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## **DEVELOPMENT OF POLISH NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN THE CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL DIRECTIONS IN UKRAINE FROM 1991 TO 2014**

The article is dedicated to defining milestones and tendencies in the development of the Polish minority and identification of the key aspects of their participation in the socio-cultural and public processes in Ukraine since 1991. The basic illustration is provided of the level of development of civic maturity, political culture of the Polish community in Ukraine from 1991 to 2014. The main milestones and peculiarities are analyzed of the activity of public organizations of the Polish minority in Ukraine since the proclamation of Ukraine's independence. The study is based on an analysis of the work of Polish NGOs, known events, actions and events that were organized and held in the context of meeting the cultural and educational needs of the Polish minority in Ukraine. The contribution of Polish public organizations to the development of Ukrainian-Polish relations is assessed. The main attention in the research is paid to the study of the spectrum of directions of interaction between the Polish minority of Ukraine and the Ukrainian society, the research of its participation and influence in the life of the Ukrainian society and the nature of interethnic relations. The analysis of processes is conducted in the context of cultural, socio-economic and political transformations in Ukraine from 1991 to the present times. The study has found that after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the withdrawal of Ukraine and Poland from the influence of communist ideology, a new page of Ukrainian-Polish intercultural cooperation began, a number of festivals, cultural and educational events were initiated, organized and held, a number of institutions, newspapers and magazines, media channels and educational institutions were established. Civil society in both countries has a major role to play in these processes. The author also traces the main achievements that arose in the process of fruitful work of public organizations of the Polish minority in Ukraine.

**Keywords:** intercultural interaction, public organization, cultural and educational activity, festival, Polish language.

The issue of studying the situation and development of ethno-political processes in independent Ukraine acquires special significance in the context of the development of Ukraine as a sovereign, democratic state, which has chosen the European path of historical development. Considering the principles and paradigms of democratic policy for national minorities adopted by the Constitution and laws of Ukraine, it is of primary importance to consolidate Ukrainian society around supporting and promoting the free development of different ethnic groups, while respecting the limits of national and cultural needs OF sovereignty of Ukraine.

Representative in this case is the development of cross-border cooperation and ethnocultural dialogue of the Ukrainian and Polish communities, which were successfully restored and established on the eve of Ukraine's restoration of the state independence. One of the aspects of this interaction is to meet the cultural and educational needs of the Polish ethnic group in Ukraine. These issues are studied to a large extent by Y. Varyvoda, L. Vakhmina, V. Hazhaman, O. Kalakura, L. Mazepa, L. Loiko, A. Lyubonevych, S. Rudnytsky, and others. We will try to consider the role of Polish public organizations in Ukraine in matters of cultural and educational support of the Ukrainian Polish community in terms of building civil society in Ukraine.

The purpose of this work is to study the process of cultural and educational self-realization of the Polish minority in Ukraine after the Ukraine's independence.

The task of this article is to study the role of public organizations of the Polish minority in meeting their own cultural and educational needs and establishing a Polish-Ukrainian dialogue within the current legislation of Ukraine and agreements between Ukraine and Poland.

It should be noted that among the key cultural and educational needs of the Polish community in Ukraine are the following issues: study of the Polish language, literature, cultural traditions, customs, and teaching them at different levels of education in Ukraine.

Cultural and educational activities of Polish NGOs in Ukraine have a long tradition, because, even if we talk about Ukrainian-Polish cooperation after the restoration of independence of both countries from the communist past, before the adoption and ratification of the Treaty between Ukraine and Poland on good neighborliness, friendly relations and cooperation began the first cross-border interactions<sup>1</sup>.

Thus, in the late 1980s in many cities of Ukraine the reform of the so-called Soviet-Polish friendship societies began, which performed mostly ideological functions set by the Soviet leaders and sided with the problems of the Polish people in the USSR and USSR. In addition, Polish national and cultural societies began to be established, and during 1990-1991 the Union of Poles of Ukraine (ZPU, chairman Stanislaw Shalatsky, later Stanislaw Kostecki) and the Federation of Polish Organizations in Ukraine (FOPU, chairman Emilia Khmelova) were founded. Both organizations have been actively working for almost 30 years to strengthen Ukrainian-Polish relations, both at the state and public levels<sup>2</sup>.

The main purpose of these organizations is the national revival of the Polish minority, raising its national spirit and consciousness, encouraging participation in socio-political, cultural and social life of the country on the basis of respect for ethnic history and difficult issues of interethnic cooperation between Ukrainian and Polish peoples, strengthening partnership and cooperation between Ukraine and Poland. The Union of Poles in Ukraine, the Federation of Polish Organizations in Ukraine and other public associations of the Polish minority operate in accordance with the Constitution of Ukraine, legislation and their own statutes.

