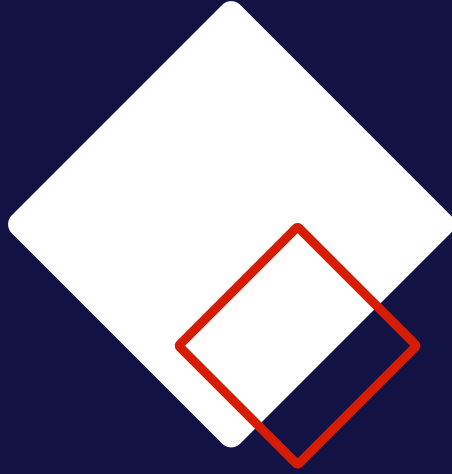
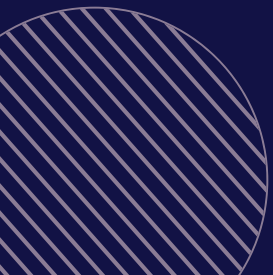


Poland's National Branding



In the context of the war in Ukraine





Building Poland's National Brand – Report

We initiated this project with the belief that a national brand is not only an abstract concept, but above all a real, dynamic collection of perceptions that directly influence the economic, cultural, political, and social position of the country in the world. This is particularly important in the context of globalization, digitization, and increasing international competition, where the national image can be both an asset and an obstacle to development.

In this report, we focused on various aspects of building a national brand – from cultural, through economic, to social and political. We analysed the roles of various entities in this process, including the government, businesses, non-governmental organizations, and individual citizens. We also tried to consider the international perspective, which allowed us to better understand how Poland can effectively compete and stand out on the global stage.

We hope that this report will not only be a source of knowledge but also an inspiration for further efforts to promote Poland in the world. We believe that building a strong, positive national brand is a task to which each of us can contribute – regardless of where we live and the role we play in society.





Introduction

In today's global environment, a state's position on the international stage encompasses much more than just hard power, economic size, or military potential. The global arena of competition is more complex, with nations seeking to shape their place in global consciousness through diverse and subtle mechanisms that go beyond traditional indicators of power. One of the key elements influencing a country's position is the building of a national brand (a brand of a country). This is a process in which states seek to create their unique identity and image, which will attract attention and sympathy both internally and beyond their borders. The national brand becomes an indispensable tool for influencing, managing reputation, and gaining support on multiple fronts.

Building a national brand is a complex and multidimensional endeavour that requires a strategic approach. It encompasses many aspects such as diplomacy, culture, tourism, economy, education, sports, or even humanitarian aid. It requires the involvement of numerous stakeholders, both at the national government level and local authorities, as well as businesses, social organizations, artists, scientists, and citizens. Everything must be coherently integrated and coordinated to create a comprehensive strategy for building the national brand. This requires harmonious cooperation of all involved parties and an approach based on a long-term vision and action plan. As the national brand becomes increasingly important in a global context, this process requires continuous improvement and adaptation to changing realities and challenges we face. This publication comprehensively analyses this issue.

The main goal of the report is to present the process of building a national brand and its significance in the context of contemporary global challenges, as well as to provide a comprehensive assessment of this process and identify key factors and actions determining success in building the national brand. Through the analysis of theoretical foundations, the role of various parties in this process, and case studies of specific examples of countries, this report aims to provide practical guidance and recommendations for Polish national and local authorities that will help Poland strengthen its image worldwide.



Interview

Stanisław Raźniewski

President of the Polish-Georgian
Chamber of Commerce and Industry

In the first part of the interview, Stanisław Raźniewski, President of the Polish-Georgian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, discussed Georgia's successes in building a positive image worldwide.

He emphasized that since 2008, when Poland strongly supported Georgia during a short but dynamic armed conflict, Poland has maintained very good relations with the country. He highlighted that historically, Poles have been positively perceived by Georgians, which provides a solid foundation for developing economic cooperation.

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President Raźniewski pointed out that Poland and Georgia together are building a positive image, which translates into the development of economic cooperation. He also noted the dynamic growth of interest from Polish companies in the Georgian market and mutual trade exchange. Poland is perceived as a gateway to Europe, which the chamber president found pleasing, seeing it as a recipe for the dynamic development of relations between both countries.

In terms of economic areas that have the greatest potential for promoting the brands of Poland and Georgia, the president emphasized the importance of the wine sector in Georgia and the export of Georgian wine to Poland. He added that Poland is succeeding in the furniture sector, food production, and fruit exports, contributing to the dynamic development of business relations.

In the second part of the interview, president Raźniewski responded to a question about the successes of Polish and Georgian companies in the international market. He emphasized the importance of building partnership based on respect, professionalism, and understanding of the partner's business culture. He argued that good relationships and reputation have a positive impact on business development, and Polish companies are appreciated for the professionalism of their management teams.



The chamber president stressed the importance of preparing a dedicated offer tailored to Georgian culture and language. He highlighted the significance of the first impression, emphasizing that direct meetings, company presentations, and a professional approach are crucial. He also spoke about the need to understand the specifics of Georgian culture and to build business relationships consistently and coherently.

In the context of effective branding tools in Georgia, President Raźniewski pointed out the importance of professionally designed websites, marketing brochures, and offers in the Georgian language. He pointed out that an effective offer should consider not only price but also the quality of customer service, after-sale services, and compliance with warranty conditions.

To summarize, president Stanisław Raźniewski stressed that cooperation between Poland and Georgia is developing dynamically thanks to good relationship and reputation, professionalism, and understanding of business culture. Building a positive image and effective foreign expansion require dedicated efforts, competence, and the ability to understand and respect business partners.

Full interview available on YouTube channel



Interview

prof. Tomasz Grosse

Sociologist, Political Scientist,
and Historian

Professor Grosse emphasized that prior to the conflict, Poland had a tarnished or even negative image in the EU, mainly due to issues regarding the rule of law. However, the war changed this perception when Poles massively provided aid to refugees from Ukraine, which influenced the improvement of Poland's image not only among Ukrainians but also internationally.

The professor noted that this period was not fully utilized for promoting the Polish image abroad. There was a lack of action from public authorities, political elites, and artists that could have translated this solidarity into lasting messages, such as films or artistic events, that would convey the uniqueness of this situation.

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The guest also addressed Poland's crisis management efforts regarding Ukraine. He noted that Poland effectively handled the crisis both at the administrative and local government levels. The government, local authorities, and society quickly responded by providing support not only socially but also through the involvement of medical services, the military, and the police.

The next question concerned Poland's response to the Ukrainian crisis in the context of public management. Professor Grosse pointed out that Poland showed initiative at various levels, both at the local and central levels. Various institutions, both public and private, engaged in providing aid to refugees, thereby fostering a favourable image of Poland as a nation characterized by solidarity and readiness to assist others during challenging times.

The professor also addressed the criticism Poland faced for providing unconditional assistance. He emphasized that such unconditional solidarity is a value worth promoting, even in the face of criticism. He underscored the need to continue this aid and build relationships based on mutual trust and shared interests.

Regarding geopolitical changes, Professor Grosse emphasized that Poland should focus on security issues, both on its eastern flank and in the broader context of Central Europe. Poland must cultivate the image of a responsible neighbour, ready to support others in times of crisis. Assistance to neighbours, investments in common safety and development are key elements of building a positive image of Poland.

To conclude the discussion, Professor Grosse expressed hope that Poland would continue its positive approach to cooperation, regardless of changes in the geopolitical situation. Collaboration, both international and domestic, should be based on the values of solidarity, responsibility, and shared interests.

To summarize, the conversation with Professor Grosse focused on Poland's role in the context of the crisis in Ukraine, public governance, social solidarity, and building a positive image of the country on the international stage. The professor emphasized the need for continued cooperation, investment in security and development, and the promotion of solidarity as the foundation of the Polish brand.

Full interview available on YouTube channel





Interview

Marcin Chruściel

Director of the Service Office of the
Government Plenipotentiary for Polish-
Ukrainian Development Cooperation
Ministry of Development Funds and
Regional Policy

The conversation began with a question about the initiatives and programs of the Polish government aimed at promoting Poland as a partner in the reconstruction of Ukraine. Director Chruściel emphasized the involvement of the private sector, especially Polish entrepreneurs, encouraging them to invest and expand their activities in Ukraine.

Regarding this goal, he mentioned the amendment of the law on state-guaranteed export securities, which aims to facilitate investments by Polish companies in the Ukrainian market.

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The director also discussed the role of the official Polish Export Credit Agency (pol. Korporacja Ubezpieczeń Kredytów Eksportowych - KUKE) in providing insurance for Polish companies participating in trade exchanges and investments with Ukraine. Through these actions, the Polish government seeks to create support tools for entrepreneurs, thereby enhancing the competitiveness of Polish businesses in Ukraine. It is worth emphasizing that these actions are crucial for securing investments in a country affected by armed conflict.

Another important element of the conversation was the issue of Ukraine's accession to the European Union. Director Chruściel expressed the belief that Ukraine, after the conflict ends, should join the EU, which would be in the interest of the entire region. He emphasized Ukraine's role as a security stabilizer on NATO's eastern borders and its significance for the entire Three Seas region.



Economic aspects of cooperation with Ukraine were also addressed. The large potential of the Ukrainian market, especially in the agricultural sector, was highlighted, which poses both opportunities and challenges for Polish businesses. Negotiations regarding Ukraine's accession to the EU and the modernization of border infrastructure were recognized as key elements of long-term cooperation.

The director emphasized Poland's involvement in assisting Ukraine, both financially and in terms of military-economic support. He mentioned projects related to the modernization of border crossings, aimed at facilitating the flow of goods, which in turn would contribute to the development of trade between the countries.

It is worth noting that the webinar proved to be a significant platform for discussion, allowing insight into Poland's approach to cooperation with Ukraine. Placing emphasis on private sector engagement and bolstering support for Polish enterprises in Ukraine marks a notable stride toward the nation's reconstruction and regional collaboration.

Full interview available on YouTube channel



Interview

Julia Kowalczyk

Founder of the Polish-Ukrainian
Association „Pojednanie”;
Social Activist

The conversation with Ms. Julia Kowalczyk began with a question about the origins of her charitable activities aimed at strengthening Polish-Ukrainian relations and helping Ukrainians in Poland following the outbreak of war in Ukraine.

Ms. Kowalczyk emphasized her Ukrainian background and her residence in Poland for eight years as one of the main reasons for her involvement. She expressed the belief that it is a moral obligation to aid Ukraine, especially considering its difficult situation.

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The webinar host also asked about the goals of the „Pojednanie“ association in both the short- and long-term perspectives. The guest emphasized the importance of fostering connections between the Polish and Ukrainian nations, conducting dialogue based on truth, and supporting Ukraine – a cause Julia Kowalczyk considers to be in Poland’s national interest.

During the conversation, issues of cooperation with Poles and the overall assessment of social engagement in the association’s projects were also addressed. Julia Kowalczyk spoke favourably about working with a young and dynamic team noting a growing trend of societal involvement, both in Poland and Ukraine. The next topic was about potential challenges that a non-governmental organization may encounter in Poland. Julia Kowalczyk mentioned the need for financial support but also emphasized the existence of many support mechanisms for NGO activities in the country.

The interviewee provided a detailed overview of the projects underway at the association, including workshops, discussions, film screenings, alongside the support for various initiatives, such as burn treatment for Ukrainian soldiers and medical assistance.

Towards the conclusion of the interview, the discussion delved into the pivotal role of non-governmental organizations in shaping the image of Poland and Ukraine as allies on the international stage. Ms. Kowalczyk highlighted the importance of grassroots initiatives in shaping the positive image of both countries, particularly through endeavours focused on democracy, peace, and freedom. The entire conversation encourages reflection on the role of society in building international relations and the significance of NGO activities in promoting values such as solidarity, democracy, and peace. It’s an inspiring interview that showcases the power of social engagement in creating a favourable image of the country on the world stage.

Full interview available on YouTube channel





Interview

Jakub Krzeszkowski

Culture Manager, Project Founder and
Chairman of the Board of the Jazz po
Polsku Foundation

The special guest of the webinar organized by the Metropolitan Institute of Development in cooperation with the Orlen brand was Jakub Krzeszkowski, a culture manager, project creator, and chairman of the board of the Jazz po Polsku Foundation.

He gained recognition for organizing hundreds of Polish events worldwide and traveling with Polish artists.

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The conversation commenced with an inquiry about the role of jazz music in fostering intercultural connections and supporting the promotion of the Polish brand worldwide. Jakub Krzeszkowski emphasized that jazz embodies notions of freedom, improvisation, and creative liberty. Artists performing it often collaborate with each other, creating projects beyond the borders of Poland, which is an excellent example of building relationships and bridges between countries.

The Jazz po Polsku Foundation, represented by Jakub Krzeszkowski, aims to promote Polish music internationally. To date, they have organized over 400 events globally, with a particular focus on Asia. Jazz music serves as a tool for conveying values and building intercultural relationships. Through concerts and educational initiatives, their aim is to portray Poland as a modern nation open to collaboration.

The next question concerned potential cooperation and support for the foundation. Jakub Krzeszkowski underscored the necessity for financial support, especially to cover logistical and organizational costs related to concert tours. They collaborate with local governments, ministries, Polish diplomatic missions abroad, and local partners, operating on a co-financing principle, where projects receive funding from two or three sources.



The interviewee cited examples of artists such as Rafał Sarnecki and Leszek Możdżer, who promote Poland abroad through jazz music. The Foundation also plans to explore new destinations, and in May this year, they launched the „Jazz po Polsku Around the World” project, aimed at bringing Polish jazz music to four continents.

The final question pertained to the significance of jazz music during difficult times, particularly amidst the backdrop of the war in Ukraine. Jakub Krzeszkowski mentioned cooperation with musicians from Odessa who faced adversity following the outbreak of the conflict. The Foundation provided support by facilitating their travel and organizing concerts, which is an example of using jazz music for soft diplomacy and influencing audiences in unconventional ways compared to traditional tools.

The webinar served as a fascinating testimony to how jazz music can be not only an artistic form but also a tool for building cultural connections, bolstering the Polish brand, and navigating through challenging circumstances. The Jazz po Polsku Foundation sets ambitious goals, promoting Polish jazz music worldwide and inspiring cooperation and cultural activities.

Full interview available on YouTube channel



Interview

Tomasz Szczerba

Mayor of Wojkowice

During the interview, the guest elaborated on how actions undertaken by local governments contribute to shaping Poland's national brand, particularly concerning international projects and responses to the Ukrainian crisis.

Significant emphasis was placed on the role of education, cultural exchange, and humanitarian aid as key elements in moulding Poland's positive image globally.

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The mayor highlighted the value of educational projects such as Erasmus+, which enable the exchange of young people and students. These initiatives are presented as important not only for the personal development of the participants but also for showcasing Poland as a nation keen on international cooperation and cultural exchange. Such initiatives enable youth to acquire new skills, broaden their horizons, and build international relationships, ultimately yielding long-term advantages for both the individuals involved and the image of Poland.

A substantial portion of the interview was devoted to the municipality's involvement in assisting Ukrainian citizens fleeing the war. The expert described comprehensive actions taken by the local government, including providing shelter, psychological assistance, language education, and social as well as vocational integration programs for refugees. Specific examples of such activities were highlighted, such as organizing accommodation, language classes, assisting in job placement, and implementing social integration initiatives, all of which support the adjustment of refugees and demonstrate Poland's commitment to being supportive and hospitable.

The mayor also emphasizes the importance of cooperation between the local government, local businesses, and international institutions in attracting investments and promoting local development. Such partnerships not only energize the local economy but also contribute to creating a positive image of Poland as an investor-friendly and innovation-friendly location.

Through the lens of Wojkowice municipality's actions, the interview highlights how diverse and coordinated local government initiatives can effectively influence Poland's international perception. These actions, focused on education, cooperation, humanitarian aid, and development, play a pivotal role in building a strong and positive national brand.

Full interview available on YouTube channel





Interview

dr Paweł Kurtasz

President of the Polish Investment and Trade Agency (PAIH)

Paweł Kurtasz emphasized that despite the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, Poland maintains the image of a safe and stable trading partner. He stressed that there is no need to prove this fact, as economic data, especially the trade balance, confirms the positive aspects of Poland's economic situation.

Last year, Poland recorded a significant increase in investments, with the PAIH president citing specific figures – 3.7 billion euros.

He also noted that Poland is experiencing a decrease in trade with Germany, but at the same time, cooperation with Ukraine is growing, contributing to maintaining a favourable trade balance.

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The guest elaborated on the cooperation between PAIH, the government, businesses, and other entities in promoting Polish firms abroad and supporting investments and exports. He highlighted PAIH's alignment with national economic policies, aiming to increase the competitiveness of the Polish economy in international markets. In the area of cooperation with enterprises, PAIH offers a range of services, such as investment advisory and business matchmaking. Additionally, it serves as an intermediary between Polish enterprises and potential investors or trading partners.

The president emphasized that one of the key areas of PAIH's activities is promoting Polish firms on the international stage. Through participation in trade fairs, conferences, business missions, and promotional campaigns, PAIH seeks to increase the visibility and attractiveness of Polish products and services. He also cited a specific example – investments worth 3.7 billion euros in 2022, which is a record compared to previous years.



