compare, throughout the period of the Czech Presidency, from 1 January to 30 June 2009, over 600 cultural events were organised (450 abroad including 60 events which were organised in Brussels), though officially their number was 300.[22]

Both NInA and AMI specified "types" of flagship projects which those institutions were to coordinate and organise.[23] Owing to the multitude of events, selecting the most important "types" seems to be a reasonable solution.

The following three groups of projects constituted the national programme of the Polish Presidency:

- "special projects" initiated by NInA in cities that hosted high-level meetings, i.e. in Sopot, Wrocław, Cracow, Poznań and Warsaw, and additionally in localities engaged in the Eastern Partnership Programme, i.e. Lublin, Białystok, Katowice and Krasnogruda;
- "projects recommended by the Programme Council for the Cultural Setting of the Polish Presidency of the EU Council" organised by national culture institutions and selected institutions co-managed by the Ministry of Culture (museums, theatres, opera houses and other institutions);
- and the most important "regular events and festivals" held in Warsaw, Cracow, Wrocław, Poznań, Katowice and the Tricity (Gdańsk-Sopot-Gdynia).[24]

The Programme was not limited to a provision of artistic settings for political meetings. In most cases, instead of organising concerts for political decision-makers only, the Polish Presidency decided to cooperate with NGOs and local institutions. The scale of this cooperation was the largest ever.

Among most important events organised by NInA were: the open air concert inaugurating the Presidency at the Parade Square [Plac Defilad] in Warsaw and meetings dedicated to the works of Czesław Miłosz (among others the European Agora in Krasnogruda). The latter project was initiated by the Borderland Foundation and the Centre "Borderland – of arts, culture, nations" and implemented under the patronage of UNESCO. It took place on the 100th anniversary of Miłosz's birth, on 30 June 2011. During the European Agora, the International Dialogue Centre was launched. This is to be a facility oriented at the establishment and deepening of intercultural

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[22] M. Czyżniewski, *Czeskie przewodnictwo w Radzie Unii Europejskiej*, "Analizy Natolińskie" no. 1 (43) 2010, pp. 10-12.

[23] *Cf*. A. Umińska Woroniecka (2011), *Program Kulturalny Polskiej Prezydencji* (*w kontekście Europejskiego Kongresu Kultury we Wrocławiu*), in: A. Zeidler-Janiszewska (ed.), "Kultura Współczesna. Teorie. Interpretacje. Praktyka" special edition no. 5 (2011), pp. 189.

[24] http://http://www.nina.gov.pl/docs/prezydencjabiuroprasoweplikidopobrania/krajowy-program-kulturalny-polskiej-prezydencji-2011.pdf.

dialogue.[25] Other NInA flagship projects included the European Culture Congress[26] in Wrocław and a series of events in Lublin that were aimed mainly at promoting the Eastern Partnership.

The national programme included festivals and concerts held regularly in Poland, among others the Gdańsk Shakespeare Festival, the Cracow Sacrum Profanum Festival and international festivals of contemporary music: Warsaw Autumn, Jazz Jamboree, and Wratislavia Cantans.[27] The "blessing of the Presidency" turned out to be very helpful for many organisers, as in the period of savings and financial cuts it averted the threat of budget reduction or discontinuation of the festivals.

The Foreign Cultural Programme also included leading projects called the six pillars of the Programme. On 5 January 2010, the Programme Council for the Cultural Setting of the Polish Presidency of the EU Council approved the six pillars of the Foreign Cultural Programme of the Polish Presidency prepared by AMI. Most of those projects were carried out in all ten capital cities chosen and as such they were a regular component of the foreign programme. They included presentations of the works of Stanisław Lem, Czesław Miłosz and Karol Szymanowski. The avant-garde open air theatrical performance titled "Planet Lem" produced and staged by Teatr Biuro Podróży was presented in seven capitals. As the year 2011 marked the 100th anniversary of Czesław Miłosz's birth, the programme included events during which his works were presented. On the occasion of the Presidency, the Czesław Miłosz Audiobook was produced. Outstanding personalities of film and theatre from various countries recited Miłosz's poems in over ten languages. "King Roger" opera by Karol Szymanowski, directed by David Pountney, inaugurated the Polish Presidency in Warsaw on 1 July 2011. This opera was also performed in prestigious concert halls around the world, among others at La Monnaie in Brussels, the Berliner Philharmonie, the Moscow Philharmonic, Theatre de Chatelet and the Kiev Opera at the closing of the Presidency.