Public organizations of the Polish minority in Ukraine, as a rule, are engaged in the following activities: conduct researches, publishing, cultural, educational activities, teach or promote the teaching of the Polish language in Ukraine, establish libraries and educational institutions, organize festivals and tourist routes, help in the development of amateur art groups, etc.

It is worth mentioning that they were cultural and educational activities that became decisive for the Union of Poles, as it is no coincidence that its first name was the Polish Cultural and Educational Society. Whole families start learning Polish in Sunday schools here. Such educational activities spread throughout Ukraine in cities where there are branches of the Union of Poles of Ukraine or other Polish organizations, such as the Federation of Polish Organizations with the Polish House in Kyiv, Lviv, Khmelnytsky, Zhytomyr, Vinnytsia, Kamianets-Podilskyi, Gorodok and others.

The situation remains worse in places of compact and mixed settlement of the Polish community in rural areas. Not all the villagers have preserved the Polish language in their active life, but in the memory of many of them folklore works and prayers have been preserved<sup>3</sup>.

A similar situation today applies to many settlements of Ukraine, because Poles, as well as representatives of other national minorities in the conditions of the independent Ukrainian state received the constitutional right to education and free development of their culture.

Some difficulties also exist and continue to exist. Poles, like other ethnic groups in Ukraine, which had long been part of the Russian Empire and the USSR, were limited in their ties to their homeland, and there were constant problems, and frequent bans, on the national press and publishing. However, in recent decades, in the context of establishing relations between Ukraine and Poland, the situation has improved significantly. In the new conditions, Polish branches, enjoying the right to the status of national minorities, began to revive, engage in journalism and publishing.

Educational work is carried out by almost all Polish national public organizations in various forms. Thus, the Adam Mickiewicz Cultural and Educational Society was established at the Adam Mickiewicz Library in Kyiv.

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<sup>1</sup> *Договір між Україною і Республікою Польщею про добросусідство, дружні відносини і співробітництво, 1992* (Верховна Рада України). *Офіційний сайт Верховної Ради України* <[https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/616\\_172](https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/616_172)> (2021, February, 02).

<sup>2</sup> Калакура, О. (2011). Польська меншина як чинник українсько-польської співпраці на сучасному етапі. *Історичний архів*, 6, 74.

<sup>3</sup> Вахніна, Л. (2008). Розвиток культури поляків України в незалежній українській державі. *Українсько-польські культурні взаємини*, 2, 171.

Polish language courses are constantly operating at the Polish House in Kyiv, and the Federation of Polish Organizations of Ukraine has initiated the creation of a union of Polish language teachers, which has been operating successfully for many years. The study of the Polish language is important for the development of Polish amateur art in Ukraine, which is currently experiencing its true revival<sup>1</sup>.

Polish non-governmental organizations in Ukraine support 5 Polish-language schools with about 2,000 students, in particular, in the Lviv region in 4 of them education is conducted in Polish. Another Polish-language school operates in Ivano-Frankivsk. In addition to teaching in Polish, subjects such as «History of Poland» and «Geography of Poland» have been introduced in these schools.

In general, as a subject, more than 4,000 students study Polish in Ukraine, and more than 3,000 students study optionally or in groups. Polish is also studied in numerous Ukrainian higher education institutions<sup>2</sup>.

Thus, during the years of Ukraine's independence, Polish public organizations managed to realize their interest in learning the Polish language, while the realization of these needs through secondary and Saturday-Sunday schools proved to be a much more difficult test.

In 1992, the Ministry of Education approved the Provisional Regulation on Sunday School for National Minorities in Ukraine, which contributed to the formation and improvement of their network<sup>3</sup>. As of the 2006/2007 school year, there were already 26 Polish Saturday-Sunday schools in the regions of Ukraine, but these data could only be applied to institutions registered in local education departments (according to the Polish data, there were 72 such schools within the only Lviv Consular District<sup>4</sup>.

In 2010, the Ministry of Education and Science approved Polish language programs for Saturday schools, which significantly improved the situation with Saturday schools. Thus, at the end of the 2011/2012 school year in Ukraine there were already 532 institutions of the Polish language study (12 groups in kindergartens, 5 Polish schools, 29 classes with the study of Polish, 53 schools with the study of Polish as a foreign language, optional study of Polish in 83 schools, 200 Saturday/Sunday schools and 150 different Polish language courses)<sup>5</sup>.