Paweł Kurtasz presented new PAIH initiatives, focusing on two key areas. The first is the „Investments tailored to people” program, which promotes sustainable investments considering social, environmental, and cultural aspects. The second area is investments related to modern technologies, especially Industry 4.0. PAIH's objective is to attract investments from the innovation, digitization, and smart solutions sectors, which are expected to contribute to the growth of competitiveness in the Polish industrial sector.

The president concluded his speech by highlighting Poland's dynamic development, enhancing the country's appeal to investors. He expressed PAIH's readiness to support every investor, regardless of origin, while emphasizing a responsible approach to business and sustainable development. The presentation concluded with expressions of gratitude for webinar attendance, extended to both the speaker and the participants, along with well wishes for fruitful endeavours to entrepreneurs and investors.

The webinar provided participants with extensive knowledge about PAIH's efforts towards building Poland's brand. President Paweł Kurtasz presented specific figures, initiatives, and development prospects. His presentation was informative, blending numerical data with real-life examples of the organization's activities. A significant emphasis was placed on the role of sustainable investments and cutting-edge technologies in shaping PAIH's future. The webinar served as an inspiring platform for understanding the key aspects contributing to the establishment and reinforcement of Poland's robust brand on the global stage.

Full interview available on YouTube channel



Interview

Mieszko Rajkiewicz

Specialist in politicization and globalization of sports.

Sport has played a crucial role in national culture and identity for centuries. It has also become an important tool in international politics, serving diplomatic, economic, and propaganda functions. The term „Soft Power,” coined by Joseph Nye, refers to a country’s ability to influence others not through force but through attraction and persuasion.

Sport is one of the most important tools of Soft Power. Events such as the Olympics, FIFA World Cups, or other international sports competitions attract the attention of millions of people worldwide, serving as platforms for promoting the culture, values, and image of the host country.

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The history of sport is replete with examples of its use for political purposes. The 1936 Berlin Olympics were used by Nazi Germany to promote its ideology. The Cold War led to Olympic boycotts in the 1980s. Modern examples include discussions about Qatar's role as the host of the 2022 FIFA World Cup and the role of sports in promoting Saudi Arabia on the international stage. The term „sportswashing“ refers to the practice of governments using sport to „clean“ their image, especially in the context of human rights violations. Countries like Russia, Qatar, or Saudi Arabia invest billions in sports, organizing major events and buying sports clubs to improve their image on the international stage.

Sport can serve as a bridge between nations. Examples such as ping-pong diplomacy in the 1970s between the USA and China, or a soccer match between the USA and Iran in 1998, demonstrate how sports can contribute to bringing nations closer and easing tensions. Sport is not just entertainment but also an important tool in international politics. It can be used for both propaganda and diplomatic purposes. However, it is important not to lose sight of the essence of sport as a means of uniting people and fostering values such as fair play, cooperation, and respect.

Sports diplomacy involves leveraging sports as a tool for dialogue, fostering relationships, and promoting values in the international political context. Sports diplomacy encompasses a wide range of activities, from friendly matches between countries to major sporting events such as the Olympic Games.

Ways of operation

Sports diplomacy operates in several ways:

Building identity and national spirit: Success in sports can strengthen the sense of national pride and unity.

Promoting values: Sports can be used to promote values such as fair play, equality, and respect.

Developing international relations: Joint sports events can facilitate dialogue and cooperation between countries.

Soft power: Sport is one of the tools of „soft power“ that can be used to build a positive image of a country on the international stage.

Despite its challenges, sports diplomacy remains a country's powerful tool for fostering international relations. When utilized effectively, it can bring benefits both internationally and domestically. The key lies in understanding its mechanisms and potential pitfalls.

Full interview available on YouTube channel





National brand – theoretical aspects

The concept of national branding was introduced into scientific and common circulation by Simon Anholt in 1996¹. National branding „is a social and managerial process aimed at building the image and reputation of a country on an international scale, desirable from the point of view of its development strategy”². The aim of national branding is to improve the country’s position, attract tourism and investment capital, increase exports, attract talented and creative workforce, and increase its cultural and political influence worldwide³.

Branding is not the same as promotion. Brand shaping is primarily long-term in nature. Moreover, it requires the involvement of many entities, whereas promotional campaigns may be the responsibility of a single entity. Brand creation typically involves significantly greater capital and financial resources. Promotion usually focuses on one element, whereas the approach to building a national brand must be holistic – considering many elements while also paying attention to details, as one poorly executed element can weaken overall branding efforts⁴. Modern national brands strive to be consistent and authentic in their actions to build lasting trust and reputation on the international stage. Ultimately, national branding is a tool that can contribute to achieving many benefits for the country, both economically and socially, influencing how it is perceived by the rest of the world.

When starting to create a national brand, it is essential to answer key questions. The first and most crucial question is „Who are we?”.

This question is fundamental because the national brand cannot be false or pretentious. The country’s image must come from its authentic identity, while also avoiding becoming a hostage to its own image.

¹ Anna Quirin, Branding narodowy – co to jest? Uwagi do toczącej się dyskusji, „Athenaeum. Polskie Studia Politologiczne”, 2016, t. 49.

² Marta Hereźniak, Marka narodowa. Jak skutecznie budować wizerunek i reputację kraju, Warszawa 2011.

³ What is Nation Branding?, Bloom Consulting, <https://www.bloom-consulting.com/journal/what-is-nation-branding/>.

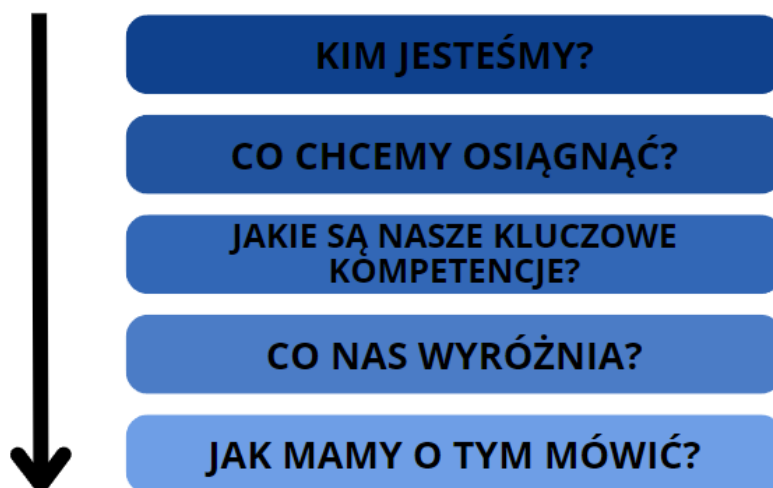
⁴ Parul Soni, Nation Branding: How to Build an Effective Location Brand Identity, Brand Finance, <https://brandfinance.com/insights/nation-branding>.



National brand

theoretical aspects

The strategy for building a national brand should be based on a central idea that reflects the country's unique identity and values. In other words, it is necessary to use those elements that distinguish it from other countries⁵. Other questions that need to be answered concern what one wants to achieve in the process of building a national brand (whether the goal is to improve reputation on the international stage, attract more investments or tourists, increase exports, or something else), what the desired outcome is (helping to identify specific effects and changes expected in the longer term), what the key competencies are (identifying areas where the country has a competitive advantage or unique resources, as these competencies can become pillars of building the national brand), what sets us apart (i.e., what makes our country unique and what can attract attention and interest from others), and finally, what communication strategy to adopt (choosing the right tools and communication channels to promote the national brand and convey its message).



During the process of building a national brand, certain limitations and potential problems may arise. One of the most important aspects, which can serve as both a source of inspiration and difficulty, is the issue of national identity. It is a set of unique identifiable characteristics, such as culture, language, history, or values, through which a country is recognizable on the international stage⁶.

⁵ Two countries that prove nation branding works, City Nation Place, <https://www.citynationplace.com/two-countries-that-prove-nation-branding-works>.

⁶ Magdalena Raftowicz-Filipkiewicz, Elementy brandingu narodowego w procesie komunikacji marketingowej kraju, „Zeszyty Naukowe”, 2011, nr 209.



Identity is the foundation of shaping a national brand but defining it can be problematic and even lead to conflicts as within one country, multiple concepts of identity may exist.

Countries often encompass regional, ethnic, cultural, religious, or even linguistic diversity. In such cases, there are many concepts of identity with which different social groups identify⁷. Another challenge related to the issue of identity is avoiding excessive simplification of the national image. While striving to create a coherent national brand, there is a risk of oversimplification and stereotyping of the country. This can lead to the loss of diversity and complexity of the national identity. Therefore, it is important to maintain subtlety and depth in creating the national brand, avoiding one-dimensional images and generalizations.

Political stability is also a significant issue. One of the key factors influencing the success of building a national brand is political stability. The process of creating a national brand should be apolitical and separate from current politics. Otherwise, there is a risk that national branding will become a hostage to the electoral cycle. Changes in power can lead to a complete change in the concept of brand building, negatively affecting the coherence of the country's image. Another challenge may arise from human resources, such as difficulties in finding personnel and experts, or societal reluctance to engage.

Problems may also arise in the collaboration between the public and private sectors, as such actions may be perceived as ambiguous interests and criticized as attempts at lobbying or favouring specific companies. Therefore, it is essential to develop clear, transparent, and ethical principles of cooperation between the public and private sectors, which will allow for the effective integration of the interests of both sides and the achievement of national goals related to building the country's brand.

Building a brand requires more than just rhetoric; it necessitates tangible support infrastructure, including real projects, initiatives, and structures (for instance, promoting tourism entails the creation and dissemination of advertisements abroad or the development of booking websites). Furthermore, the constructed image must be consistent with the country's values and accurately

⁷ Bloom Consulting, The Challenges of Nation Branding, <https://www.bloom-consulting.com/journal/the-challenges-of-nation-branding/>.



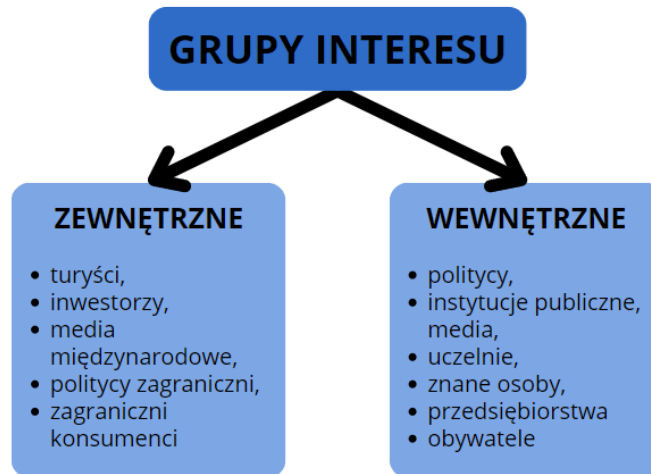
reflect its current state of affairs (e.g., a country that violates human rights cannot credibly portray itself as a beacon of freedom and justice).

Another crucial aspect prone to challenges is coherent marketing communication and the overall communication system. Establishing a national brand requires meticulous control over the message and image of the country. This task can be daunting, particularly in the era of social media, where information spreads rapidly. Unregulated messaging or negative incidents can detrimentally impact the country's reputation, underscoring the need for continuous monitoring and reputation management.

An effective monitoring and evaluation system constitute essential components of the national branding process. It allows for ongoing tracking of actions, ensuring that the branding strategy is working as intended and that the desired objectives are being achieved. Establishing clear indicators is crucial for this purpose. These indicators may include measuring changes in how the country is perceived by the international community, increases in tourism, attracting investments, or export growth⁸. The monitoring system should entail regular research and analysis, furnishing data on the country's perception, international opinions, and changes in competitive dynamics vis-à-vis other nations. Numerous stakeholder groups influence the shaping, positioning, and either fortifying or undermining the national brand⁹. Concurrently, it is worth noting that the national brand also impacts these stakeholders, creating a complex relationship of mutual influence. Stakeholders can be classified into two categories: external (operating abroad) and internal (operating in the country or originating from it).

⁸ What are the best practices and tools for conducting nation branding campaigns?, <https://www.linkedin.com/advice/1/what-best-practices-tools-conducting-nation-branding>; Cleven Masango, Vannie Naidoo, Nation Branding Strategy for Zimbabwe: Towards an Integrated Nation Branding Framework, "Journal of Accounting, Business and Finance Research" 2019, t. 6, nr 2, s. 51–63.

⁹ Bloom Consulting, The Challenges of Nation Branding, <https://www.bloom-consulting.com/journal/the-challenges-of-nation-branding/>.



Brand capital stands as a pivotal element in building and maintaining a country's image. Unlike monetary value, brand capital encompasses the answers to what bolsters the brand's resilience. The resources constituting this capital can be broadly divided into internal and external categories¹⁰.

Internal resources of national brand capital include assets under direct control of the country itself. These include innate symbols such as flags, emblems, or other recognizable national insignia that form integral elements of the national brand. Additionally, the country's natural landscapes and architectural heritage play crucial roles in shaping the country's image internationally. Furthermore, national culture, customs, and traditions serve as significant internal resources, influencing citizens' identification with their country and communicating its values, as well as which values the country is associated with abroad.

Acquired resources are those obtained by the country through promotional, diplomatic, and economic activities. Positive perception of the country abroad is extremely important as it can influence the level of interest in investments, tourism, or international cooperation. Support from stakeholder groups such as universities or businesses can also contribute to strengthening the national brand capital.

¹⁰ Keith Dinnie, *Nation Branding: Concepts, Issues, Practice*, Oxford 2008.



External resources of national brand capital stem from the country's presence on the international stage. Indirect external resources of national brand capital include the influence of international media, films, literature, and popular culture on how the country is perceived worldwide. Positive connections in international media can contribute to promoting the country as an attractive destination for investment, tourism, or international cooperation. Films set in a specific country can be a powerful means of communication, shaping impressions and perceptions – both positive and negative – of the depicted country.

On the other hand, direct external resources of a nation's brand capital include national diasporas, which are communities of citizens of a given country living abroad, constituting an important aspect of shaping the national brand. They often engage in promoting their country beyond its borders, acting as ambassadors of culture and national heritage¹¹. Ambassadors of national brands are most often globally recognized individuals from a particular country. However, citizens themselves can also serve as ambassadors of the national brand, both in business, private, or tourism contacts. Export brands, which are globally recognized companies and corporations originating from specific countries, also play a significant role. These globally successful brands largely contribute to the image of the country they come from. Thus, national authorities should prioritize the promotion of export brands that strengthen their country's image on the global stage¹².

¹¹ Jennifer M. Brinkerhoff, *Diasporas and Public Diplomacy: Distinctions and Future Prospects*, „The Hague Journal of Diplomacy”, 2019, t. 14, nr 1-2.

¹² Martin Roll – Business & Brand Strategist, *How Nations And Brands Overcome Country of Origin Challenges*, <https://martinroll.com/resources/articles/branding/how-nations-and-brands-overcome-country-of-origin-challenges/>



Various systems have been established for measuring the effectiveness and standing of brands representing individual countries. The most renowned and important ranking of national brands is the Anholt-Ipsos Nation Brands Index (NBI). Conducted annually since 2008, this survey collects opinions about countries worldwide, providing insights into their perceived brand strength. Notably, for six consecutive years, Germany has been ranked first. Other high-ranking countries include Canada, Japan, Italy, France, and the United Kingdom. In the two latest iterations of the ranking (i.e., 2021 and 2022), Poland secured the 26th position.

The NBI score is an average of results for six categories: exports, governance, people, culture, tourism, and immigration and investment. Ratings are based on a scale from 1 to 7, where 7 represents the highest or best rating, 1 represents the lowest or worst, and 4 represents a neutral opinion that is neither positive nor negative¹³.



In the „exports” category, the survey assesses whether information about the country of origin increases or decreases the likelihood of purchasing a product (the „country-of-origin effect”), whether the country has specific strengths in science and technology, and whether it is considered innovative in domestic and global initiatives.

The „governance” section includes perceived competence and honesty of governments, their relationship with citizens and respect for their rights, as well as their behaviour in international peace and security, environmental protection, and poverty reduction.

¹³ The Anholt-Ipsos Nation Brands Index, 2022, <https://www.ipsos.com/sites/default/files/ct/news/documents/2022-11/NBI%202022%20Report%20-%20Updated%209JAN23.pdf>.



In the „people“ category, the survey evaluates the friendliness of the people of a particular nation. This is measured by whether respondents would feel welcome when visiting the country. Additionally, it measures the personal attractiveness of people—whether respondents would like to have a close friend from that country and whether they would be willing to employ a well-qualified individual from that country.

„Culture“ is measured by collecting opinions about the country’s heritage and its contemporary cultural expressions in music, films, art, and literature, as well as perceived excellence in sports. All these factors shape the global image of the cultural „product“ of a country.

The „tourism“ category, in other words, the attractiveness of a country for tourism, is evaluated in three main areas: natural scenery, historical buildings and monuments, and the attractiveness of urban life and urban attractions. The potential tourism attractiveness is also assessed: how likely respondents would be to visit a particular country, assuming no financial problems, and whether the anticipated experience of the visit could be described with adjectives such as romantic, stressful, or spiritual.

In the „immigration and investment“ section, the country’s ability to attract talent and capital is measured. This is analysed not only in terms of whether people would consider studying, working, or living in the country but also through the perception of the country’s economic prosperity, equal opportunities, and whether it is perceived as a place of high quality of life¹⁴. Talented individuals are a key element in building a national brand, so countries should focus on attracting and retaining talented and creative workforce¹⁵.