The *I, CULTURE Orchestra* project was especially successful. This AMI project gathered young musicians from Eastern Partnership states: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Poland and Ukraine. Conducted by Sir Neville Marriner and Paweł Kotla, the orchestra gave concerts in recognised European venues, among

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[25] A. Warywoda, *W przeddzień inauguracji – Europejska Agora w Krasnogrudzie*, http//www.uniaeuropejska.org. Accessed 16.01.2012.

[26] The events that were classed as priority events were also awarded appropriate funds for their organisation. To give an example, the cost of the concert organised in Warsaw on 30 June amounted to approx. PLN 10 million, and the European Culture Congress held in Wrocław to approx. PLN 13 million.

[27] As one of the commentators noted: "The vast majority, however, was not prepared with a view to be held during the Polish Presidency. Though almost 60 festivals, as well as a high number of exhibitions, concerts and theatre performances, were entered onto the Institute's list, a vast majority of these events would have been held anyway. The Poznań Malta Festival, the Polish Music Festival in Cracow, the Warsaw Film Festival or the Gdańsk Shakespeare Festival have been organised for years." J. Marczyński, *Atrakcyjne prezenty dla świata*, "Rzeczpospolita" 2.01.2012.

others at the Berliner Philharmonie, the Royal Festival Hall[28] in London and the Teatro Real in Madrid. Most importantly, the project has not been closed and the young musicians are scheduled to play in Lublin, Warsaw, Minsk, Kiev, Chisinau, Yerevan, Tbilisi and Baku. In this case, one can speak of a successful marriage of culture and the political priorities of the Presidency.

The remaining two pillars of the programme were the *I, CULTURE Puzzle*[29] and *A Guide to the Poles*.[30]

Both NInA and AMI stressed the important role non-governmental organisations and institutions played. In this case, solutions tried and tested by previous Presidencies e.g. the French and Slovakian Presidencies, were employed.[31] Already at the preparatory stage, recommendations on how to support projects of Polish NGOs that promote Poland and its culture abroad were drafted. They included pointing out that the Polish administration should be ready to cooperate with non-governmental organisations, that online communication tools should be used, and that new financial solutions should be adopted to support NGOs. The latter boiled down to allocation of funds via competitions and grants.[32] As a result, 106 non-governmental organisations and institutions won subsidies in a competition organised by AMI. The funds were allocated to projects and events chosen to be part of the Foreign Cultural Programme. Funds allocated to selected entities in the "Promesa" competition alone amounted to PLN 19,993,993.[33]

As many as one fourth of 400 cultural events abroad were held in Ukraine. This means that the Ukrainian audience was considered to be the priority addressees of Polish cultural diplomacy. The multitude and diversity of the events, as well as the idea to organise the concert concluding the Polish Presidency in Ukraine underlined the important position of Ukraine in Polish foreign policy. In compliance with the document drafted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs titled "Directions for promoting Poland until 2015", Ukraine is indeed a priority in Poland's promotion at large. The

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[28] Positive reviews of this event were published in "The Times" and "The Guardian".

[29] The multimedia I, CULUTRE Puzzle project carried out in public space in Berlin, Brussels, Kiev, Copenhagen, London, Madrid, Minsk, Moscow, Paris, Beijing, Tokyo and Warsaw was to unite its participants. Citizens of world capitals were invited to participate in happenings during which they created puzzle elements from fabric.

[30] The series of documentary films was designed to show "the modern Polish society in an interesting and at the same time surprising way." Poland's most recent history was presented through rock music, fashion, games and toys, Himalayan expeditions" L. Stomma, *Polaków seks wyjątkowy*, "Polityka" no. 7 (2794), 12.02.2011.

[31] *The Polish Presidency of the EU Council: cooperation between public administration and the non-governmental sector*, Expertise of the Institute of Public Affairs commissioned by the Office of the European Integration Committee, Warsaw 2008, p. 107.

[32] *Ibid.*, p. 109.