However, the problem of researching the issue of learning the Polish language in the courses of Polish organizations in terms of quantitative and qualitative indicators remains important and difficult, namely, due to the lack of accurate data. We can note that as of 1993, with the support of the Republic of Poland 28 teachers from Poland worked in Ukraine and in 2009 their number increased to 41<sup>6</sup>. In total, 190 Polish language teachers worked in Ukraine<sup>7</sup>. It is clear that the situation has changed significantly in recent years, but there are difficulties in systematizing such data.

Schools and courses operating in Roman Catholic parishes also remain understudied, and can only be discussed with the support of the Polish Community Society, which in 2008 provided assistance to Polish language courses in Roman Catholic parishes in Brozdowce, Dolyna, Mykolayiv, Romanov, Sharovechka, monastic congregations of Dominican sisters in Chortkiv, sisters of Jesus' servants in Nova Borova, Volodar-Volyn district, Zhytomyr region, Benedictine sisters in Zhytomyr, etc<sup>8</sup>.

More documented are the issues of functioning of educational institutions that promote the development of the Polish community in Ukraine. Among preschool educational institutions, for example, there are both public and private institutions. Thus, in the 2010/2011 school year in Lviv and in the city of Stryi, Lviv region, there were 3 groups with education in Polish in public preschools and a group in a private preschool. Similarly, in the Horodok district of the Khmelnytsky region, a Polish language group operated on the basis of a child development center, which was attended by an average of 30 preschool children. 2 preschool institutions of Chernivtsi region used forms of work with children that promote the learning of the Polish language.

<sup>1</sup> Вахніна, Л. (2008) Розвиток культури поляків України в незалежній українській державі. *Українсько-польські культурні взаємини*, 2, 173.

<sup>2</sup> Жосан, О. (2009). Особливості українсько-польських стосунків на сучасному етапі. *Форум нації* <<http://www.forumn.kiev.ua/2009-09-88/88-07.html>> (2021, Січень, 15).

<sup>3</sup> Калакура, О. (2014). Полонія Галичини у суспільно-політичних процесах сучасної України. *Наукові записки Інституту політичних і етнонаціональних досліджень ім. І. Ф. Кураса НАН України*, 4-5 (72-73), 291.

<sup>4</sup> Рудницький, С. (2014) *Суспільно-політичні інтереси поляків незалежної України*. Житомир, 439.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, 440.

<sup>6</sup> *Raport o sytuacji Polonii i Polaków za Granicą*, 2009. Warszawa. <[http://polska.szkola.pl/images/moodledata/1/Raport\\_o\\_Polonii\\_i\\_Polakach\\_za\\_granic\\_B1.pdf](http://polska.szkola.pl/images/moodledata/1/Raport_o_Polonii_i_Polakach_za_granic_B1.pdf)> (2020, April, 10).

<sup>7</sup> Калакура, О. (2007). *Поляки в етнополітичних процесах на землях України у ХХ столітті*. Київ: Знання України, 428.

<sup>8</sup> Калакура, О. Я. (2014). Полонія Галичини у суспільно-політичних процесах сучасної України. *Наукові записки Інституту політичних і етнонаціональних досліджень ім. І. Ф. Кураса НАН України*, 4-5 (72-73), 292.

The Polish community also contributes to the educational needs of the Polish minority, in particular in secondary schools. For example, in 2002 – September 1, two Polish schools were inaugurated – in Gorodok, Khmelnytsky region and Mostyska, Lviv. Funds for the construction were allocated both by the Polish community in Ukraine and by Polish government programs. Children study in Polish in public schools, the number of which in 2010/2011 school years increased compared to the situation in the USSR, when there were only two Polish schools in Lviv, to 5, due to new schools in Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv and Khmelnytsky regions. In addition, there is one secondary school with instruction in Polish and Ukrainian and with instruction in Polish and Russian (a total of 1,357 students studied in Polish in state and municipal secondary schools)<sup>1</sup>.

The Federation of Polish Organizations of Ukraine regularly puts on the agenda of public authorities the issue of recognizing schools with Polish language teaching in schools of national minorities. This problem is actualized due to the unjustified reduction of the number of hours of Polish language study in some secondary schools. Authorities refer to the lack of funds, so, according to E. Khmelova, in Stary Skalata, Polupanivka, Galushchyntsi Ternopil region by the decision of the regional department of education abolished the teaching of Polish, although until 2008 there were 4 hours of Polish per week<sup>2</sup>.