Another indicator measuring national brands is the FutureBrand Country Index. It ranks the 75 largest economies in the world based on interviews with 2,500 respondents, including CEOs, managing directors (of both corporations and international organizations), and top-level civil servants from around the world.

¹⁴ The Anholt-Ipsos Nation Brands Index, 2022, <https://www.ipsos.com/sites/default/files/ct/news/documents/2022-11/NBI%202022%20Report%20-%20Updated%209JAN23.pdf>.

¹⁵ Parul Soni, Nation Branding: How to Build an Effective Location Brand Identity, Brand Finance, <https://brandfinance.com/insights/nation-branding>.



Each respondent evaluates seven well-known countries based on several categories: culture and heritage, tourism, quality of life in the country, value system, business potential, and brands originating from the country (i.e., „made in“)¹⁶. Japan occupies the first place in this ranking, followed by Switzerland in second place, and Norway in third. Germany and Canada are further down the list.

The Global Soft Power Index is another indicator that measures the soft power of countries, which is their ability to influence others without resorting to force. The „currency“ of soft power includes culture, values, ideals, etc. It differs from hard power, which involves coercion and requires the use of military or economic force to achieve foreign policy goals¹⁷. This ranking classifies countries according to their ability to influence others in areas such as culture, economy, political values, science, and technology, without resorting to military or economic means. It is based on surveys conducted in over 100 countries¹⁸.

The ranking is based on eight pillars of soft power: 1) culture and heritage, 2) international relations, 3) governance, 4) business and trade, 5) media and communication, 6) education and science, 7) people and values, 8) sustainable future. For several years, the United States, the United Kingdom, and Germany have been at the forefront of the ranking. In the latest Global Soft Power Index from 2023, Poland ranks 33rd, but it's worth noting that it has risen by 7 positions within a year¹⁹.

The last noteworthy indicator is The Good Country Index, developed by Simon Anholt in 2014. It classifies countries according to their contribution to the common good of humanity and the benefits they derive from global common goods, relative to their size (GDP). The goal is to show that the greatest challenges facing humanity today should be understood as global and cross-border in nature. What sets this ranking apart from others is that it does not assess the performance of individual countries in isolation but as part of the global community.

¹⁶ FutureBrand Country Index 2020, <https://web.archive.org/web/20210415050446/>

<https://www.futurebrand.com/uploads/FBCi-2020-Assets/FutureBrand-Country-Index-2020.pdf>

¹⁷ What Is Soft Power?, CFR, <https://world101.cfr.org/foreign-policy/tools-foreign-policy/what-soft-power>

¹⁸ Global Soft Power Index 2023, Brand Finance, <https://static.brandirectory.com/reports/brand-finance-soft-power-index-2023-digital.pdf>.

¹⁹ Global Soft Power Index 2023, Brand Finance, <https://static.brandirectory.com/reports/brand-finance-soft-power-index-2023-digital.pdf>.



The Good Country Index largely relies on UN databases. It measures a country's contribution in areas such as science and technology, culture, international peace and security, world order, planet and climate, prosperity and equality, and health and wellbeing. For the purposes of this indicator, „good“ is not the opposite of „bad“ but rather „selfishness“²⁰. In the overall ranking, Sweden leads The Good Country Index, followed closely by Denmark and Germany. However, the top performers in individual elements may look different²¹.

	Science and technology	Culture	International peace and security	World order	Planet and climate	Prosperity and equality	Health and wellbeing
1.	Ukraine	Belgium	Morocco	Australia	Finland	Sweden	Germany
2.	Hungary	Estonia	Republic of Moldova	Chile	Sweden	Norway	Sweden
3.	United Kingdom	Switzerland	Kazakhstan	Luxembourg	Switzerland	Denmark	United Kingdom
4.	Czech Republic	Austria	Kyrgystan	Norway	Slovenia	Belgium	Denmark
5.	Latvia	Portugal	Malaysia	Netherlands	Canada	Finland	Norway

Poland currently ranks 27th out of 169 countries in the overall ranking. Its lowest performance is in the „health“ category, where it ranks 97th. On the other hand, it achieves its highest position in the „science and technology“ category, ranking 16th. Poland also holds relatively high positions in the categories of peace and international security, as well as global order, ranking 20th and 21st, respectively²².

20 Nation branding: beyond a cosmetic symbol, WIPO, https://www.wipo.int/wipo_magazine/en/2022/03/article_0008.html.

21 The Good Country Index, <https://index.goodcountry.org/>.

22 The Good Country Index, <https://index.goodcountry.org/>.



Soft power in international relations

The contemporary world is characterized by a shifting perception of mutual relations and the evolving interests of countries and other entities in international affairs. Economic, political, military, and cultural integration on an international scale permeate all spheres of life and profoundly shape the conduct of global politics.

According to one of many definitions, international relations are understood as the international reality, with the most important elements including both state and non-state entities, phenomena, events, and processes occurring in the world in areas such as politics, economy, and culture. They serve as a manifestation of the dynamic nature of international life, the activity of its participants, their interests, aspirations, and mutual expectations.

In international relations, soft power consists of the values expressed by a given state or organization in its culture, its internal practices and policies, and the way it shapes its relationships with other participants. Through technological development, the achievement of a stable position by state in the structures of the international system, and the dynamically changing situation, countries build their position not only with tangible factors such as GDP or military strength but also want to base it on their attractiveness. In a world dominated by communication and imagery, the power of attraction is a significant dimension of building the image and position of a country.





Soft power

in international relations

In the idealistic perspective of international relations, discussions regarding the role of the state and its standing in the global system underscore the importance of shared interests among entities, fostering openness to cooperation and a willingness to compromise. This inclination stems from the imperative to seek peaceful resolutions to conflicts through diplomatic channels.

Yet, within the increase of deepening interdependence, a nation's essence lies in its capacity to offer conducive conditions for undisturbed development, based on social, economic, and cultural frameworks, which become a source of its strength and attractiveness.

Culture serves as the primary and most influential source of „soft political influence“, embodying a set of values and practices fundamental to society. In the broader international context, culture is a dynamic phenomenon that has undergone diffusion over the years. Its effectiveness in shaping a country's image is often correlated with its appeal, as evidenced by the global dominance of the United States, which boasts a strong cultural dimension, as noted by Z. Brzezinski. According to S. Huntington, the modernization process has led to a transformation of global politics along cultural lines. Culture plays a significant role in the lives of both states and nations, serving as a conduit for ideological content.

Distinguishing between the sources of soft power is valuable, as they encompass both high culture, such as education, art, or literature, and popular culture geared towards mass entertainment. The degree of influence and ease of assimilation depends on the readiness of the target audience and the context. Popular culture, with its universal values, often serves as a potent carrier of soft power, increasing the likelihood of achieving intended goals. Commerce is one of the ways culture is transmitted. American soft power was solidified by entities such as Hollywood, Microsoft, and Michael Jordan. Currently, symbols of America's greatness, illustrating the extent of its influence, are companies such as Google, Apple, McDonald's, Facebook, and Instagram, with millions of users worldwide.



Cultural exchange, personal interactions, visits, and exchanges hold significant importance as they can act as instruments for gaining economic benefits or asserting cultural dominance. The rapid growth of international cultural exchange and the increasing government interest in this phenomenon have led to the emergence of the concept of „cultural diplomacy“ as a new dimension of international relations. Cultural relations have evolved into a distinct realm of global affairs, and cooperation in the cultural dimension stands as an important component of governments' foreign policies and related actions.

The neoliberal paradigm used to describe international relations reflects formal and informal connections, creating a vast network characterizing the contemporary world. The early 21st century witnessed profound technological transformations that deeply influenced and became ingrained in the international reality, simultaneously altering its image.

To effectively promote their values, countries use all kinds of mass media such as press, radio, television, the Internet, and social media. Currently, a vast majority of the global population has access to information, which, in a world interconnected through global networks, equates to power. Technological progress has led to a significant reduction in the costs associated with processing and transmitting information. An excess of information leads to diminished attention, while information overload weakens the focus of the recipient. The key to effectively influencing the perception of audiences is to capture their attention. Countries compete for trust not only with other countries but with a wide range of alternative sources of opinion, including corporations, media, non-governmental organizations, and networks of scientific communities. Although states still engage in propaganda, information saturated with it can undermine the reputation and credibility of a country. In the age of information, under new conditions and considering diverse sources of news, delivering information in a balanced manner may prove more effective than propaganda.

Obtaining support for their actions is facilitated by technological development, as widely accessible sources of information such as the Internet, enable recipients to stay more aware of the actions taken by countries.



Soft power

in international relations

Social media platforms such as Facebook (2004), YouTube (2006), or Twitter have become symbols of communication in the modern world, strongly influencing contemporary politics, the economy, and various other aspects of life.

The power of social media is not just a theory. A perfect example of mobilizing society through social media platforms can be seen in the intense protest action in 2012 against the so-called ACTA - an international agreement aimed at protecting intellectual property rights but leaving a „loophole“ that could allow for the surveillance of Internet users. The role of social media was also evident during the organization of social protests during the Arab Spring in the Middle Eastern countries in 2011. More recent examples, albeit controversial, include the use of bots or fake accounts to achieve political goals by creating and distributing false narratives, as seen in the activities of the Russian Federation during Brexit in 2018, or the current use of social media for disinformation campaigns in the context of the ongoing war in Ukraine.



Soft power of the Fifth Republic of France

In the 21st century, the strength of a state undoubtedly lies in the way it utilizes its soft power resources, which are the means of exerting political influence through non-coercive methods. One of its most important elements is cultural attractiveness. While not an end in itself, it becomes a means to achieve political goals.

French culture is known worldwide. The French do not hide that their cultural policy is an important element of influence on the international stage. According to Xavier Dercos, director of the French Institute, „cultural and scientific policy is the essence of French influence strategy“.

In the era of information, deterritorialization, and disintegration, the realm of symbolism plays an increasingly significant role. The Louvre, Champs-Élysées, Eiffel Tower, or Montmartre are symbols through which France is recognized worldwide, and Paris is not only the capital of the country but also a global metropolis, the capital of art, culture, and fashion. The dissemination of the French language, networks of French research centres and cultural centres, contributes to the development of France's international cooperation in economic and investment dimensions. Exporting books, artistic and cultural productions, scientific expertise, and the exchange of ideas are among the priorities of French policy. State-funded subtitling or dubbing in French cinematography aims to facilitate the entry of domestic productions into foreign markets.

A particularly important element for French culture is the French language. The policy concerning the teaching of the French language is implemented through various means, including bilingual education, the promotion of books and magazines, and an online presence. Besides English, French is the only language spoken on five continents. It serves as a working language in many international organizations and institutions, including being one of the official languages of the UN, the working language of the EU, and according to Article 39 of the Statute of the International Court of Justice, French is the official language of the Court. Furthermore, French is considered a language of diplomacy. It has defined a global model of diplomatic activities, influenced by historical considerations dictated by the „common form“ due to the specificity of both Latin and French languages.



Soft power

of the Fifth Republic of France

Thanks to its lexical richness, it ensures correctness and clarity of expression, making it highly valued by the diplomatic community. For French society, the language serves as a conduit for moral values and legal norms, while also symbolising France's European power and its commitment to cultural identity. The ubiquity of the Anglo-American language in education, technology, economy, business, or communication poses a growing threat not only to the French language but also to the survival of the cultural richness of the world in all its diversity. France owes its position to its values, heritage, and creativity. Therefore, protecting the uniqueness of French culture and its diversity in international relations is crucial. The cultural sphere should be present in the entirety of French policy, both domestically and in the external activities of the state.

Promotion of culture in France and beyond its borders is the responsibility of numerous organizations, such as the French Association of Artistic Actions, whose activities primarily focus on promoting French cultural institutions, national and regional theatres, museums, orchestras, and art centres. The institution responsible for disseminating French culture and cooperation in this field is the French Institute, which has branches in many countries and carries out its activities based on the guidelines of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in agreement with the Ministry of Culture. It collaborates with international organizations, state and private institutions, both domestic and foreign, involved in promoting French culture.





Nevertheless, France's cultural activities within multilateral frameworks mainly focus on utilizing the opportunities provided by the European Union, UNESCO, and the Council of Europe, concerning grants and the revision of international agreements, among other aspects. One of the most important areas for France's cultural activity is maintaining special relations with countries of the International Organization of La Francophonie, which includes societies that have shaped their cultural space under significant influence of the French language and culture. La Francophonie is a very broad concept that applies not only to former colonies but also to countries where the French language holds a special position due to historical reasons. The organization focuses primarily on promoting Francophone culture and the French language but also actively works to support peace, democracy, human rights, and sustainable development, with an emphasis on educating children and youth and ensuring gender equality.

Through the implementation of cultural policy objectives and the attachment of French society to national identity and heritage, France has preserved its uniqueness as an asset in competition with other cultures in the fields of wine, fashion, perfumes, cosmetics, and refined cuisine. Traditions are upheld by companies such as L'Oreal, Christian Dior, Hermes, and Vuitton. Emphasizing national brands, traditions, and products is an important element of the policy that disseminates France's rich cultural heritage, modernity, and lifestyle, which are still synonymous with luxury.



The Role of the Government in Nation Branding

The government plays a pivotal role in shaping the country's brand, leveraging its resources, infrastructure, and authority to effectively promote the nation globally. The government can influence nation branding through:

Creating government strategies and policies - the government plays a central role in creating and implementing strategies aimed at building a positive image of the country. This includes developing comprehensive plans that integrate various aspects of state promotion, such as tourism, exports, culture, sports, or public diplomacy. Effective strategies require not only identifying key strengths and values that the country wants to promote but also understanding the audience of these actions and effective communication.

Collaboration between ministries - Effective nation branding requires coordination and cooperation between different ministries and government agencies. Each ministry can contribute to creating a positive image of the country through its actions and initiatives. For example, the Ministry of Culture can promote cultural heritage, the Ministry of Economy can emphasize innovation and entrepreneurship, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs can build relationships with other countries and international organizations.

Activities of state centres operating abroad: Institutions such as the Sejong Institutes, Polish Institutes, and Alliance Française play a significant role in promoting the culture, language, and values of their countries abroad. These centres not only teach language and present culture but also organize events, cooperate with local institutions, and create a platform for cultural exchange. Through these activities, they help shape a positive image of their country among foreigners, contributing to the building of a strong and positive nation brand.

All of the actions listed are closely interconnected and require coordination to ensure consistency and effectiveness in communicating a unified and appealing image of the country abroad. The government, acting as a leader and coordinator of these activities, plays a fundamental role in building and maintaining a strong national brand.



In the process of shaping a nation's brand strategy, precise definition of strategic goals and in-depth identification of national strengths, which contribute to the message's strength on the international stage, are of paramount importance. In the context of nation branding, goal definition involves articulating clear, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound objectives that the government intends to achieve through strategic communication and promotional actions. These goals should be synchronized with national development strategies and reflect a long-term vision of the country's desired positioning on the global stage. Nevertheless, identifying strengths requires comprehensive recognition and selection of those elements of natural, cultural, social, and economic heritage that can be promoted as unique values of the country. This phase of the strategic process is not limited to internal introspection but also requires the use of research methods to understand external perceptions and expectations. These elements form the foundation upon which the narrative of the nation brand is built, enabling the creation of a coherent and understandable message for the audience.

Strategic goal definition and asset identification require an interdisciplinary approach that combines knowledge from strategic management, marketing, international communication, as well as cultural and social research. It is important for this process to be conducted iteratively, allowing for continuous adaptation to changing international conditions and internal dynamics of the country.

1. Natural resources - unique landscapes, flora, fauna, that can attract tourists or investments in specific sectors (e.g., renewable energy).
2. Cultural and historical heritage - art, music, literature, monuments, festivals, that can generate interest and build a positive image.
3. Achievements and innovations - successes in science, technology, education, or business, that can showcase the country as a leader in certain fields.
4. People and society - quality of life, hospitality, creativity, and other social characteristics can be important in building a friendly and open image of the country.

The above elements, in the context of nation branding, constitute the key pillars on which the entire strategic structure is based. Their meticulous and methodical development is necessary to build strong foundations for an effective and long-term country promotion strategy on the



international stage, allowing to achieve strategic goals and the creation of a desirable global image.

ZA significant element in the national branding process is in-depth analysis and research, allowing the government to gain a holistic and multidisciplinary understanding of both the internal strengths and potentials of the country and its external perception and position on the international stage. These two areas of analysis - internal and external - are inseparably linked and mutually influence each other, creating a comprehensive picture that is necessary for effective and conscious management of the nation's brand.

Within the framework of internal analysis, a deep understanding of national resources, culture, history, economic achievements, and innovation, as well as unique social and ethical values, becomes the foundation for identifying those characteristics that may be attractive from an international perspective and may be key points in brand communication. This self-aware and introspective approach allows for the identification of authentic and compelling elements of national identity that can be emphasized in the nation branding strategy.

Even so, external analysis focuses on understanding how the country is perceived by external observers - including potential tourists, investors, trading partners, and the international community. Through opinion research, media analysis, and case studies of other countries, valuable insights can be obtained regarding the country's current reputation, as well as areas that require improvement or transformation in an international context.