[33] Programme: 2011 Polish Presidency, Promesa, accepted applications, generally the allocated funds ranged from PLN 100,000 to PLN 200,000, though some projects received more funding, e.g., poems in the underground received PLN 1 million. http://www.iam.pl/public/files/Wnioski%20rozpatrzone%20pozytywnie.pdf. Accessed 27.02.2012.

deepening of Ukraine's integration with the EU might "make Ukraine even higher a priority for Poland. It is especially important [...] to focus on the image of modern Poland and our – to a large extent shared – history."[34] In a long-term perspective, it is necessary to undertake activities aimed at supporting the promotion of Ukraine in the European Community, on condition that Ukraine meets numerous criteria.[35] The network of Polish-Ukrainian relationships, already often of non-governmental nature, stands a chance to grow also thanks to the sports events organised jointly by the two states.

It is worth emphasising that in addition to the ten selected world capitals covered by the Foreign Cultural Programme of the Polish Presidency, many cultural events were organised elsewhere by Polish outposts subordinate to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Polish Institutes and cultural counsellors and attachés at Polish Embassies all over the world. Generally speaking, all their activities promoted the Polish Presidency starting from 1 July 2011. In their case, their promotion of Poland through culture was not temporary and was not limited to the Polish Presidency, as public and cultural diplomacy is a regular task of Polish outpost.[36]

The cultural setting of the Polish Presidency turned out to be a project of an unprecedented scale. Institutions responsible for the coordination of the culture promotion programme prepared a wide range of events that catered for Foreign and Polish audiences of varied artistic tastes. Also in terms of organisation and logistics, the Cultural Programme of the Polish Presidency has been on the whole evaluated positively.[37] The decision to entrust the coordination of the programme to government agencies (NInA and AMI) and the realisation of its specific elements to cultural institutions and non-governmental organisations in cooperation with local governments proved to be right.

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE CULTURAL PROGRAMME OF THE POLISH PRESIDENCY OF THE EU COUNCIL

Before an assessment of the Cultural Programme of the Polish Presidency is offered, some introductory remarks are in place. Evaluations of the Cultural Programme were mostly delivered by institutions responsible for the programme coordination and are full of quantitative data. About the national programme one can read that 1,000 projects were realised, that events were held on 184 days and that

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[34] *Kierunki promocji Polski do 2015 roku*, Council for the Promotion of Poland, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Warsaw 2010, p. 88.

[35] *Ibid.*, p. 89.

[36] *Cf.* A. Umińska-Woroniecka, *Od promocji stosunków kulturalnych i naukowych do dyplomacji kulturalnej w działaniach polskiej służby zagranicznej*, "Polski Przegląd Dyplomatyczny" no. 5-6 (57-58), September-December 2010, pp. 51-56.

[37] Ł. Bukowiecki, *Taki wspaniały sukces*, "Res Publica Nowa" http://publica.pl/teksty/taki-wspanialy-sukces. Accessed 6.01.2012.

170 partner entities were involved. The implementation of the foreign programme was presented in a similar manner and included more figures: 10 capital cities, 400 events, 19 million recipients. During the Presidency, the European, Chinese and Japanese media informed about Polish cultural events more than 7,500 times. The culture.pl portal was visited by just under a million people from all over the world.[38] The quantitative data, however, does not give a full picture of the Presidency's Cultural Programme. Thus it is necessary to perform also a qualitative analysis of the Programme, and first and foremost to find whether it fulfilled its general and componential tasks. Difficulties that arise in the course of such evaluations may result from the lack of appropriate instruments and tools that enable an impartial qualitative assessment. To provide an example, an event targeted at a narrow group of recipients, e.g. professionals who have an impact on opinion formation (journalists, researchers, artists) might bring about better results in achieving political goals than projects aimed at a broader audience. Moreover, the assessment of concerts, theatrical performances and similar cultural events might elicit varied subjective opinions which often follow from personal preferences. The inauguration of the Presidency, i.e. the concerts held in Warsaw on 1 July 2011, is a good example. Some opinions were full of appreciation and recognition of the event[39], but there were also negative remarks suggesting the artistic value of the event was low.[40] When summing up the Polish Presidency in terms of the implemented Cultural Programme, one ought to take into account that many results and consequences (both positive and negative), might become visible in the coming months, or even years. In the final assessment of the Presidency's "cultural charge", one should take into consideration not only the sum-ups drafted by the organisers, which present the Programme as highly successful, but also opinions of milieus that form public opinion (the media, academics and artists).

The presented assessment of the Cultural Programme is not comprehensive. I agree with the opinion of Marcin Bogucki that "partial assessments – of particular projects and events of the programme – will provide a better evaluation of the six-month cultural programme than reports full of quantitative data"[41], therefore I will present assessments of individual projects that were part of the Cultural Programme of the Polish Presidency.