In addition, the Federation of Polish Organizations in Ukraine, which unites majority Polish NGOs in Ukraine in 1999, favored the admission of Poles to the Faculty of Polish Studies at Lviv National University, thus proposing a certain «ethnicization» of Polish education. Also, in 2003, organizations representing the Polish minority in Ukraine stressed the need to improve contacts between Polish NGOs in Ukraine and the Polish Ministry of Education, but these proposals have not found the support in either Ukraine or Poland.

Instead, fruitful cooperation with Polish educational institutions was carried out by domestic higher education institutions, among which the Department of Polish Philology of the Ivan Franko National University of Lviv can be singled out. Similar cooperation is present among secondary schools of Ternopil region, which have concluded cooperation agreements with Polish educational institutions. Similar direct cooperation has been carried out and continues to be implemented by other educational institutions in many regions of Ukraine.

Thus, we can note that the issue of meeting the educational needs of the Polish ethnic group was on the agenda of Ukrainian-Polish cross-border cooperation in the early 1990s, but there are many issues that need clear coordination and further solution for effective interethnic cooperation and building a democratic society that cares about the capabilities of each of the population groups.

Cultural cooperation between the two countries is distinguished by a special diversity. Polish and Ukrainian NGOs are doing even more in this direction. One of dominant forms of this interaction is the holding of festivals and cultural and artistic events, which allow a large number of people to join the Ukrainian and Polish cultures.

The annual festivals of Polish culture in Ukraine, which are certainly supported by Polish NGOs in Ukraine, as well as in the field of cultural cooperation between our countries are already traditional. Such festivals and ethnocultural actions allow ordinary Ukrainians to learn about Polish culture, traditions, cuisine, art and many other forms of ethnic expression in an unobtrusive way, to overcome existing ethnostereotypes.

Also, another form of cross-border cooperation deserves special attention – the European Days of Good Neighborliness on the Ukrainian-Polish border. This form of festivals is relatively new and for the first time such border events took place in 2004 under the slogan «Cross-border dialogue of Polish and Ukrainian cultures». The festivals of the following years had a similar meaning in their name – cooperation and development of cultural interaction, unification of the inhabitants of the border regions, overcoming stereotypes, which are of the prior importance the purpose of the meetings.

In 2010–2012, the Neighborhood Days were held in several stages. The Ninth European Neighborhood Days were held in the year of Euro 2012 and became the most massive in the history of border celebrations. Within the Days of Good Neighborliness there are forums and conferences of cross-border cooperation, musical and artistic activities, ecumenical prayers, football matches, culinary picnics with traditional cuisine, folk crafts fairs, workshops, integration events for children and youth, etc.<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Калакура, О. (2014). Полонія Галичини у суспільно-політичних процесах сучасної України. *Наукові записки Інституту політичних і етнонаціональних досліджень ім. І. Ф. Кураса НАН України*, 4-5 (72-73), 293.

<sup>2</sup> Polska Szkoła (2009). *Raport o sytuacji Polonii i Polaków za Granicą* <[http://polskaszkoła.pl/images/moodledata/1/Raport\\_o\\_Polonii\\_i\\_Polakach\\_za\\_granic\\_B1.pdf](http://polskaszkoła.pl/images/moodledata/1/Raport_o_Polonii_i_Polakach_za_granic_B1.pdf)> (2020, April, 10).

<sup>3</sup> Романюк, І., Пачос, Ю. (2014). Фестивалі української культури в Польщі як елемент мистецької українсько-польської співпраці початку ХХІ ст. *Україна ХХ ст.: культура, ідеологія, політика*, 19, 211.

Festivals of Polish culture have become annual in Khmelnytsky and Zhytomyr regions, in places of compact residence of the Polish minority, such as «Rainbow of Polissya» and «Flowers of Podillya», which are supported by the Union of Poles in Ukraine. At the same time, many events are held with the support of both countries, these festivals have become traditional for Lviv and Kyiv. Such events are a source of support for amateur folk groups, dance studios and choirs. Polish language courses often take place in such groups and sections.