By integrating the results of internal and external analysis, the government can develop effective communication strategies that not only highlight the country's unique characteristics and values but also effectively respond to perceptions and expectations of the global community. Such a strategic approach allows not only for strengthening the positive image of the country but also for effective navigation in the dynamic and competitive international environment.

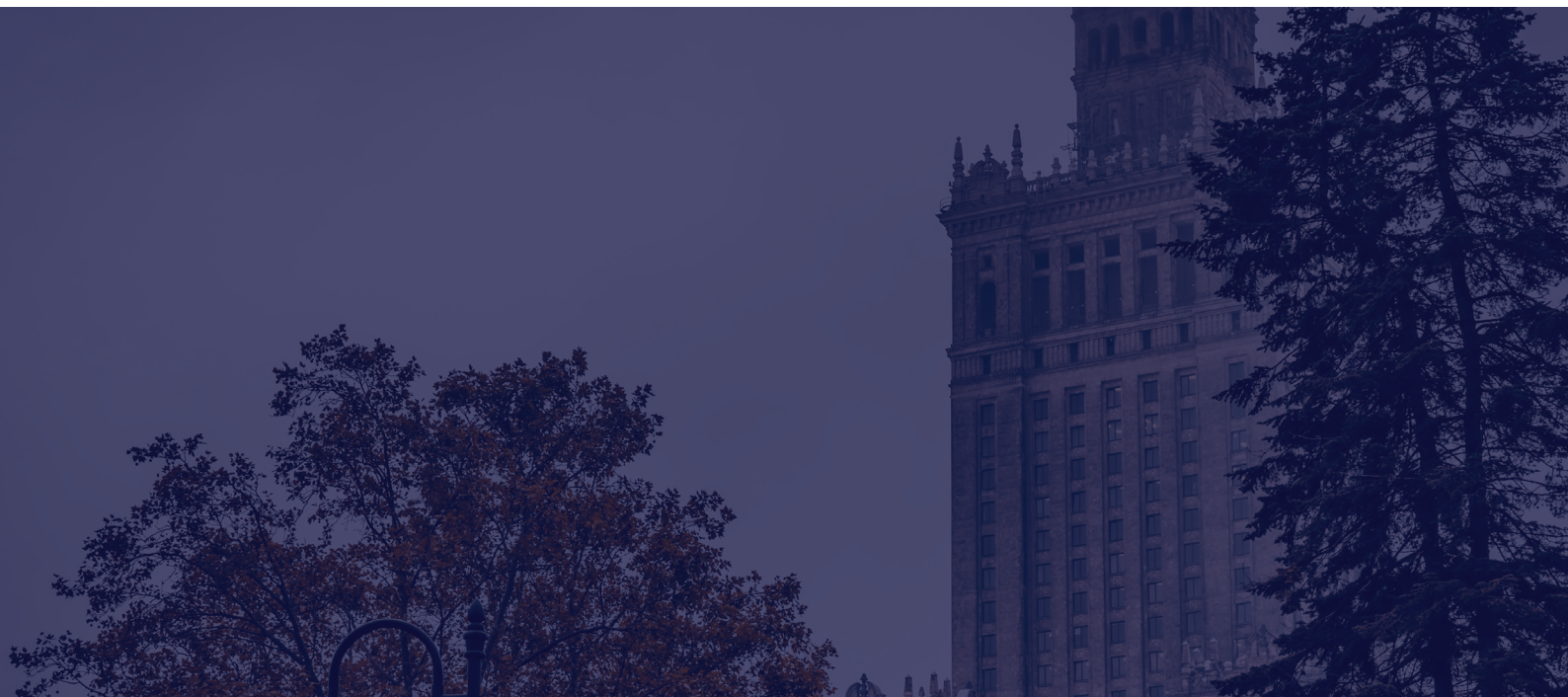
In the global context, where every country strives to stand out and build a positive reputation, understanding both internal strengths and external perception is crucial. Only through an integrated and holistic approach to analysis and research can governments effectively shape



strategies that are both authentic and credible, resonating with international audiences, thereby building a strong and enduring nation brand.

Formulating a strategy in the context of nation branding is a process in which the government shapes an integrated action plan aimed at promoting the country on the international stage. It is a stage where internal and external analysis, as well as identified goals and assets, are transformed into specific initiatives and programs.

During the formulation of the strategy, a key task is to determine the main messages that the country wants to communicate to the world, and to define specific goals that these messages are intended to support. This strategy should reflect the unique values and assets of the country, while also addressing the perceptions and expectations of the international community. The next step is to identify the target groups of the strategy. These can be potential tourists, foreign investors, international business organizations, governments of other countries, foreign media, or the global public opinion. Understanding their needs, expectations, and preferences is crucial for effective communication and interaction. Next, the strategy should specify the channels and methods of communication that will be used to convey the main messages. This may include media campaigns, events, international cooperation, cultural initiatives, educational programs, and other actions that can effectively reach selected target groups and strengthen the positive image of the country. It is also important to consider mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation,





which will allow tracking progress and assessing the effectiveness of individual elements of the strategy. This enables adjustments and optimization of actions in response to changing conditions or received results.

In formulating the strategy, it is also important to ensure its consistency and integration with other government plans and actions. The national branding strategy should not be isolated but linked to broader national and international goals, creating a coherent and multidimensional image of the country.

Overall, formulating a strategy for nation's branding is a complex process that requires strategic thinking, creativity, and the ability to integrate diverse data and perspectives to create an effective and coherent action plan. It is a stage where vision becomes reality through thoughtful, purposeful, and integrated actions.

Implementation and coordination in the process of national branding constitute stages where the strategy transforms from a plan into reality, which requires organized introduction and management of various initiatives and actions. This critical moment in the national branding process requires all planned activities to be executed according to established goals, resources, timeframes, and budget.

During the implementation phase, specific actions such as promotional campaigns, diplomatic initiatives, cultural, and educational programs are launched based on detailed action plans. Each of these undertakings requires precise scheduling, resource allocation, and assignment of responsibilities to ensure their effective execution. This is the time when the strategy begins to impact the international stage, and the country actively shapes its perception and image. Coordination is equally essential as it ensures that all actions are carried out consistently and complementarily. This requires an integrated approach and continuous communication among various agencies, ministries, and other stakeholders to ensure that all elements of the strategy reinforce each other and contribute to a unified image of the nation. Effective coordination also helps avoid duplication of efforts and ensures that all initiatives are aligned with the main message and goals of the strategy.



Engagement of various stakeholders, including the private sector, non-governmental organizations, diaspora communities, and citizens, is crucial for enriching and deepening a nation's branding efforts. Their active participation can significantly contribute to building a positive image of the country by offering additional perspectives and channels of communication. The dynamic nature of strategy implementation also requires flexibility and readiness for adjustments. Regular monitoring of progress and evaluation of results enable swift responses to changing circumstances and real-time optimization of actions. Such adaptive management allows for maximizing the effectiveness of the national branding strategy, enabling continuous improvement, and increasing its impact on the international image of the country.

As a result, implementation and coordination involve not only the execution of planned activities but also the creation of synergies between them, ensuring their coherence with the overall vision, and adapting the strategy to the evolving environment, all of which shape the perception and reputation of the country worldwide.

At the final stage of the nation's branding process, communication and engagement building emerge as two inseparable spheres of action that play a crucial role in anchoring and expanding the achieved image of the country. This process requires the government to construct and maintain a two-way flow of information, both with the international community and within the country, to ensure that nation branding efforts are adequately perceived and supported.

In the international context, effective communication of the nation's brand entails systematically conveying coherent, thoughtful, and persuasive information that reflects both aspirations and unique national characteristics. Such communication aims not only to inform but also to build positive associations and reinforce the perception of the country as an attractive partner, investment and tourist destination, or a source of cultural experiences. Simultaneously, the government must actively engage diverse stakeholders, including businesses, non-governmental organizations, diasporas, and citizens, in the process of building and promoting the nation's brand. Such broad engagement fosters the creation of strong alliances and supports multidimensional brand actions, ensuring their broader reach and depth. The active participation and endorsement of these groups not only strengthen external actions but also contribute to fostering a sense of community and national pride.



Equally crucial is the internal strengthening of the brand, where the government, through communication directed at citizens, seeks to build national identification with the national brand. By making citizens aware of their role in promoting the country's positive image, the government can inspire active participation in this field, which significantly impacts the authenticity and effectiveness of brand actions. Additionally, this process must be supported by continuous monitoring and evaluation, allowing for an understanding of how brand initiatives are perceived and what resonances they generate. Such feedback is invaluable for further shaping the strategy, enabling its flexible adaptation to changing conditions and expectations.

In summary, communication and engagement-building in the context of a nation's brand are essential for achieving resonance and sustainability in the country's image. These processes not only strengthen and disseminate the achieved positive perceptions but also create a platform for continuous interaction, adaptation, and growth, which is crucial for maintaining a dynamic and effective national brand on the international stage.



The role of public institutions

private entities, projects and initiatives
in shaping Polish soft power

The role of public institutions, private entities, projects and initiatives in shaping Polish soft power

Shaping Poland's image abroad is a process that plays a crucial role in promoting the Polish economy, culture, and innovation on the international stage. Actions taken by Polish investment agencies, enterprises, and other entities have a significant impact on building a positive image of Poland as an attractive place for investment, a trading partner, and a centre of creativity. In this chapter, an analysis of the activities of entities such as the following is presented:

- Polish Investment and Trade Agency (PAIH), which actively supports foreign investment in Poland and promotes Polish entrepreneurs in the global market. By participating in major global economic events such as the World Economic Forum and Hannover Messe, PAIH creates a positive image of Poland as an attractive investment market and trading partner.
- Export Credit Agency (pol. Korporacja Ubezpieczeń Kredytów Eksportowych - KUKE) supports Polish exporters on the international stage by providing export credit insurance and trade risk management services. In 2020, the value of export insurance exceeded PLN 50 billion, and the total value of secured export transactions exceeded PLN 87 billion.
- Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego (BGK) plays a significant role in supporting Poland's economic development and promoting its positive image internationally by providing financial support to various sectors of the economy. In 2020, the Bank provided financial support totalling over PLN 8 billion for infrastructure development, entrepreneurship, and the housing sector.
- Orlen, one of the largest oil companies in Poland, contributes to shaping Poland's image abroad through its involvement in promoting Polish culture, scientific achievements, and supporting the development of local communities internationally.
- The Polish Institutes is a network of cultural and educational institutions that work to promote Polish culture, language, and scientific achievements abroad.
- CD Projekt, one of the most significant Polish video game producers, contributes to shaping a positive image of Poland abroad by offering innovative video games and promoting



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Polish creativity and innovation on the international stage.

- Izero, Reserved, and Ziąja are also examples of Polish companies that contribute to the promotion of Polish creativity, design, and high-quality products in international markets. Additionally, Wojciech Zaremba and his activities related to the company OpenAI are noteworthy contributors to promoting Polish innovation and expertise on the global stage.

Polish Investment and Trade Agency

Polish Investment and Trade Agency (PAIH) plays a significant role in promoting the Polish economy and building a positive image of Poland abroad. PAIH engages in promoting the achievements of Polish companies and investments by presenting them at international trade fairs, conferences, and promotional campaigns. The agency actively participates in major global economic events such as the World Economic Forum and Hannover Messe, showcasing investment opportunities in Poland and successes of Polish enterprises. PAIH organizes international congresses, conferences, and business meetings, providing an excellent opportunity to promote Poland's economic potential. These events gather business representatives, investors, and foreign partners, facilitating the exchange of experiences and presentation of achievements of Polish companies. PAIH collaborates with foreign media to promote the achievements of the Polish economy and foreign investments in Poland. The agency actively provides press releases, reports, and case studies presenting the successes of Polish businesses and foreign investors in Poland. PAIH utilizes social media and online platforms to promote the achievements of the Polish economy and foreign investments in Poland. The agency conducts informational activities by publishing reports, market analyses, and case studies presenting Poland's economic potential and successes of Polish companies.

The data collected on the activities of the Polish Investment and Trade Agency and trends in foreign investments in Poland are very promising. According to the National Bank of Poland, the value of reinvested profits accounted for the largest share of net inflows of foreign investments in Poland, which demonstrates investors' confidence in the Polish economy and willingness to reinvest. Poland has recorded an increase in the inflow of new foreign investments, resulting in advancement from the seventh to the sixth place in the ranking of European countries attracting



The role of public institutions

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the most investments. In 2020, Poland received a total inflow of foreign direct investments amounting to PLN 53.94 billion (EUR 11.77 billion)²³.

The National Bank of Poland informs that as much as 94% of investors are willing to reinvest in Poland, which is a significant proof of confidence in the Polish economy, and this willingness to reinvest in the country is growing every year. Additionally, Poland is a leader in the Central and Eastern Europe region in terms of the number of greenfield investments and ranks third in Europe in terms of the value of investments. In 2019, the estimated value of investments in Poland amounted to USD 21.8 billion, indicating the country's stable economy and its resilience to crises, even during the COVID-19 pandemic. The largest investment projects supported by PAIH in 2021 had a total value of EUR 3.5 billion. Furthermore, the value of foreign investments that are or will be realized in Poland with the support of PAIH is estimated at over EUR 7.4 billion, which is almost double the value compared to 2022 (EUR 3.74 billion). An example of such an investment is Intel's semiconductor integration and testing plant worth USD 4.6 billion, which will allow for the employment of over 2,000 new workers²⁴.

Export Credit Agency

Export Credit Agency (pol. Korporacja Ubezpieczeń Kredytów Eksportowych – KUKE) was established in 1991 and has since actively supported Polish businesses by providing export credit insurance and related trade risk management services. KUKE is the only insurer in Poland authorized to offer export insurance guaranteed by the State Treasury, ensuring security in trade in high-risk political markets.

KUKE offers a range of supportive actions to assist Polish exporters. It insures long-term export projects of investment nature, financed with a repayment period of two or more years. Through its factoring company, KUKE Finance SA, it finances foreign and domestic receivables in all types of factoring available on the market, with particular emphasis on full factoring, which involves assuming the risk of customer insolvency. KUKE offers insurance against the insolvency of foreign counterparties, enabling the protection of exported goods and services and minimizing the

²³ https://www.paih.gov.pl/en/why_poland/investment_potential/

²⁴ <https://www.funduszeuropejskie.gov.pl/en/site/learn-more-about-european-funds/effects-of-european-funds-2014-2020/>



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financial risks associated with export activities. KUKE allows Polish branches of foreign companies to benefit from the same insurance opportunities as Polish enterprises, enhancing the security of foreign transactions and potentially leading to the creation of new jobs in Poland, as well as increasing the innovation and competitiveness of the economy. Through its supportive activities, KUKE contributes to shaping Poland's positive image as a reliable trading partner and provider of high-quality goods and services in global markets. Providing support to Polish exporters, especially in the context of involvement in the reconstruction of Ukraine, demonstrates KUKE's commitment to promoting the Polish economy internationally.

According to data provided by KUKE, in 2020, the value of export insurance exceeded PLN 50 billion, and the total value of secured export transactions exceeded PLN 87 billion²⁵. These figures are evidence of significant support provided by KUKE to Polish exporters and their involvement in promoting Polish goods and services in international markets. Operating under the supervision of the State Treasury, KUKE plays a crucial role in supporting Polish exporters and promoting Poland's image internationally by providing financial security in trade transactions and offering financial support in the form of insurance and factoring²⁶.

Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego

Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego (BGK) is a financial institution of crucial importance for the development of Poland. It plays a significant role in supporting the Polish economy by providing loans, guarantees, and financing for investment projects, and it also engages in promoting Poland's image abroad through active participation in international initiatives.

BGK carries out a variety of activities supporting Poland's economic development, including providing credits for infrastructure investments such as road, rail, port, and airport construction, contributing to the improvement of the country's infrastructure and increasing its investment attractiveness. BGK offers various financial instruments, including investment loans and guarantees, supporting Polish enterprises in expanding their operations, investing in new technologies, and enhancing competitiveness in the market. The bank implements financial programs supporting

²⁵ <https://www.kuke.com.pl/relacje-inwestorskie/raporty-okresowe-i-gieldowe/raporty-okresowe>

²⁶ <https://kuke.com.pl/wiedza/nowelizacja-ustawy-o-gwarantowanych-przez-skarb-panstwa-ubezpieczeniach-eksportowych>



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residential construction, which contributes to increasing housing availability and improving living conditions in Poland.

BGK actively engages in promotional activities aimed at shaping a positive image of Poland abroad. Through participation in international investment projects and collaboration with financial institutions from other countries, the bank promotes the Polish economy and builds trust in Polish financial institutions internationally. BGK provided financial support for the construction project of the Central Communication Port, which is to become a modern transportation hub of international significance, contributing to the improvement of Poland's transportation infrastructure and increasing the country's attractiveness to foreign investors. BGK actively participates in programs supporting residential construction, contributing to the increase in the number of available housing units and improving the quality of life for residents.

According to data provided by BGK, in 2020, the bank provided financial support totalling over PLN 8 billion for purposes related to infrastructure development, entrepreneurship, and the housing sector²⁷. This figure demonstrates BGK's significant commitment to the country's economic development and building a positive image of Poland abroad through financial support in various sectors of the economy. BGK collaborates with other financial institutions and export support agencies, such as KUKE, PAIH, and ARP (the Polish Development Agency), to support exports and investment projects of Polish companies on six continents²⁸.