The National Cultural Programme included 1,000 events and was a project difficult to execute for reasons of its "size". The ambitious motto of this Programme: "Art for Social Change" was to encourage recipients and creators of art to discuss culture, reflect on its condition and undertake a creative activity. It was also aimed at

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[38] Press release, sum-up of the Presidency in culture, 2 January 2012, Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, http://www.mkidn.gov.pl/media/docs/20120102-inf–prasowa.pdf. Accessed 24.02.2011.

[39] J. Cieślak, *Pałac kultury odleciał*, "Rzeczpospolita". Wydarzenia, 02.07.2011.

[40] R. Pawłowski, *Kulturalna Prezydencja. Pierwsza taka ofensywa*, "Gazeta Wyborcza" 02.01.2012.

[41] M. Bogucki, *Szymanowski i Mykietin, Dwa oblicza programu kulturalnego polskiej prezydencji*, "Mała Kultura Współczesna" 26.01.2012.

increasing the society's participation in culture. In the opinion of Michał Merczyński, Director of NInA, this was achieved without much difficulty.[42] First and foremost, the Presidency succeeded in implementing the postulate of social involvement in culture, mainly by encouraging citizens to participate in the programme prepared by non-governmental organisations. A major achievement of the Presidency was making the public aware of the Eastern Partnership.[43]

The idea to structure the programme to impact various groups of recipients, both connoisseurs of classical music and audiences with less refined expectations, may be deem a success. An assessment of the organisation of the whole National Cultural Programme has been positive. A vast majority of projects were smoothly executed, well-organised and well-received. It is, however, understandable, that during such a large-scale project there were some failures (the Gesture campaign[44] or the pavilion of a Dutch artist in Warsaw).[45]

It is difficult to assess whether the general objectives of the Cultural Programme have been fully implemented that is to what extent the Presidency managed to involve an "average citizen" in the discussion on culture and whether the programme embodied its motto "Art for Social Change". Opinions are divided because as expected only popular culture events attracted large audiences[46], which was not the intention of the designers of the Programme.

From the point of view of a participant, complaints about the "insufficient integration" of the European Culture Congress (ECC), the most important event of the cultural setting of the Polish Presidency organised in Wrocław on 8-11 September 2011, "with the local community" might be justified.[47] It must, however, be clearly stated that the idea to bring together artists, academics, cultural institutions and

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[42] M. Merczyński, *Akcja czy reakcja? Dyplomacja publiczna i kulturalna w Europie*, "Res Publica Nowa" 15 December 2011, http:__wszechnica.org.pl_?p_11&id–content_589&id–keyword_120. Accessed 12.01.2012.

[43] B. Marcinik in conversation with Paweł Potoroczyn, Michał Merczyński, Olga Wysocka, *Trójka pod księżycem, Podsumowanie roku 2011 w kulturze*. (http://www.polskieradio.pl/Player).

[44] *Kity polskiej prezydencji, Akcja Gest*, "This was to be a social campaign that integrated Poles around the Presidency Programme. Similar to the "Light to Heaven" event organised by the Great Orchestra of Christmas Charity, during which people were encouraged to light candles and place them on their window sills. It turned out that this Gesture event consisted in putting on a paper mask of a Mr. Roman, the main character of a TV spot who visits an exhibition of modern art and returns home with a face resembling a work of Pablo Picasso."

[45] The project of Olafur Eliasson won the closed competition announced by the National Audiovisual Institute at the end of 2010. The Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw was a partner in the project. More on failures: Ł. Bukowiecki, *Taki wspaniały sukces*, "Res Publica Nova" http://publica.pl/teksty/taki-wspanialy-sukces. Accesssed 6.01.2012.

[46] M. Ostrowski, *Między wzniosłością a miernotą*, "Polityka" http://www.polityka.pl/kraj/opinie/1517406,1,inauguracja-polskiej-prezydencji-w-ue.read. Accessed 6.01.2012.