An exemplary case of a combination of educational and cultural education is the ensemble of ancient music «Kantycki»; Kyiv team «Lastivky – Yaskulki», which operates at the Teacher's House in Kiev. Among the members of the ensemble are students of Kyiv Slavic University studying Polish philology. The band's program includes Polish folk songs that live in Ukraine. It should be noted that the number of children's groups is growing, so the acknowledgement of Polish songs, trips to Poland, as well as participation in festivals, traditional concerts on the occasion of Polish Constitution Day on May 3 or the Independence Day of Poland in Kiev or Zhytomyr, can be a favorable factor for learning the language itself, filling the vacuum in education in Polish for people of Polish nationality or mixed families, which, unfortunately, exists in places of compact settlement of the Polish community, in particular in Zhytomyr region, which in our opinion, is experiencing not only the revival of Polish culture, but also became for the Polish minority one of the manifestations of their national identity<sup>1</sup>.

However, the Polish community in Ukraine is represented not only by creative groups and circles. The activity of the Polish community in the media sphere is also active, especially in the western regions of Ukraine. For example, Slovo Polske is aired weekly on the regional TV channel «Zhytomyr», and the broadcasting company Soyuz-TV broadcasts programs for the Polish national community on a daily basis at the request of Polonia TV.

Polish radio broadcasting is also represented in Ukraine. First, Polish Radio Abroad plays an important role in intercultural communication. Secondly, Radio Lwow broadcasts on the frequency of «Nezalezhnist» radio station on different days and the Program «Program katolicki» is broadcasted. The Lviv City Non-Governmental Organization «Polskie Towarzystwo Radiowe» also operates here. Thus, Lviv can be confidently called the capital of Polish radio broadcasting in Ukraine. Radio programs include news releases, press reviews, commentaries, reports from around the world, interviews and discussions, and literary and musical stories.

Periodicals of the Polish national minority are represented by the following groups of publications:

- informational: Głos Podola (Kamianets-Podilskyi), Volyn Monitor (Lutsk), Kurier Stanisławowski and Kurier Galicyjski (Ivano-Frankivsk), Gazeta Polska (Zhytomyr), Dziennik Kiiowski (Kyiv);
- public: Lwowskie Spotkania (Lviv), Harcerz Kresow (Lviv), Wspolne Dziedzictwo (Ternopil), KOTWICA (Mykolaiv);
- cultural and educational: «Mosaic of Berdychiv» (Berdychiv), «Voice of a teacher» (Drohobych), «Krynica» (Kyiv);
- religious: «Cries from Volhynia» (Ostrig), «Joy of Faith» (Lviv)<sup>2</sup>.

Recently, joint Ukrainian-Polish projects in the media sphere, such as the international interdisciplinary magazine «Ucrainica Polonica» and «Ukrainian Polonistics» are becoming popular and recognized by public<sup>3</sup>.

Thus, in addition to the educational component, the Polish community in Ukraine is actively engaged in organizing and conducting cultural and artistic events that each year promote knowledge about Polish culture, increase interest in the original Polish traditions. At the same time, NGOs, with the assistance of both countries, do not stop there, expanding the horizons of activities to new components: sports, gastronomic, environmental activities that support the Polish minority in Ukraine, and knowledge of Poland, its culture, including modern, overcoming stereotypes and the formation of a positive image of Poles among Ukrainians and vice versa.

Thus, we considered the key aspects of the Polish community in Ukraine, under the auspices of public organizations operating in accordance with the Constitution and laws of Ukraine, in the context of cultural

<sup>1</sup> Вахніна, Л. (2008). Розвиток культури поляків України в незалежній українській державі. *Українсько-польські культурні взаємини*, 2, 173-174.

<sup>2</sup> Куришко, С. (2014). Польська національна меншина як суб'єкт суспільно-політичних процесів в Україні. *Наукові праці Чорноморського державного університету імені Петра Могили комплексу «Києво-Могилянська академія»*. Серія: Політологія, 228, 216, 102.

<sup>3</sup> Там само, 103.

and educational work. Based on this, we conclude that the situation of the Polish national minority in Ukraine differs significantly from the situation of other national minorities, due to the close neighborhood and good neighborly relations with Poland, as well as due to the size of the Polish community in Ukraine. Equally important is the material, institutional and ideological support of the Republic of Poland. Throughout the years of Ukraine's independence, Polish NGOs in Ukraine have made significant efforts to establish educational institutions, hold cultural and artistic events and festivals, lectures and creative circles, as well as to enter the Ukrainian media space to promote Polish culture, customs, language and other ethnic features. And most importantly, they care about establishing a peaceful, friendly dialogue, which carries the seeds of understanding of both cultures, by finding common ground and abandoning confrontational rhetoric. No less important and promising is further study of the financial basis and material support of public organizations of the Polish minority and consideration of other areas of their activities to understand the problems and prospects of meeting the needs of the Polish community in Ukraine.

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