In 2020, Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego provided financial support totalling over PLN 10.7 billion for more than 190 projects, which represents a significant contribution to promoting Polish business in international markets. Through providing financial support and securing export transactions, BGK plays a crucial role in promoting Polish goods and services worldwide. Furthermore, as an initiator, co-founder, and main shareholder of the Three Seas Fund, BGK invests in transportation, energy, and digital infrastructure in the countries of the Three Seas region, contributing to promoting Poland as a trading and investment partner on the international stage²⁹.

²⁷ <https://www.bgk.pl/relacje-inwestorskie/raporty-okresowe-i-gieldowe/raporty-okresowe>

²⁸ <https://www.en.bgk.pl/programmes/export-and-foreign-expansion/>

²⁹ <https://www.eib.org/en/press/all/2022-399-the-eib-and-bgk-successfully-issued-the-first-tranche-of-bonds-under-the-eib-solidarity-package>



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Orlen

Orlen is one of the largest oil companies in Poland, whose operations extend beyond national borders, contributing to shaping Poland's image abroad. The company carries out a variety of activities that promote Polish culture, scientific achievements, and support the development of local communities on the international stage.

Orlen is actively involved in sponsoring various cultural events, such as music and film festivals, allowing for the promotion of Polish culture abroad. An example of this is the support provided to the Tauron Nowa Muzyka festival in Katowice, which is recognized as one of the most important music events in Poland. The company also sponsors Polish sports teams, such as the Orlen Wisła Płock handball team, which achieves success both nationally and internationally. Orlen conducts several social initiatives that have a positive impact on local communities. An example of this is the "Let's help together" (pol. „Pomóżmy Razem”) program, which supports local communities through various charitable and social activities. The Orlen Group actively engages in projects related to sustainable development, contributing to improving Poland's image as a country that cares about the environment and local communities³⁰.

It is also worth mentioning that the company became the General Sponsor of the Krakow-Małopolska 2023 European Games³¹. Through this sponsorship, Orlen has strengthened its presence on the international stage, while simultaneously contributing to the promotion of Poland abroad.

Polish Institutes

The Polish Institutes is a network of cultural and educational institutions that work to promote Polish culture, language, and scientific achievements abroad. Through the organization of cultural events, language courses, and other initiatives, the Polish Institutes contribute to shaping a positive image of Poland worldwide.

³⁰ <https://www.orlen.pl/pl/dla-biznesu/hurtowe-ceny-paliw>

³¹ <https://european-games.org/pkn-orlen-becomes-the-general-sponsor-of-the-european-games/>



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The Polish Institutes offer Polish language courses and organize cultural events such as concerts, exhibitions, and film screenings. An example of this is the organization of „Polish Day” in other countries, during which elements of Polish culture, art, and tradition are presented. The Polish Institutes engage in promoting Polish education abroad by organizing seminars, conferences, and collaborating with foreign universities. This supports educational development and promotes Poland’s scientific achievements. The Polish Institutes also collaborate with local cultural, educational, and scientific institutions. They support Polish artists, scientists, and entrepreneurs, helping them promote their work and achievements internationally³².

Through their efforts in promoting culture, language, and education, the Polish Institutes play a significant role in shaping a positive image of Poland abroad, introducing Polish culture and scientific achievements to a broad international audience. One of the institutions promoting Polish culture abroad is the Adam Mickiewicz Institute (AMI)³³. AMI specializes in promoting Polish culture abroad by initiating international exchanges between Polish and foreign cultural institutions, co-producing artistic events, organizing study visits, and ensuring the presence of Polish artists on the international stage.

AMI organizes exhibitions, concerts, film screenings, and festivals. Through collaboration with renowned foreign institutions, AMI has reached 60 million foreign audiences through projects carried out on 6 continents and in 70 countries, including the United Kingdom, France, Russia, Israel, Germany, Turkey, the United States, Canada, Australia, China, Japan, and Korea. AMI aims to develop international dialogue, with a particular emphasis on neighbouring nations. The institute carries out its mission openly, promoting the broadest possible access to cultural heritage and scientific resources. Through such initiatives, the Polish Institutes effectively contribute to promoting Polish culture, art, and achievements abroad, strengthening ties between Poland and other countries.

³² <https://www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja/instituty-polskie>

³³ <https://instytutpolski.pl/london/get-to-know-poland/culture-in-poland/>



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CD Projekt

CD Projekt is one of the most significant Polish video game developers, whose activities contribute to shaping a positive image of Poland abroad. The company not only achieves success in the international market but also promotes Polish creativity and innovation through its products and involvement in various initiatives.

CD Projekt is the creator of one of the most well-known video game series in the world - „The Witcher”. The company actively supports Polish game developers through initiatives such as the „Indie Showcase”, providing Polish independent developers with the opportunity to promote their projects internationally. CD Projekt Red is known for its technological innovations in video games, contributing to the promotion of Poland as a country with a developed technological sector.

According to data published by CD Projekt, „The Witcher” series has sold over 50 million copies worldwide. These figures confirm the significant impact the company has on shaping the image of Poland abroad through its innovative and creative products³⁴.

The game „The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt” has had a significant impact on the dissemination of Polish culture worldwide through its narrative, inspiration from Polish literature, mythology, folklore, landscapes, and promotion of Polish talents in the video game industry. The game is based on motifs from the series of books by Andrzej Sapkowski, a well-known Polish fantasy writer. Thanks to its success, Sapkowski’s works gained international popularity, contributing to the promotion of Polish literature and culture.

„The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt” showcased the abilities of Polish video game creators to the world, solidified CD Projekt Red’s position as a leading game developer globally, and increased interest in the video game industry in Poland. The game received acclaim from critics and players worldwide, contributing to enhancing Poland’s reputation as a country with a developed entertainment industry.

³⁴ <https://www.cdprojekt.com/en/investors/>



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The success of the game contributed to increasing interest in Polish culture, history, and folklore, which may affect the growth of tourism in the country. Locations inspired by Polish landscapes in the game, such as forests, mountains, and cities, contributed to the promotion of the Polish landscape and tourist attractions.

Izera

Izera is a Polish brand of electric cars with ambitions to create a competitive vehicle in the global market. The Izera project not only relates to the development of the automotive industry in Poland but also aims to promote innovation, ecology, and advanced technologies, thus contributing to shaping a positive image of Poland abroad.

The project to create a Polish electric car that will compete in the international market also aims to raise Poland's status as a country with a developed automotive industry and promote eco-friendly transportation solutions. The Izera brand draws inspiration from the Izera Mountains, symbolizing purity and the power of nature. This approach to car design reflects the Polish landscape and nature, serving as a positive reference to Poland's culture and heritage. Izera has European aspirations and plans to be available beyond Poland's borders, contributing to the promotion of innovative and advanced technologies in the Polish automotive industry internationally.





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The Izero project symbolizes the development of the Polish automotive industry, which is a positive reference to Poland's economic potential. The electric nature of the Izero car symbolizes Poland's commitment to developing eco-friendly transportation solutions, contributing to the promotion of Poland as a country that cares about the natural environment. The use of modern technologies in the Izero project emphasizes the innovation of the Polish industry, contributing to the promotion of Poland as a technologically advancing country.

Izero presented its brand of electric cars publicly on July 28, 2020, unveiling two elegant prototypes: a hatchback and an SUV³⁵. These vehicles, the result of four years of work and research, were designed by an international team consisting of Polish engineers and employees of the Torino Design studio from Italy. Renowned Polish car designer Tadeusz Jelec, who worked for Jaguar for 30 years, also participated in creating the vehicles.

The brand refers to Polish art, including the works of artists such as Katarzyna Kobro, Magdalena Abakanowicz, and Magdalena Karpińska, who influenced the interior design of the car. The interior of the vehicles is characterized by spaciousness and a cozy, family-friendly character, reflecting inspirations from Polish art. In the future, Izero plans to produce 100,000 vehicles annually. The company aims to export its cars beyond Poland's borders, which is a significant step towards promoting Polish innovation and advanced technologies internationally.

According to a report published by InsideEVs, the first models of Izero will enter production in 2025³⁶. This step towards mass production is a significant moment for the brand, which aims to compete in the international electric car market. Izero's activity in designing innovative electric cars and drawing inspiration from Polish culture and nature contributes to promoting Poland as a technologically advancing and innovative country on the global automotive scene.

Reserved, Ziaja and activity of the Poles in the world

Reserved, a part of LPP S.A. based in Gdańsk, is one of the most well-known Polish fashion brands, achieving success not only in the domestic market but also internationally. The brand offers a

³⁵ <https://culture.pl/en/article/izera-the-polish-electric-car-inspired-by-art-nature>

³⁶ <https://insideevs.com/news/660291/polish-ev-startup-izera-first-models/>



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wide range of clothing for women, men, and children, as well as fashion accessories. Reserved plays a crucial role in shaping a positive image of Poland abroad through its innovative projects, advertising campaigns, and expansion into foreign markets.

Reserved is the flagship brand of LPP S.A., achieving significant success in both the Polish and international markets. The first Reserved stores were opened in the mid-1990s in Poland, and currently, there are over 110 stores in the country and more than 120 abroad, including in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Russia, Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Ukraine. Reserved is known for its innovative advertising campaigns aimed at building the desired brand image. From the very beginning, Reserved has conducted advertising campaigns including outdoor, television, radio, print, and online ads, carefully selecting models who have previously collaborated with other prestigious brands. In addition to its success in the domestic market, Reserved has succeeded in international markets, contributing to the promotion of Polish creativity and design on the international stage.

The participation of Kendall Jenner, one of the most recognizable faces in the fashion world, in the „Ciao Kendall“ campaign solidified Reserved’s position internationally, contributing to the promotion of Polish fashion and design abroad³⁷. This campaign is a clear example of Reserved’s commitment to shaping a positive image of Poland abroad through the promotion of Polish creativity and design in the international fashion world.

Ziaja, a well-known Polish cosmetic brand, plays a significant role in shaping a positive image of Poland abroad by offering high-quality cosmetics based on natural ingredients at competitive prices. Ziaja was founded in 1989 by pharmacists Zenon and Aleksandra Ziaja, becoming one of the largest cosmetic companies in Poland. The company has 25 years of experience in the pharmaceutical and cosmetic markets, offering over 900 skincare, body care, and hair care products, including high-quality pharmaceutical-grade products.

Ziaja emphasizes providing customers with high-quality products at attractive prices without compromising on the safety and effectiveness of the products. The company holds certifications

³⁷ <https://graziadaily.co.uk/fashion/news/reserved-kendall-jenner-sponsored/>



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such as ISO 9001:2008 and GMP, and its products are manufactured in accordance with European cosmetic law.

Ziaja does not conduct animal testing or use raw materials classified as CMR (carcinogenic, mutagenic, harmful to reproduction). With its Polish roots, Ziaja has also achieved success in foreign markets, enjoying recognition from customers worldwide. Ziaja continuously develops its product range, introducing new product lines such as „Baltic Home Spa vitality” and „Delicious Skin Care”, which demonstrates the company’s commitment to continuous improvement and adaptation to customer needs³⁸.

According to the report „Foreign Investments in Poland 2009–2011”, Ziaja has succeeded in foreign markets, contributing to the promotion of Polish creativity and design on the international stage³⁹. This success confirms Ziaja’s commitment to shaping a positive image of Poland in foreign markets. As a Polish cosmetic brand, Ziaja plays a significant role in promoting Polish creativity, innovation, and high-quality cosmetic products internationally. Its commitment to offering products based on natural ingredients at attractive prices contributes to building a positive image of Poland abroad.

Ziaja actively exports its products to many countries worldwide, including the USA, Czech Republic, Russia, Ireland, Germany, Hungary, Slovenia, Slovakia, and Finland.

Since the time of Marie Curie-Skłodowska, Poland has been known for outstanding achievements in science and technology. However, in recent years, it is Wojciech Zaremba and his work associated with OpenAI that stand out as a symbol of modern Polish technical achievements. His work contributes to building a positive image of Poland abroad by promoting the achievements of Polish science and technology. As one of the founders and chief scientists at OpenAI, Wojciech Zaremba is widely recognized as a visionary in the field of artificial intelligence. His contributions to the development of advanced machine learning algorithms and work on creating intelligent computer systems attract global attention. His achievements not only demonstrate individual talent but also represent the potential of Polish scientists and engineers on the international

³⁸ <https://www.zjashop.com/pages/about-ziaja>

³⁹ https://issuu.com/msz.gov.pl/docs/polands_10_years_in_the_eu



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stage. His accomplishments inspire young Poles to pursue education and careers in technical fields, which in turn can contribute to increased innovation and technological development in the country. Moreover, Poland's positive image as a country supporting technological development can attract foreign investment and facilitate easier knowledge and technology transfer between Poland and other countries.



Building a brand through the economy

Case study of 1989–2022 economic success and Poland.
Business Harbour.

Building a brand through the economy. Case study of 1989–2022 economic success and Poland. Business Harbour.

Building a brand through the economy is also one of the main areas in which countries develop their branding and soft power policies. The goal of state-driven brand building in the economy is to create competitive advantages on the international stage. In this area, Poland can actively build its „success story” brand – a country that, from one of the poorer economies of the communist bloc, has become a regional economic champion, attracting talent and foreign investment.

In this area, Poland should showcase the success of the economic transformation in 1989 and the Poland. Business Harbour program.

Polish „economic miracle”

After 1989, following the fall of communism in Poland, our country embarked on a long and challenging path towards economic success. The systemic transformation that took place in the 1990s opened new opportunities and challenges for Poland. Initially, it was a time of difficulties and uncertainties, but thanks to persistent reforms and the determination of society and successive governments, Poland began to achieve economic success, transforming it into one of the key players on the European and global economic stage. As a result of these efforts, Poland has experienced steady GDP growth for many years and has gained significance as a trading partner for many countries worldwide.

Poland’s economic success is reflected in the statistics – Poland had the fastest-growing economy among all former Eastern Bloc countries throughout the period following the collapse of real socialism in 1989. Poland was among the top 25 economies with the highest GDP growth from 1990 to 2020. Over 30 years, our GDP has increased by over 850%(!), with the only country surpassing us in this ranking being China. The level of prosperity, measured as GDP per capita (in purchasing power parity), was almost five times higher than 30 years ago (in 1989, author’s



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note), and the real purchasing power of gross domestic product per capita has tripled. The value of Polish exports in the last three decades has increased 26-fold from \$13.2 billion in 1992 to USD 350 billion in 2022. In 2022, the export of goods and services amounted to EUR 404,034.7 million. Meanwhile, imports reached EUR 396,749.3 million, both marking the highest values in Poland's history. From 2020 to 2022, the annual inflow of foreign direct investment in Poland increased by USD 14.3 billion, compared to USD 7.8 billion in Romania, USD 5.3 billion in Slovakia, USD 1.5 billion in Hungary, and USD 0.4 billion in the Czech Republic. In 2022 alone, foreign companies invested over EUR 3.7 billion in Poland with the support of the Polish Investment and Trade Agency (PAIH).

Poland. Business Harbour.

Building a brand through the economy involves the creation of effective support programs. One of the successful examples of such brand building by Poland is the program called Poland. Business Harbour (PBH). It fits into the goals of Polish economic diplomacy, which include the general promotion of the economy and the investment climate in the country. The Poland. Business Harbour program is a comprehensive package facilitating smooth relocation to Poland for freelancers, startups, SMEs, and large companies. The organizers of the program are:

- GovTech Center in the Plenipotentiary of the Prime Minister,
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
- Ministry of Economic Development and Technology,
- Polish Investment and Trade Agency,
- Polish Agency for Enterprise Development.

The program was initiated in 2020 in response to the events of August 2020 in Belarus. Due to the political crisis and the authoritarian style of governance, Belarus is not perceived as a safe place for investment, business development, or career advancement. The political repercussions and tense atmosphere are not conducive to conducting business activities. Therefore, the Belarusian IT sector has begun, often involuntarily, to emigrate. Seeing the beginning of the „exodus” of part of the IT sector and listening to the voices of entrepreneurs from Belarus, Poland faced quite a challenge. The exodus of specialists and ICT companies from Belarus was inevitable - the question that remained was where they would relocate. Would they choose Poland, neighbouring



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Lithuania, or the broader West? It was a kind of natural „competition“ for Belarusian companies and specialists – the destination of emigration would gain significant human and knowledge capital. It was necessary to construct a comprehensive offer for the Belarusian IT sector and utilize the positive attitude of Belarusians towards our country – according to a study published by the OSW, about 74% of Belarusians declare a positive or rather positive attitude towards Poland, and nearly 83% towards Poles. Antipathy towards Poland (negative or rather negative attitude) is expressed by 18.5% of Belarusians, and towards Poles – by 10.9%.

For this purpose, in late August and September 2020, Poland. Business Harbour (PBH) was created and launched in September of that year.

PBH is a unique program within Polish economic diplomacy. The program pragmatically and realistically targeted the strong Belarusian ICT sector, providing comprehensive services and support in relocating to Poland for emigrating specialists, startups, and enterprises. The program was not open to all specialists or companies but rather focused on selected strategic areas due to support limitations. PBH focused on supporting individual IT specialists, startups, and mature companies – from micro-entrepreneurs to the largest players in the market. The program is the only one of its kind in the history of Poland and in Europe, open to both business and individual support. Support includes business advisory, support in fundraising, and obtaining a special type of visa.