[47] Ł. Bukowiecki, *Dwie panoramy, obok Europejskiego Kongresu Kultury oraz Prezydencji*, "Mała Kultura Współczesna" 22.09.2011. The critical analysis of this project, performed mainly by culture experts, was presented in the special edition of "Kultura Współczesna".

non-governmental organisations from Poland and Europe, often representing various views on culture and its place in modern society, was much needed. The invitation of European and Polish experts, the artistic programme which accompanied the talks, and lively discussions concerning the Congress organisation[48] as well as its agenda made the ECC a success of the Polish Presidency, even though there were some flaws.

The organisation of festivals and events in Lublin and Białystok to promote the Eastern Partnership should be recognised as a success of the National Cultural Programme. In this case, the Presidency succeeded in making the Cultural Programme fit the strategic aims of the Presidency and Poland's general foreign policy. A high turnout at the exhibition "Journey to the East" held in Białystok might be indicative of Poles' increasing cultural awareness.

The meetings dedicated to the works of Czesław Miłosz also deserve praise, similarly as the establishment of the International Dialogue Centre which is likely to carry on its activities.

The unprecedented cooperation between culture institutions, NGOs and Polish administration in promoting Polish culture was undoubtedly a success of the whole programme. The formula of allocating grants for the execution of chosen projects turned out to be most appropriate and effective. In this case, it resulted in the establishment of long-term relations based on trust between the public sphere and the third sector.

It is, however, difficult to state whether the "size" of the National Cultural Programme ensured realisation of its announced objectives.[49] The multitude of mottoes, ideas and tasks as well as the high number of projects and events might have led to difficulties in getting its main message. Another negative feature was the omission of the educational factor at the preparatory stage of the Presidency. Promotional spots broadcast in the mass media could not make up for this omission. As a result, one might have an impression that the idea of the National Cultural Programme was not transparent to many people.

The concentration of cultural events in a six-month time span might have negative consequences, as it will be difficult to find an equally strong stimulus as the Presidency to increase the participation of artists and recipients in the discourse on involvement in culture in its broad sense. That is why it is so important that at least some of the projects launched during the Presidency are continued.

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[48] The problems with installations in the courtyard in front of the Centennial Hall in Wrocław were especially visible. They were considered to be unprecedented "artistic events" that proved impossible to present to the Congress audience. *Niezidentyfikowany obiekt kulturalny, program Europejskiego Kongresu Kultury*, Wrocław 2011, p. 56.

[49] For the sole purpose of writing this article, a survey was carried out among 200 students of the Wrocław University. The study concerned the Cultural Programme of the Polish Presidency and demonstrated that only 14 respondents were aware of the programme, not to mention the events that it was comprised of (12.10.2011).

As part of the Foreign Cultural Programme of the Polish Presidency, the motto of which was *I, CULTURE*, 400 events were organised. They were to present Poland as a modern and unique country with a rich and creative modern culture – "a creative hub of Europe". The execution of the programme in 10 selected capital cities was a successful move as it helped reach those interested efficiently and avoid activity dispersion. A wide diversification of measures and moving away from previous, rather conventional[50] means of promoting Poland and its culture abroad as well as a vast cooperation platform were noticeable. On the one hand, the Presidency cooperated with well-known European cultural institutions that have their regular audiences. On the other hand, Poland cooperated with national artists by supporting their activity with grants. The developed system of tying Polish artists and cultural institutions with their counterparts in Europe and Asia may well bring about the implementation of defined objectives of Polish public diplomacy abroad.

According to Paweł Potorczyn, AMI Director, the success of the foreign programme resulted from the action plan adopted by AMI: "First, we searched for an intellectual frame of the programme design, for an idea or value that would become the axiological and emotional core of our narration, and only afterwards we developed the programme. And this worked. The cohesiveness of the message and its artistic and intellectual codes worked. Poland finally has a face, and it is one of its culture."[51] Just under 20 million recipients of events held in the 10 capital cities is to be a proof that the goal – Poland's promotion abroad by means of its culture – was achieved. Another attempt to evaluate the foreign programme employed media monitoring. Approximately 7,500 media releases were identified.[52]

The foreign programme attracted relatively much interest among its recipients, though maybe in different political and economic circumstances the response could be higher. One might ruminate on the adjustment of the programme to the needs of recipients and to the external situation in which Poland had to implement its Foreign Cultural Programme.

Summing up the Foreign Cultural Programme of the Polish Presidency, it is worth underlining that it was usually the exhibitions that attracted greatest interest of the media and recipients, thought they had not been considered to be key components of the Programme. The following exhibitions should be mentioned: "Side

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[50] B. Ociepka points to the abandonment of the previously used symbols, "wooden storks and folk paper-cuts", B. Ociepka, *Polska – Niemcy: narzędzia miękkiej siły w polityce zagranicznej*, "Przegląd Zachodni" no. 2 (2011), p. 53.