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Initially, the program was dedicated to Belarusian entrepreneurs and specialists. However, due to the success of the program (55,000 visas by September 2022), the program was expanded globally. By the end of March 2023, the government program had attracted over 74,200 ICT specialists. According to PAIH data, by the end of March 2023, almost 93% of visa applications processed under the Poland. Business Harbour business path (i.e., at the request of Polish employers) and reviewed by Polish diplomatic missions outside the European Union were directed to Belarusian specialists and companies, with most of them resulting in PBH visa approvals. Some PBH visa applications were also granted as part of investments by Eastern European companies. By the end of March, the agency had handled 122 such projects, primarily involving entrepreneurs from Belarus (following the aggression on Ukraine, companies from Russia no longer receive support from PAIH).



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Summary

Given what has been said, Poland should build its brand as an economic champion, a leader of economic change, effectively attracting talent and investment by showcasing past successes and effective actions. PBH is a good example of how valuable a comprehensive, well-thought-out strategy in economic diplomacy can be, as recognized by organizations such as the Software Development Association Poland, which honoured the program with a Special Award. The jury appreciated the wide range of support tools targeted at the IT industry in Poland, its innovation, and coherent programmatic concept. All specialists, startups, and companies benefiting from the program contribute to the Polish economy, strengthening the digital and ICT market. It is one of the first Polish programs of its kind, enabling the large-scale acquisition of thousands of specialists and dozens of companies from neighbouring countries. This change builds a positive international image, strengthens Poland's position as an economic leader, and enhances Poland's economic reputation.

Poland's economic history can inspire other countries' development and allow for the building of Poland's soft power. Unfortunately, as noted by Professor Marcin Piątkowski, knowledge about Polish success is scarce. To address this, the story of Polish transformation should be disseminated using tools typical of public diplomacy, as well as economic diplomacy. Poland possesses the necessary tools, such as the Polish Investment and Trade Agency, diplomatic institutions, the Polish National Foundation, and the State of Poland foundation. Poland should create a narrative about Poles' ability to succeed and portray Poland as an economic haven and a role model in the economy



The Role of Local Governments in Building Poland's National Branding

Introduction

Contemporary Poland, like many other countries, emphasizes the promotion of its image on the international stage. However, it is not only the central government but above all local governments that play a key role in shaping the positive image of the country. What are the main tasks of local governments in this field, and what challenges do they face?

The Role of Local Governments in Promoting the Country

Local Character in a Global Context

Local governments, due to their proximity to the local community, have the opportunity to promote the unique traditions, culture, and heritage of their region, contributing to enriching the country's image as a whole.

Investments in Tourist Infrastructure

By developing local infrastructure, local governments attract tourists, which translates into a positive image of Poland as an attractive place to visit.

International Cooperation

Sister cities, cultural exchanges, and economic cooperation with other countries strengthen Poland's position on the international stage.

Economic Development and Business Environment Institutions

Economic development entails changes in the structure of the economy's production potential, production and consumption structure, socio-economic relations, and the economic system's



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functioning. It encompasses the entire sphere of economic activity of humans, both productive activity and the distribution of produced goods, not only through quantitative growth but primarily through structural and qualitative changes in the broadly understood economic management process.

The dynamically developing network of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the region can be its primary competitiveness factor. A characteristic feature of the new approach to innovation in regional policy is the emphasis on creating new resources in the region, rather than promoting activities aimed at the optimal allocation of existing resources. For the purposes of this article, business environment institutions will be defined as entities, regardless of legal form, acting for the development of entrepreneurship and innovation, not operating to achieve profit or allocating profit for statutory purposes in accordance with the provisions of the statute or other equivalent founding document. Possessing material, technical, human resources, and competencies necessary to provide services to the SME sector.

Business environment institutions can be divided based on the scope of their activities:

- operating at the local level;
- performing their tasks at the regional level or covering the entire province area;
- pursuing their goals on a supra-regional scale, i.e., encompassing at least several provinces or the entire country, and may also operate on the international stage.

Functioning of Business Environment Institutions (IOB) is associated with the economic situation in the region. Their activity is correlated with the level and dynamics of economic development. There is also a reverse relationship, i.e., IOBs influence regional development primarily through providing various services to entrepreneurs, which contribute, among other things, to improving the efficiency of economic activity, creating new entities, and developing human and social capital. Important elements of the business environment are loan funds, guarantee funds, venture capital funds, as well as industrial, science and technology parks, created to support economic innovation and technology transfer. Business Environment Institutions are a direct tool for the economic development of the region in which they operate, through opportunities provided to entrepreneurs, such as training, professionalization, and development of activity and potential, as



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well as financial instruments ensuring the stability of development, its security, and incentives for creating new business forms through, for example, grants for starting a business.

In this way, business environment institutions shape the development of the region by participating in the support structure for entrepreneurs and implementing tasks aimed at increasing the investment attractiveness of the region, by building a positive image and attracting potential investors.

Business environment institutions play an increasingly important role in the development of regions, including the Silesian Voivodeship. They carry out various activities, the most important of which are: advisory, training, informational-promotional activities, and support in starting economic activity. The main recipients of these services are small and medium-sized enterprises. Support for the internationalization processes by business environment institutions is a relatively new phenomenon in the region. The above-mentioned initiatives, if the assumed goal is achieved both qualitatively and quantitatively, will become a factor contributing to the recognition and identification of processes shaping the modern European space in the Silesian Voivodeship. The economic development of the region in the conditions of progressing globalization and growing mutual connections seems to be directly correlated with the internationalization of business activities. Strengthening the investment attractiveness of regions also directly results from the Regional Specialization Strategies, which remain the main axis of action for entities participating in and involved in the internationalization process.

The role of Local Governments

Local governments play a crucial role in shaping the country's image both domestically and internationally. Their actions have a direct impact on how the country is perceived by both citizens and external observers.

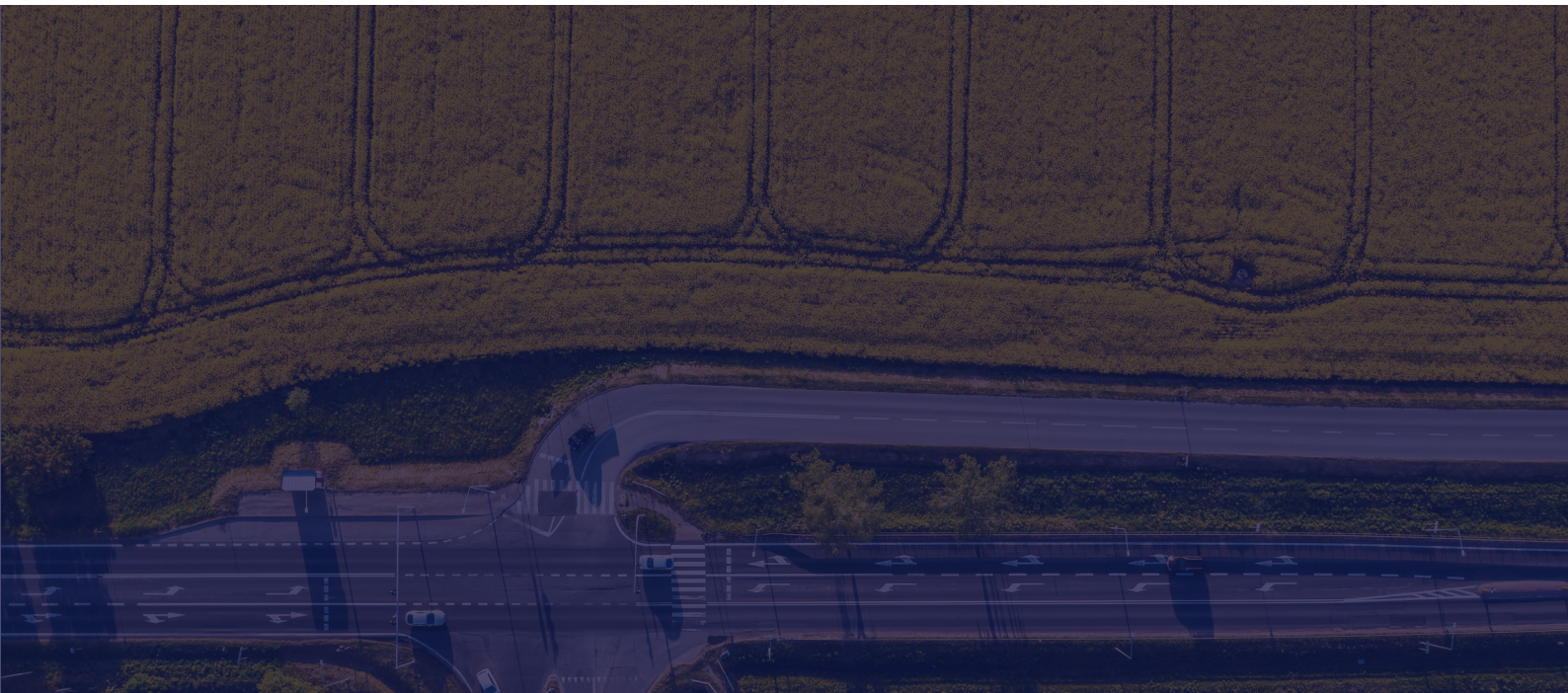
First and foremost, local governments are responsible for promoting local culture and heritage. By organizing festivals, events, and other cultural initiatives, they showcase the richness and diversity of their region. In this way, they emphasize the uniqueness of their territory, contributing to enriching the overall image of the country. Another important aspect of local government



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activity is investing in infrastructure. Decisions in this area, whether related to road modernization, construction of public facilities, or creation of recreational spaces, have a direct impact on the quality of life of residents and the attractiveness of the region for tourists and investors. Good transportation connections, modern public facilities, and attractive leisure areas can attract both tourists and potential investors, ultimately leading to a positive image of the country as a friendly place for residents and businesses. Local governments also play a significant role in building international relations. By forming partnerships with other cities and regions, engaging in cultural exchanges, and participating in international programs and initiatives, local governments contribute to promoting the country on the international stage.



Collaboration between local governments and partner regions across borders is a strategy that brings a wide range of benefits. One of the most important aspects of this cooperation is the opportunity for exchange of experiences. This allows local governments to draw inspiration from their partners, observing the solutions and innovations used elsewhere. This not only enables the adaptation of best practices but also facilitates the implementation of effective strategies within their own municipalities. In addition to the educational aspect, this cooperation also has an economic dimension. Local governments often gain access to international funds, grants, and other forms of financial support. These additional resources can be used for joint projects that



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benefit both sides of the partnership. Another important element is the development of tourism. By establishing relationships with partner regions, local governments have the opportunity to promote their tourist attractions among the residents of those regions. This, in turn, attracts tourists, leading to the revitalization of the local economy, creation of new jobs, and generation of revenue from the tourism sector. However, the benefits are not limited to the economic dimension. Collaboration with partner regions contributes to building a positive image of the local government on the international stage. It demonstrates that the local government is open to the world, willing to establish international relations, and ready to cooperate for the common good. Finally, such cooperation can lead to cultural exchange, where both sides have the opportunity to learn about the traditions, history, and culture of their partner. This can lead to the organization of cultural festivals, student exchanges, or other initiatives that enrich the cultural life of the region.

Collaboration between local governments and foreign partner regions has a profound impact on building a positive image of Poland on the international stage. When Polish local governments establish and maintain relations with foreign partners, they create opportunities to showcase Poland's progress and achievements in various fields. We can then demonstrate to the world how Poland has transformed into a modern, dynamic, and innovative country. At the same time, such partnerships enable the promotion of Poland's rich history, traditions, and culture. Through festivals, exhibitions, or concerts organized abroad, Poland is presented as a country with deep cultural roots and a rich heritage. This not only enriches Poland's image but also builds cultural bridges and understanding between nations. Beyond the cultural aspect, regular contacts and cooperation between local governments lead to building lasting relationships and trust. When these relationships are positive, they have a huge impact on Poland's image as a reliable and trustworthy partner on the international stage. Local government cooperation also provides an opportunity for Poland's economic promotion. Through partnerships with foreign regions, Poland can present its economic achievements, investment potential, and business opportunities. Consequently, Poland is perceived as an attractive place to invest and do business. The implementation of joint projects and initiatives with foreign partners is also important. It demonstrates Poland's ability to engage in effective cooperation and carry out ambitious projects on an international scale.

Moreover, such cooperation demonstrates Poland's openness to the world and willingness to build bridges between different countries and cultures.



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As a result, municipal cooperation contributes to creating a positive image of Poland abroad. In the longer term, this affects better international relations, greater investment opportunities, and strengthens Poland's position in the world. Above all, Polish entrepreneurs gain access to new markets. Thanks to international relations and partnerships, entrepreneurs can more easily establish trade contacts, acquire new customers, and business partners abroad. Municipal cooperation often leads to organizing business missions, fairs, or conferences, where entrepreneurs can present their offerings and establish direct business relationships. Additionally, thanks to such cooperation, entrepreneurs have the opportunity to exchange knowledge and experiences with foreign partners. They can draw inspiration from other markets, learn from others, and introduce innovations into their operations. International cooperation can also lead to the creation of joint ventures or strategic partnerships.

From the perspective of attracting investments, the positive image of Poland built through active municipal cooperation makes our country more attractive to foreign investors. When Poland is perceived as a country open to cooperation, politically and economically stable, and business-friendly, investors are more willing to invest their resources in our country. Additionally, international relations established by municipalities can help in attracting foreign direct investments. These partnerships often lead to visits by business delegations, which have the opportunity to see the investment opportunities that Poland offers. Municipalities can present investors with favourable investment conditions, such as economic zones, tax incentives, or support in accessing skilled workforce. Finally, foreign investors often seek local business partners, suppliers, or contractors. Thanks to international relations, Polish entrepreneurs have a greater chance of establishing such relationships and participating in international investment projects.

Poland's international cooperation at the municipal level

Over the past few years, Poland has become an attractive destination for foreign investors. Many of them have appreciated the positive image of our country, which has been developed, among other things, through active municipal cooperation with foreign partners. The Polish Investment and Trade Agency emphasized in its 2020 report that foreign direct investments exceeded EUR 13 billion. This impressive result is partly due to international relations established by municipalities.



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Additionally, the World Bank, in its „Doing Business“ report from 2019, identified Poland as one of the most business-friendly places in Central Europe. This prestigious ranking not only confirms that Poland is an attractive destination for investments but also attests to the effectiveness of municipalities' efforts in promoting their regions.

One specific example that can be cited is the cooperation between the city of Wrocław and Cheongju—the first agreement signed by the capital of Lower Silesia with a city in South Korea. This international cooperation has led to numerous business partnerships, including the establishment of LG Energy Solution Wrocław—a battery production centre for electric vehicles, the first in Lower Silesia and the largest in Europe. It is one of the largest employers in the region, employing over 10,000 people. This collaboration has not only brought direct economic benefits in the form of new jobs but has also strengthened Poland's positive image in Korea. Another example is the cooperation between the Pomerania region and the Skåne region in Sweden. Thanks to this collaboration, Gdańsk and other Pomeranian cities have become the location for numerous Swedish investments, as well as a place for cultural and scientific exchange.

One of the most significant examples of municipal cooperation is the relationship between the city of Łódź and Chengdu in China. This cooperation gained particular importance when a railway connection between the two cities was opened several years ago. Thanks to this connection, Łódź has become a key logistical hub for many international companies, especially those from China. The opportunity for fast transportation of goods between Poland and China has attracted many Chinese investments to Łódź. As a result, Polish entrepreneurs have gained not only access to the vast Chinese market but also the opportunity for direct cooperation with Chinese partners, accelerating the development of many local companies.

Another interesting case is the longstanding cooperation between Kraków and San Francisco in the United States. Although the two cities are thousands of kilometres apart, they have become close partners thanks to joint initiatives, especially in the technology sector. Kraków, known for its dynamically developing IT sector and startups, found an ideal partner in San Francisco, which has access to Silicon Valley—the global centre of innovation. This cooperation has led to many student exchanges, technology conferences, and joint research projects. For Kraków startups, this meant invaluable opportunities to connect with investors from Silicon Valley, raise capital, and



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expand into the American market. Conversely, for San Francisco, it was an opportunity to access talent and innovative solutions from Kraków.

In both cases, it can be observed that active municipal cooperation not only brings direct economic benefits to the regions but also strengthens their position on the international stage and builds a positive image of Poland abroad.

Support from the European Union

Local governments in Poland have a unique opportunity to utilize EU funds to develop their potential, which also contributes to creating a positive image of Poland as a trustworthy partner in Europe. The main value of EU funds is their ability to accelerate development in regions that may have difficulty financing certain projects independently. Since Poland's accession to the European Union in 2004, local governments have had access to significant sums of money that could be allocated to various initiatives. According to the Ministry of Funds and Regional Policy, in the years 2014-2020, Poland received a total of approximately EUR 82.5 billion from EU funds. A significant portion of these funds was allocated to local governments for projects in infrastructure, education, healthcare, culture, and environmental protection. As a result, many Polish cities and municipalities underwent dynamic transformations, becoming modern, attractive places for residents, tourists, and investors.

For example, the city of Poznań used EU funds to expand and modernize its public transportation system, contributing to improved mobility for residents and reduced CO2 emissions. Similarly, in Kraków, thanks to EU funds, a project to modernize the district heating system was implemented, directly impacting the improvement of air quality in the city. These investments not only raised the standard of living for residents but also contributed to shaping the image of Poland as a modern country that cares about the environment and the quality of life of its citizens. Furthermore, the effective implementation of projects funded by EU funds demonstrates the administrative competence of Polish local governments, building trust among foreign partners. Nevertheless, EU funds have also become a catalyst for innovation in many regions of Poland. Local governments invest in the development of technology parks, start-up incubators, and research and development centres. Wrocław, for example, has become one of the leading IT centres in Poland, partially due to support from EU funds.



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Special Economic Zones

Special Economic Zones (SEZs) are one of the tools that have significantly influenced Poland's image as an attractive destination for investors from around the world. Designed to stimulate economic development in specific regions, they have become a key factor in attracting foreign capital to Poland. Currently, we have 14 Special Economic Zones spread across the country, each with a unique profile and specialization. From the Silesian Special Economic Zone, which focuses on heavy industry and automotive, to the Pomeranian Special Economic Zone, where the new technologies and services sector dominates. They all share common features: offering tax incentives to investors, excellent infrastructure, and administrative support in investment realization.

The successes of SEZs are impressive. According to data from the Polish Investment and Trade Agency, since their inception, they have attracted investments worth over PLN 125 billion, creating over 300,000 jobs in the process. These are strong evidence that SEZs have become an important driver of Poland's economic development. The impact of SEZs on the development of individual regions is invaluable. For example, thanks to the Lubusz Special Economic Zone, a region that once struggled with high unemployment has become one of Poland's leaders in manufacturing sector investments. Similarly, in the case of the Warmian-Masurian Special Economic Zone, which has contributed to the development of the food and timber industry in northern Poland. But it's not just about new jobs or attracting investments. SEZs have also influenced the perception of Poland as an innovative country, open to new technologies and business trends. Thanks to them, regions that were previously perceived as less developed have become attractive to global giants such as LG, Toyota, or General Electric. At the same time, SEZs have created an ecosystem supporting the development of local enterprises. Thanks to the proximity of large international companies, many Polish SMEs were able to collaborate with them, supplying products or services, contributing to their development and expansion into foreign markets.

Summary

Poland's development in recent decades, especially since joining the European Union, is the result



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of multidimensional efforts aimed at creating a strong economy and building a positive image of the country internationally. Elements such as Special Economic Zones (SEZs), active municipal actions, strategic use of EU funds, and cooperation with foreign partner regions have been the cornerstones of this success.

SEZs, scattered throughout the country, have attracted hundreds of investors from around the world, creating jobs and driving innovation in the process. Municipal cooperation, both nationally and internationally, has focused on exchanging experiences, establishing lasting partnerships, and promoting Poland as a trustworthy partner in culture, science, and business.

EU funds have become key to implementing many ambitious projects in various regions of Poland, from modern transportation networks to investments in education and environmental protection projects. These actions have led to dynamic economic development, improved quality of life for residents, and strengthened Poland's position as an attractive investment destination.

Looking to the future, there are many opportunities to continue this positive trend. Technological advancements, especially in areas such as artificial intelligence, biotechnology, and renewable energy, present opportunities to attract new, technologically advanced investments. Polish municipalities will have the opportunity for deeper collaboration with foreign partners in research and development, which may result in the formation of international scientific and business consortia.

International municipal cooperation is likely to become even more intense, especially in the context of global challenges such as climate change, migration, and energy security. Polish cities and regions will have the opportunity to share their experiences and solutions with partners from other countries, while also benefiting from their knowledge and innovation.

In the upcoming financial perspectives, EU funds will likely focus on supporting innovation, sustainable development, and digital transformation. Polish municipalities will have the opportunity to secure funds for implementing modern projects that will further modernize the country and strengthen its position in Europe.



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In conclusion, Poland's future in terms of economic development and its international image seems very promising. The key to success will be the continuation of past actions, flexibility in adapting to new challenges, and effective use of available tools such as EU funds and municipal cooperation. Ultimately, long-term success will result from a combination of strategic vision, determination, and the ability to adapt in a dynamically changing global environment.





Conflict in Ukraine and Its Impact on Poland's Image

Humanitarian Aid

Since the beginning of the conflict in Ukraine in 2014, Poland has been providing humanitarian aid, including food, medicine, and other essential supplies to areas affected by the conflict. These actions aimed to alleviate the humanitarian consequences of the war and support the Ukrainian civilian population. The aid was coordinated by Polish charitable and governmental organizations, which actively raised funds and delivered them directly to Ukrainian territories. These efforts often took place in cooperation with Ukrainian partners to ensure effective delivery of aid to those most in need.

Among the providers of medical equipment is the Polish Center For International Aid, which, since the escalation of the conflict until June 2022, has sent nearly 2.5 tons of medical equipment to Ukraine. The Polish Medical Mission equips Ukrainian hospitals with medical supplies and operates three mobile clinics that reach those affected in the Kharkiv and Sumy regions. PMM rescuers aided at the border in cooperation with the International Medical Corps. They provided 15,000 doses of tetanus and diphtheria vaccine, donated 5 equipped ambulances, and over 120 medical aid transports. The cost of assistance from the Polish Humanitarian Action, according to the report for 2022, amounted to PLN 49.2 million. In the first year of the conflict escalation in Ukraine, PAH managed to aid about 1.2 million people from Ukraine who found themselves in Poland. The Polish Red Cross helped 1.8 million people from Ukraine over the past two years of the conflict, with the cost of aid estimated at around PLN 304 million. According to data published by Ukrainian media „Rubryka”, from the escalation of the conflict in 2022 until May 2023, Poland allocated 170 million euros for humanitarian aid to Ukraine. Poland has been positively received on the international stage as a country that actively engages in humanitarian aid. Its actions were regarded as expressions of solidarity and responsibility in the face of the humanitarian crisis.



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Humanitarian aid has contributed to strengthening relations between Poland and Ukraine. Cooperation in humanitarian assistance has become one of the pillars of the strategic partnership between the countries, emphasizing common values and readiness for mutual support.

Further humanitarian assistance from Poland may include::

- Support for the healthcare system: providing medical equipment and personal protective equipment for healthcare workers.
- Psychological support: organizing psychological assistance for individuals affected by war trauma.
- Infrastructure reconstruction: participating in international programs for the reconstruction of destroyed areas and infrastructure, particularly hospitals.

The humanitarian aid and support provided by Poland have been crucial in mitigating the effects of the conflict in Ukraine and strengthening Poland's position as a responsible partner on the international stage. Continuing these efforts can contribute to further building a positive image of Poland and deepening Polish-Ukrainian cooperation.

Political support

Poland has consistently supported Ukraine politically since the escalation of the conflict in 2022, firmly standing for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country. Poland has engaged in various actions on the international stage, leveraging its membership in the European Union, NATO, and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) to draw attention to the situation in Ukraine and mobilize international support. The Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a statement on the first day of the Russian aggression against Ukraine, expressing support for Ukraine and pledging to take all legal actions in cooperation with allies to stop the Russian aggression. Former Minister of Foreign Affairs Zbigniew Rau expressed concern over Russia's open invasion of Ukraine during the plenary session opening the OSCE Winter Session, remaining in contact with foreign representatives and urging Russia to cease its military actions in Ukraine. Within the first days of the attack, Minister Rau held discussions with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada, Mélanie Joly, and Secretary of State Antony Blinken.



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Poland, from the very beginning, has consistently pushed for a decisive response from the Council of Europe to the Russian aggression against Ukraine. On February 25, 2022, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg decided to suspend the Russian Federation's membership in the Council of Europe. On the same day, Minister Rau, during an extraordinary meeting of the EU Foreign Affairs Council, together with other members, adopted a comprehensive package of sanctions against Russia, including financial, energy, and transportation (aviation) sectors, dual-use goods, export control, and visa policy, as well as individual sanctions targeting Russian oligarchs and political elites supporting the aggression, as well as representatives of Belarusian security structures. Minister Rau also emphasized the need for further international sanctions escalation and proposed measures in this regard, while also calling for continued support for Ukraine and ensuring not only the state and its citizens' safety but also financial stability.

Ukraine positively received Poland's support, as evidenced by numerous statements from Ukrainian politicians and officials. Poland was perceived as one of Ukraine's key allies in Europe. On the international stage, Poland gained a reputation as an active defender of international law and the sovereignty of nations. Its actions were widely commented on in international reports and media, contributing to the increase of its prestige on the international stage.

Poland has expressed support for Ukraine in the context of integration with the EU and NATO. The Polish Sejm expressed its support for Ukraine's membership in the European Union by adopting a resolution to this effect on March 3, 2022. In October 2022, the Senate of the Republic of Poland recognized the authorities of the Russian Federation as a terrorist regime, demonstrating solidarity with Ukraine and condemning Russia's actions. On May 11, 2023, the Senate of the Republic of Poland adopted a resolution regarding Ukraine's membership in NATO. This resolution indicates that the upcoming NATO Summit in Vilnius should initiate the process of preparing Ukraine for full membership in the alliance, rather than limiting itself to making non-specific declarations. The presidential elections in the Russian Federation, held in March 2024, were criticized by the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which did not recognize them as legal, free, or fair. The organization of elections in temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine was particularly condemned. In the same month, the anniversary of Poland's accession to NATO occurred, prompting a meeting at the White House between the President of the United States, the President of the Republic of Poland,



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and the Prime Minister. Although the meeting did not focus on the situation in Ukraine, ensuring Poland's security requires ensuring it also along its eastern border, a fact not forgotten by the Polish government.

Reception of Refugees

During Russia's attack on Ukraine, Poland's response was immediate, offering both political support and siding with Ukraine on the international stage, as well as opening its borders to refugees fleeing from Russian military actions. From the very beginning of the conflict, the number of refugees arriving in Poland was significant. In March 2022, the EU activated a directive on temporary protection. According to data from the Council of Europe as of November 2023, 4.2 million people from Ukraine are utilizing the temporary protection mechanism, with over 955,000 of them residing in Poland. Additionally, according to data from the Office for Foreigners from 2023, 360,000 Ukrainian citizens have valid temporary residence permits, and over 65,000 individuals have permanent or long-term resident permits in the EU. According to UNICEF data, nearly 9 million refugees crossed the border from Ukraine to Poland since February 24, 2022. Out of over 3 million refugees currently across Europe, over 1.6 million reside in Poland. UNICEF suggests that the actual number of refugees may be even higher.

The Polish government introduced legislative changes to facilitate access to the labour market, education, and healthcare system for Ukrainian refugees, making it easier for them to settle and integrate into Poland. Assistance for refugees from the Polish government was not limited to opening borders alone. In March 2022, a special law was passed that allowed Ukrainian refugees to legally take up employment in Poland without the need for a work permit.

The special law also foresaw simplifying procedures related to the admission of refugee children to schools and kindergartens in Poland. Some formalities were abolished to enable faster integration of children into the education system. Access to healthcare was also facilitated, as the lack of a PESEL number ceased to be an obstacle to Ukrainian refugees' access to healthcare services. The Ministry of Health launched an application to improve medical consultations for Ukrainian citizens. Significant social involvement was observed at the border between Poland and Ukraine. Polish citizens and various organizations, both governmental and non-governmental, engaged in helping refugees by offering shelter, food, clothing, and medical support.



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Support from the Polish government and civilian population – the Polish government launched special assistance programs, and the civilian population showed great solidarity, often offering direct assistance at refugee reception centres and in cities and villages across the country.

Reception by Ukraine and the international community – Ukraine positively received the support provided by Poland, seeing it as an expression of solidarity and friendship between nations. On the international stage, Poland's actions were widely positively received, strengthening its image as a country that is both solidary and open to helping those in need.

The actions taken by Poland proved to be quick and effective, allowing it to demonstrate not only solidarity but also the ability to respond to crisis situations on the international stage. This positively impacted the country's image not only in the eyes of the Ukrainian community but also in the international community.

Economic Support

In response to the military aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, Poland, as part of the European Union, actively engages in providing economic support to this country. Data from the Council of the European Union shows that since 2022, the European Union has allocated significant support funds for Ukraine: the EU has allocated over EUR 81 billion, including both direct financial assistance and budget support for Ukraine. For refugees residing in EU countries, 17 billion euros have been secured. The EU has allocated EUR 28 billion for military purposes. EU member states have provided Ukraine with EUR 12.2 billion in the form of grants, loans, and guarantees.


The European Union, aiming to strengthen the Ukrainian economy, approved temporary trade liberalization and other trade concessions, which were implemented on June 4, 2022, and then extended until June 5, 2024. These measures include abolishing customs tariffs specified in Title IV of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement. Suspension of anti-dumping duties on imports of goods from Ukraine. Application of common import rules regarding imports from Ukraine. To ensure stable financial support to Ukraine, a new Instrument for Ukraine has been created. This program envisages providing Ukraine with support of up to EUR 50 billion in the years 2024-2027. According to data published by Ukrainian media „Rubryka“, Poland allocated EUR 934 million for financial assistance to Ukraine from 2022 to May 2023.



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Poland played a key role in assisting Ukraine in exporting grain when Russia blocked grain exports via the Black Sea. However, recently we have seen growing controversies regarding grain imported from Ukraine to Poland. Concerns have been raised from the Polish side regarding the quality of Ukrainian grain and non-compliance with sanitary standards. Ukrainian farmers emphasized that their grain underwent three times more rigorous inspections than Polish goods. Ultimately, facing protests from local farmers, Poland imposed a temporary embargo on Ukrainian grain. In response to the restrictions imposed by the Polish government, the all-Ukrainian Agricultural Council and the Milk Producers' Union announced a blockade of four border crossings starting from June 10, although ultimately the movement was hindered only for a few hours in Dorohusk. Despite the generally positive reception of Poland's actions, certain aspects of cooperation, such as the crisis related to grain transit, sparked discussions, and were criticized by some parties. Ukraine brought the matter to the World Trade Organization after Poland unilaterally imposed restrictions on the import of certain grains and flours, which negatively affected bilateral economic relations. Currently, Poland and Ukraine may seek to stabilize the trade situation through dialogue and cooperation with the EU and other international institutions. This cooperation may include the development of transportation and logistics infrastructure, facilitating the export of Ukrainian goods to the EU and other countries.



STOP WAR
IN UKRAINE



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Support in the Reconstruction Process

Poland's support for Ukraine may prove to be crucial not only in the context of direct humanitarian assistance but also in the long-term reconstruction of the country after the conflict ends. Continuing to provide assistance in the process of rebuilding destroyed areas and infrastructure is an important element of Poland's support and solidarity with Ukraine. The Polish Investment and Trade Agency estimated that the reconstruction of Ukraine, which has suffered significant damage due to the conflict, will require financial investments exceeding EUR 800 billion. Significant damage has been recorded in key sectors such as industry, infrastructure, and the business sector. In response to these needs, already in 2022, the Polish Investment and Trade Agency began efforts to mobilize Polish companies. A recruitment program was launched for businesses interested in resuming exports and participating in the reconstruction process in Ukraine. The PAIH acted as the operator of this project, becoming a key coordinator of economic cooperation in this area. Ukraine has chosen a path of closer integration with European structures, aiming for membership in organizations such as the European Union. Therefore, the reconstruction process must go hand in hand with profound reforms that will enable integration with European standards and values. It is essential to perceive the reconstruction of Ukraine not only as a technical process but also as an opportunity to create a modern, environmentally sustainable, technologically advanced, and integrated state with the European Union.

Through supporting Ukraine in its integration processes with the European Union, Poland can gain a strategic ally within EU structures. This is particularly important in the context of Ukraine's future potential as a member of the Union, which would strengthen regional cooperation and support common geopolitical goals. Emphasizing the importance of Ukraine's reconstruction in the context of reforms and European integration is crucial for understanding the long-term perspective of this process. The Polish Investment and Trade Agency, acting as a coordinator and supporting the mobilization of Polish enterprises, plays a significant role in preparing for this multifaceted reconstruction.



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Educational Cooperation

In 2022, in response to the crisis in Ukraine, Poland took action to facilitate access to education for Ukrainian children. The process of admission to Polish schools was adjusted to ensure the continuation of learning for young Ukrainian citizens. Public primary schools automatically admitted children living in their region if they had available places. Admission to schools takes place throughout the school year, and the determination of the class in which learning continues is based on the total years of schooling completed abroad. According to data published by the nationwide newspaper Rzeczpospolita at the end of 2023, over a quarter of a million Ukrainian children are studying in Polish schools. In the academic year 2022/2023, the number of students from Ukraine at Polish universities was nearly 50,000 (data from the report „Foreigners at Universities in Poland” published by the National Information Processing Institute).

Educational cooperation is beneficial for both sides. Children are provided with a safe environment for learning and development, which is an investment in Ukraine's future generation. The integration of Ukrainian children positively influences the growth of multicultural awareness and understanding in Polish society. Such action can lead to deeper Polish-Ukrainian cooperation and build a positive image of Poland on the international stage.