[51] Interview with Paweł Potoroczyn, *Polska ma kulturalne oblicze*, 26.12.2011, http://kulturaonline.pl/polska,ma,kulturalne,oblicze,wywiad,z,pawlem,potoroczynem,tytul,artykul,12536.html. Accessed 28.02.2012.

[52] The order of entries adopted by AMI is somewhat surprising: "a) Adam Mickiewicz Institute, b) Paweł Potoroczyn (Director of AMI, ed.), c) Polish Presidency – cultural events, d) 2011 Polish Presidency Promesa, e) www.culture.pl, f) I, Culture, g) Selection of mottoes for particular capitals", Public Procurement IAM ZP/85/2011 Monitoring of foreign media, announcement. 26.08.2011.

by Side. Poland-Germany. 1,000 Years of History in Art"[53] held at the Martin-Gropius-Bau in Berlin, "The Power of Fantasy. Modern and contemporary Polish Art" at the Bozar in Brussels and Wilhelm Sasnal's exhibition at the Whitechapel Gallery.[54] *I, CULTURE Orchestra* was the pillar project which was an outright success. Also the works of Czesław Miłosz reached foreign recipients thanks to their original presentation in the municipal spaces of the 10 capital cities.[55] AMI entrusted particular projects to non-governmental organisations and institutions, and funds for their execution were allocated in the form of grants and subsidies. This was another achievement of the Programme.[56]

In the case of the Foreign Cultural Programme it is also impossible to provide its comprehensive and final evaluation. One reason is the lack of instruments and tools necessary for performing a qualitative evaluation of the activities that were part of Poland's public and cultural diplomacy abroad. It is also difficult to state to what extent the image of Polish culture changed abroad and in what way Poland is perceived differently by societies and political elites in the countries covered by the Programme.[57]

Undoubtedly the whole project of the Foreign Cultural Programme of the Polish Presidency was thoroughly prepared and carefully implemented. This was mainly thanks to the people involved in its coordination and delivery.

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[53] It was symptomatic that the Polish press announced the success of the Foreign Cultural Programme. These opinions should be confronted with the views of Paulina Olszewska, journalist of "Obieg": "Although the Polish press, both popular and specialist, praised the *Tür an Tür* exhibition, the German press was distanced. Positive comments focused on underlining the importance of the exhibition in the continuous strengthening of the German-Polish partnership. Critical comments concerned much subjectivism in shaping the narrative and too explicit educational features". *Polskie wątki w Berlinie w 2011 roku*, "Obieg" 12.01.2012.

[54] M. Czeszejko-Sochacka, *Podsumowanie polskiej prezydencji*, "Gazeta Wyborcza" 5.01.2012.

[55] Poems of, *inter alia*, Czesław Miłosz, were presented in the undergrounds of all selected capital, but also on the fence of the Kiev University and... the Dynamo Kiev stadium. Interview with the Director of the Polish Institute in Kiev, Jarosław Godun, 10.01.2012.

[56] Not even one event escaped criticism. Roman Pawłowski believes that the *Polish ABC* project of a theatre from Toruń staged in Madrid, London, Kiev, Minsk, Moscow, Beijing and Tokyo was a failure.

[57] Also, owing to the lack of comprehensive research on the perception of Poland, its citizens, and their image among citizens of states or just capital cities where the Programme was implemented.

ABSTRACT

One of the elements of each Presidency of the EU Council is a cultural programme. The country which holds the Presidency can influence the foreign public and political decision-makers by presenting its cultural heritage and organising artistic events. Instruments of public and cultural diplomacy are helpful in shaping positive attitudes towards the country, its citizens and sometimes even its foreign policy. The cultural programme of the Polish Presidency comprised two elements: the national and the foreign one. Its objective was to promote Poland in Europe and the world, and the European Union in Poland. It was implemented with unprecedented energy and included 1,400 events and projects both in Poland and abroad.

The article attempts to sum up the cultural programme and its goals: both the overriding ones and the particular ones. A considerable difficulty in making a final assessment is the lack of instruments that would allow for a qualitative evaluation of the programme as well as its current and possible future effects and outcomes.