Military Cooperation

Poland, as one of the countries in the leading position in providing military support to Ukraine after Russia's aggression in 2022, deserved recognition in the international arena. Poland shared Ukraine has warehouses of military equipment from the Soviet period that were part of Polish reserves national. The key element of support was the delivery of Krab howitzers, which were an important element an advantage in the face of Russian military equipment. In the first half of 2023, the Minister of Defense National Mariusz Błaszczak announced that Leopard 2 tanks had been delivered to Ukraine. Value Poland's military assistance to Ukraine until the second half of 2023 amounted to EUR 3 billion, including MiG-29 fighters and T-72MIR tanks. In terms of military support for Ukraine, the United States is in the lead with over EUR 40 billion, followed by Germany with approximately EUR 17 billion. Still, Poland stands out as one of the first countries to provide



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military assistance to Ukraine, playing a leading role at the beginning of the conflict. Military cooperation between Poland and Ukraine is an important element bilateral relations and includes not only the provision of equipment and technical support, but also training initiatives and joint exercises. Poland, with the support of allies such as The United States plays an important role in strengthening Ukraine's defense potential and in promoting security in the region.

Poland's support for Ukraine contributes not only to strengthening the country's defense, but also also has the potential to increase the overall security of the region. In August 2022, 1st Division The United States Infantry initiated the transfer of its headquarters battalion to Camp Boles in Bolesławiec. It is part of Operation Atlantic Resolve, which began in 2014 in response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine and assumes command of the majority of American forces in Poland and other countries of NATO's eastern flank. Poland's involvement in supporting Ukraine in the face of Russia's aggression, it reflects its determination to defend democracy and stability in Eastern Europe. Poland's solidarity and its military contribution contribute significantly to Ukraine's persistence in the fight for sovereignty and independence.

Cultural exchange

Cultural exchange plays a key role in the context of national soft power, being important a tool in creating a positive image of the state in the international arena. Makes it easier dialogue between societies, contributing to mutual understanding and respect. Is it a process that opens the door to deeper empathy and social justice, breaking through ethnocentric barriers. History is often full of conflicts that result in long-term conflicts divisions. Cultural exchange allows for changing past narratives, offering new perspectives and the opportunity to build a future together free from old prejudices. This was extremely necessary when millions of Ukrainian citizens had to flee and were completely lost a new, alien society. Poland and Ukraine organized festivals even before the war, that presented the culture, art, music and traditions of both nations, an example of this is the Poznań one Ukrainian Spring cultural festival. The Polish Institute in Ukraine has been organizing the Days for over a dozen years Polish Cinema in Kiev. Cultural exchange may also include joint exhibitions they present both contemporary art and the historical heritage of Poland and Ukraine. workshops, seminars and conferences on culture and history, often supported by Polish and Ukrainian ones



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educational institutions contribute to a deeper understanding of common heritages. Became They are an important element of the Polish education system, which attracted hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians children and adolescents.

Opening to the culture and heritage of the neighboring country favors the creation of a space for dialogue and cooperation, which is the foundation of lasting and peaceful international relations. The organization of festivals, artistic events and exhibitions is an important tool in building positive relationships and supporting intercultural dialogue. Cooperation in the field of culture it can also contribute to strengthening the positive image of both nations in the arena international.

Reception internationally

In the face of Russian aggression against Ukraine, the Republic of Poland, being a member of the European Union and the North Atlantic Alliance, has gained international recognition for its activities diplomatic and logistical. Polish designation in persuading Germany to deliver it to Ukraine modern tanks reflects its significant contribution to European security policy.

As part of his commitment, President Andrzej Duda, in his speech at the United Nations General Assembly in September 2022, expressed Poland's position, emphasizing the global implications of the war in Ukraine and pointing to the potential dangers resulting from the actions of the Russian Federation. Poland, due to its historical experience, took on the role of a moral guide, actively





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criticizing the attitudes of countries such as Germany and Hungary, which showed reticence towards the aggressive actions of the Russian Federation. Actively calling for sanctions and providing military aid to Ukraine, condemnation projects such as Nord Stream II, and calling for greater determination to defend Ukraine, are evidence of Poland's proactive approach to the crisis. Taking advantage of its strategic geographical location, it has become a key link in the logistics supply chain international military and medical aid to Ukraine. These activities, along with the adoption over 1.5 million Ukrainian refugees and providing them with access to public services such as health care and education, strengthened ties between the two nations and strengthened Poland's position as a central partner in the humanitarian response to the conflict. Polish diplomatic activities and humanitarian issues in the face of the Ukrainian conflict may shape the future geopolitical landscape of the region. Poland's solidarity and its commitment to defending democratic values strengthen its position as a leader in the transformation process in Central and Eastern Europe.

Currently, Poland, through its diplomatic, logistic and humanitarian activities, holds a key position in the European and global response to the Ukrainian crisis. Its commitment to transforming European security policy and supporting Ukraine in the face of Russian aggression is an expression of its determination to defend democratic values and order international.



Summary

Summary

As part of our deep dive into the nation branding process, we have done a comprehensive analysis of the various aspects that together shape the international image of Poland. This process, as we have noticed, goes far beyond the boundaries of simple promotional campaigns or traditional diplomatic activities. Instead, we discovered a complex mosaic in which every piece – from culture to the economy, from science to tourism – plays a key role in shaping the world's perception of our country.

Multidimensionality of Brand Building

Our observations confirm that building the Polish brand is a multidimensional process, requiring coordinated involvement at multiple levels. The government, local governments, enterprises, social organizations and even individual citizens – each of these entities makes an irreplaceable contribution to shaping the positive image of our country. Understanding how these various elements work together and ensuring their synergy is therefore essential to achieving a coherent and attractive image of Poland on the international arena.

The Key Role of Government

The government plays an undisputed leadership role in this process. Its task is not only to coordinate the activities of various actors, but also to establish and promote the strategic vision of the national brand. Through example, initiating policies, programs and initiatives, the government shapes the foundation on which the Polish brand is built.

Challenges on the Road

However, we cannot ignore the challenges that stand in the way of effective brand building national. Diversity of identity concepts within Poland, the need to avoid stereotypes and simplifications, or the need to adapt to a dynamically changing global environment – these are just some of the obstacles that we must overcome. Political stability and its impact on the continuity and coherence of branding strategies is also an aspect that requires constant attention.

International Perception and Position of Poland

The analysis of international rankings and perceptions reveals areas where Poland has potential to grow and improve. Our ranking in key indexes such as Anholt-Ipsos Nation Brands Index or The Good Country Index is more than just a number – it is a reflection of our activities, our history, culture, economy and politics. Improving Poland's position in these rankings, through focused and purposeful actions, can significantly impact the way we are perceived around the world.

Building Poland's brand is a task that requires not only understanding and using our unique advantages, but also awareness of the challenges we face. It is an ongoing process, requiring adaptation and innovation, in which every level of governance and every citizen can play a key role. Success in this field will not only strengthen our position in the international arena, but will also bring long-term benefits to the economy and society and the image of Poland as a modern, open and noteworthy country.



Recommendations

Recommendations

1. 1. Development of a coherent strategy

Building a strong national brand requires, above all, an integrated and coherent strategy that combines various aspects of Poland's image. This strategy should take into account unique cultural, economic, scientific, social and political values, presenting Poland as a modern, innovative and open country. It should also be flexible, enabling quick adaptation to changing global and internal conditions.

The strategy should be the result of cooperation between various ministries, institutions, the private sector and civil society, ensuring that all activities are coordinated and mutually supportive, creating a coherent and convincing picture Polish.

- **Defining a comprehensive vision** - at the very beginning of the process of building a coherent strategy for Poland's national brand lies the definition of a comprehensive, multidimensional vision that clearly defines what Poland wants to represent on the international stage. This vision should be consistent with national values and aspirations, reflecting Poland's unique assets, its history, culture, achievements, and future ambitions. This requires a deep understanding of both the country's internal attributes and external expectations and perceptions.
- **Integration and coordination of actions** - a key element of an effective strategy is the integration and coordination of actions at different levels and in different areas. This includes harmonizing initiatives of the central government, regional authorities, cities, the private sector, and social organizations so that they collectively work towards a unified goal. Each of these entities has unique resources and communication channels, which, if effectively coordinated, can significantly strengthen Poland's overall message and image in the world.
- **Dynamic approach to strategy** - the national brand vision should be flexible enough to adapt to the rapidly changing international environment and internal changes in Poland. This dynamic approach allows for ongoing adjustment and modification of the strategy in response to new challenges and opportunities, while maintaining coherence and continuity in the long term.



Recommendations

- **Participatory strategy development process** - creating a strategy should not be monopolized by a narrow group of decision-makers. Instead, an effective national brand strategy should result from a broad, participatory process that engages diverse stakeholders, including representatives from the private sector, experts from various fields, citizens, and the diaspora. Such inclusion ensures a diversity of perspectives, greater social engagement, and better alignment of the strategy with the needs and expectations of different groups.
- **Measurement and optimization** - the strategy must be supported by systematic measurement of results and the effectiveness of actions taken. The use of appropriate indicators and analytical tools allows for assessing progress, identifying areas needing improvement, and tracking changes in the perception of Poland's brand on the international stage. This information is essential for continuously optimizing the strategy, enabling its evolution and adaptation to achieve intended goals.
- **Communication and narrative** - a key aspect of the strategy is also the development of a strong, cohesive narrative that communicates key messages about Poland in an engaging and memorable way. This narrative should be consistently promoted through all communication channels, both domestically and internationally, creating a unified and easily recognizable image of Poland.

2. Comprehensive engagement

The key to effectively building a national brand is engagement and cooperation at all levels – from the central government to local authorities, from large corporations to small businesses, from prominent figures to ordinary citizens. Each group has a role to play in promoting Poland, leveraging its unique resources and points of contact with the rest of the world.

For businesses, this may entail emphasizing the Polish origin of products and services. For cultural institutions, it could involve promoting Polish culture and art at international festivals and events. For individual citizens, it means acting as ambassadors for Poland in everyday interactions with foreigners.



Recommendations

3. Utilization and development of soft power

Poland should aim to expand and effectively utilize its soft power resources. This encompasses a wide range of activities, from promoting achievements in science and technology, supporting Polish artists and creators on the international stage, to engaging in active cultural and educational diplomacy.

Investments in the international promotion of Polish culture, science, and education not only strengthen Poland's positive image but also contribute to building long-term relationships and international cooperation.

4. Regular monitoring and evaluation

For the strategy to be effective, it must be based on solid data and regular assessment of results. Monitoring and evaluation should include both the assessment of individual initiatives and programs, as well as the overall perception of Poland abroad. This will allow for a quick response to any issues and adaptation of the strategy to changing circumstances. Implementing a system of indicators and metrics that allows for measuring progress in key areas is essential for effectively managing the process of building the national brand.

5. Active utilization of technology and media

In the era of digitization and global communication, effective use of modern technology and social media is essential for promoting the national brand. Poland should use these tools not only for promoting tourism, culture, or exports but also for building an international network of cooperation, sharing knowledge and innovations, and engaging global communities in a dialogue about Poland. Initiatives such as digital promotional campaigns, collaboration with influencers, the use of platforms for international communication, or interactive online projects can significantly increase the reach and effectiveness of activities related to building the Polish brand. Utilizing media and technology in the process of building Poland's national brand is not only a necessity but also a tremendous opportunity. It offers unique opportunities to reach, engage, and build positive relationships with international audiences, strengthening Poland's image as a modern, dynamic, and attractive country in various aspects - from culture, through science, to tourism and business.



Recommendations

Digitalization of communication - in today's globally connected world, leveraging modern technologies and digital media is crucial for effectively promoting the national brand. Poland should invest in digitalizing its promotional activities, using online platforms to build and strengthen its image on the international stage.

Social media - social media platforms offer unparalleled opportunities to reach a wide, global audience. Poland should be actively present on platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, or TikTok, using them to promote culture, achievements, innovations, and tourist attractions. The key is to create engaging, interactive, and valuable content that encourages users to interact and share information about Poland.

Utilization of data and analytics - modern technologies enable the collection and analysis of vast amounts of data, which can be used to optimize the national brand strategy. Data analysis allows for understanding the preferences and behaviors of audiences, enabling the customization of communication and marketing efforts to be more effective and reach the right audience.

Digital platforms - the development of dedicated digital platforms such as websites, mobile applications, or interactive portals can significantly contribute to improving Poland's image. These tools can serve as information hubs for individuals interested in Poland, offering access to news, cultural, scientific, business, and tourist information.

The role of the third sector

The role of the third sector and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in building the national brand is significant and multidimensional. These entities, operating in various social, cultural, educational, environmental, or economic fields, make a unique contribution to shaping the country's perception abroad and strengthening internal community cohesion.



Recommendations

Promotion of culture and heritage

NGOs often engage in the protection and promotion of national culture and historical heritage. By organizing festivals, exhibitions, concerts, and other cultural events, they contribute to the preservation and expansion of Polish culture on the international stage. Their activities help present Poland as a country rich in traditions that are contemporary, attractive to foreigners, and inspiring to the international community.

Engagement in global issues

NGOs often play a key role in engaging in addressing global issues such as climate change, human rights, sustainable development, or humanitarian aid. These actions not only contribute to improving the situation on a global scale but also build Poland's image as a responsible country engaged in important global issues and actively participating in international cooperation.

Supporting innovation and development

NGOs also operate in the field of supporting innovation, entrepreneurship, and socio-economic development. Through various programs, projects, and initiatives, these organizations can promote Polish innovations, technologies, and scientific successes, contributing to shaping a positive image of Poland as a modern and developed country.

Building communities and cooperation

The third sector also plays a crucial role in building communities and networks of cooperation, both at the local and international levels. NGOs are platforms for dialogue, exchange of experiences, and best practices, which fosters the creation of positive international relations and strengthens Poland's position as an active and engaged partner on the global stage..

Education and raising awareness

NGOs are invaluable in the field of education and raising awareness on various topics. Through informational campaigns, educational programs, and social initiatives, these organizations contribute to promoting knowledge about Poland, its history, achievements, and values, which can positively impact the building of the national brand..



Recommendations

The role of the third sector and non-governmental organizations in building the national brand cannot be overstated. These actions, although often carried out at a lower, more local level, have a far-reaching impact on how Poland is perceived worldwide. Their engagement, initiatives, and projects contribute to building a positive image of Poland as a dynamic, innovative, responsible, and culturally rich country, which constitutes a significant contribution to promoting Poland on the international stage..

Summary

Effective building of Poland's national brand requires an integrated approach, combining the involvement of various stakeholders, efficient utilization of soft power resources, continuous monitoring and adaptation, and active use of modern technologies and media. All these actions, based on a clear and consistent strategy, aim to collectively create and promote a positive, modern, and attractive image of Poland on the international stage, bringing benefits not only in terms of international perception but also in the economic, cultural, and social dimensions.

Closure

Considering the process of shaping Poland's national brand, it is essential to adopt a perspective that combines retrospective analysis with forecasting future trends. The historical roots of Poland, its transformations, and current achievements form the foundation upon which contemporary and future national identity is built. Contextualizing Poland within the global landscape highlights its unique contribution in the fields of science, culture, economy, and diplomacy, while also emphasizing the challenges associated with the dynamically changing international environment.

Visionary aspirations of Poland

Poland's ambition goes beyond active participation to exerting significant influence on the international stage, reflecting its innovativeness, creativity, and pursuit of excellence. Striving for recognition as a center of innovation, culture, and scientific progress requires setting clear goals and strategies that promote its values and achievements, while also encouraging global cooperation and knowledge exchange.



Recommendations

An integrative approach to building international relations

Poland should aim to act as a mediator and integrator in the complex global environment, promoting dialogue, cooperation, and peaceful conflict resolution. Through active bridge-building between cultures and nations, Poland can contribute to the development of a global society based on mutual understanding and shared aspirations.

Flexibility and innovation

The future of Poland's national brand will largely depend on its ability to adapt to changing conditions and innovate in undertaking new initiatives. Continuous evaluation, critical analysis, and readiness to implement changes are crucial for maintaining the relevance and strength of Poland's brand on the international stage. Emphasizing the value of cooperation and participation in the process of building Poland's national brand is essential. Recognizing the contribution of diverse actors, from government institutions to citizens, in promoting a positive image of Poland is necessary. The participation and involvement of every segment of society are the foundation for creating a cohesive and strong national brand.



Conclusion

Conclusion

Poland, facing the prospects of the future, has ahead a path that can lead to solidifying its status as an innovative, open, and actively engaged nation in shaping the global future. The determination to pursue these goals, while maintaining a deep respect for its roots and values, can enable Poland to achieve a leadership position that inspires other nations through example, cooperation, and contribution to global development.

The conclusion of the process of building a national brand is not the end but rather a new beginning. We want Poland to be perceived as a country building bridges between nations, cultures, and economies, rather than erecting walls. This vision encompasses Poland as a center for international dialogue, innovation, and cultural exchange, where diversity and plurality are driving forces of development and understanding. In closing, we want to express our gratitude to all who have contributed to building the Polish brand – from decision-makers to ordinary citizens, from entrepreneurs to artists. We invite everyone to collaborate and participate in this exciting process of shaping Poland's image on the international stage. Together, we can create a future that reflects the best Poland has to offer and inspires future generations to further development and exploration of new horizons.

In this spirit, with optimism and determination, we look to the future, ready for the challenges and opportunities ahead of us. May our collective journey towards building a strong, respected, and valued Polish national brand be filled with successes, innovations, and mutual understanding.