

Martyna Tomiczek

Diaspora diplomacy - about a new dimension of diplomacy, the example of a "New Emigration" non-governmental organisation

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MARTYNA TOMICZEK
martynatomiczek@wp.pl

DIASPORA DIPLOMACY – ABOUT A NEW DIMENSION OF DIPLOMACY, THE EXAMPLE OF A *NEW EMIGRATION* NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATION

ABSTRACT

In recent years, the migration movement, which tends to be oriented towards Great Britain, reached its climax at the moment when Poland became a fully-fledged member of the European Union. Years following Poland's accession have witnessed an enormous outbreak of Polish exodus – leaving their own country they were trying to find a new place abroad. Among the plurality of motives, we could point to such as: hope for a better life and improving personal material situation, a more interesting life in a multinational society and becoming a “world man”, necessity and curiosity. Results were also much more complicated than anyone could ever imagine. The causes and effects of the Polish exodus constituted an inescapable subject of analysis and research.

The Polish migration movement can be considered in many aspects. This unique phenomenon has its economic, political, social and psychosocial dimensions – each of them is worth profound analysis. Within each of the previously mentioned dimensions a researcher would find singularly important and specific phenomena regarding the migration movement – phenomena which are at the very core of the lives of migrants' succeeding generations. Undoubtedly, one of the dimensions of the *New Polish Emigration* analysis could be referred to public diplomacy strategy. This thesis will be the main framework of this paper.

FROM TRADITIONAL DIPLOMACY TO PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

Traditional diplomacy has to face a new form of diplomacy: the term “public diplomacy” has emerged in scientific discourse as a result of changes in international relations reality. It has also appeared in Polish reality: in a Foreign Affairs Minister's exposé, as one of priorities of *Adam Mickiewicz Institute or Foreign Affairs Ministry*. It should also be noticed that “public diplomacy” notion is accompanied by such terms as “national branding”, “promotion of Poland abroad”, “culture” – although they are connected, they must not be treated as synonymous. The new international environment in which states constitute only one of the whole spectrum of participants requires implementing new modes of creating image and attracting public attention. Moreover, modern communications technologies have seen the beginning of new international subject emergence and additionally have given the extraordinary possibilities of information transmission.

Public diplomacy is targeted at a wider group of receivers than the classic diplomacy, which aimed to be directed to a narrow group of diplomats engaged in particular affairs. In English the public diplomacy is defined by the abbreviation “g2p” (government to people) or “p2p” (people to people) (Ociepka 2008, p.

11-12). These concepts prove that the international environment has undergone a tremendous transformation: for centuries only states were legitimate participants of the international relations having the exclusive right to shape the international reality. Such international subjects as international organisations (both government – founded and non-governmental), individuals, diasporas, business corporations etc. were not considered as subjects influencing state or society international image. In this context it is worth referring to the way of defining “public diplomacy” as a phenomenon framed by international communication, which is strongly grounded in an institutional approach and in favour of state orientation in international relations. As Barbara Ociepka argues, although pointing out that only states have the ability to communicate among themselves in international relations area was characteristic for the first definitions of “international communication” [K. Krzysztofek conceptualizes “international communication” as “process of communication between people belonging to various national states” and Gerhard Maletzke says that this is the process of communication between various countries, nations beyond boundaries (Ociepka 2002, p. 13)], this kind of interpretation should be still taken into consideration. Nevertheless, it must be noticed that the approach regarding states as important subjects of international communication does not mean that this process is limited exclusively to national states. On the contrary, it points out that the national state does not have to be considered as the only sender and receiver in the international communication mechanism (Ociepka 2008, p. 20). Therefore, the term “public diplomacy” could be defined as “bilateral, dialogue – basic form of political international communication, directed at a public abroad, realized through transmission means mediation and through direct channels” (Ociepka 2008, p. 12) or as “a government’s process of communicating with foreign publics in an attempt to bring about understanding for its nation’s ideas and ideals, its institutions and culture, as well as its national goals and policies” (Melissen 2005, p. 11-12).

As it has been already emphasized, neither states have lost their pivotal position in the process of image building in foreign societies, nor other various subjects have taken control over this mechanism. It could be pointed out that roles in conducting national strategy of “public diplomacy” defining as a new quality being confronted with traditional diplomacy (or replenishing it) have been divided into two groups of international actors: state-originated and those being theoretically independent from official authority. I deliberately used the word “theoretically” in order to draw attention to the fact that most often so-called non-governmental subjects as associations, foundations are financially supported by the national governments, which strive to provide such institutions with means contributing to effective image building. Nonetheless, it should be noticed that this situation may lead to regarding those “independent” international actors as “transmission belts” (Ociepka 2008, p. 23). In this paper I would like to take a closer look on the role of the New Polish Emigration in building the Polish public diplomacy strategy.

EMIGRATION AS A SOCIAL PHENOMENON

After the accession to the EU, Polish reality has changed irreversibly – we became a part of the European family. One of the most noticeable effects of the conclusion of the long-lasting process of negotiating our accession and status, is the exodus of people who have decided to take a chance and try to build their future abroad. Migrations appointed a brand new quality constituted by thousands of Polish citizens living, working, acting abroad and being considered as a representation of the Polish nation as a totality.

Research conducted in 2006 revealed that the possibility of working legally in the EU countries was seen as the pivotal advantage of Poland's accession to the EU (CBOS report 2006), which could be easily understood concerning the difference in the level of development between the "old EU countries" and new ones. The fact of opening the labour market for citizens from Eastern Europe was perceived as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to gain a good social status and come abreast with the status of citizens living in the highly-developed EU states.

In order to find the very migration's distillation, it has to be analyzed from many points of view. This multi-faceted problem has emerged as one of the most important and crucial social phenomena of the globalized world. As already mentioned, the decisions preceding the act of migration are very differential – from economic, through political, to social ones. According to the latest analysis (Kłos 2006, p. 1-4), the economic premises preponderate over others – the main aim of the economic migration is improving personal financial situation and the financial situation of the family members. Living standards differentiation measured by the GDP (PPP), pay differential, jobless rate, information accessibility, better development perspectives and high mobility accounts for the economic migration. What is also worth mentioning is the specific characteristic of contemporary migration – its selectivity, which means that the way of migration is chosen rather by young, risk-orientated and well-educated citizens than by an elder generation preferring secure and stable life without shock-evoking changes.

There is no point in quoting definitions of the "migration" notion and analyzing the whole spectrum of types of this phenomenon. Enough to say that it has become an indispensable part of contemporary states and societies. Nevertheless, a little attention should be given to one distinction – the polarity between two concepts: net immigration and net emigration (more generally: gross and net migration) (Kaczmarczyk 2006, p. 4). 15 countries of the EU (before enlargement) belong to the net immigration states, which means that more foreigners come than citizens leave. Poland, however, belongs to the net emigration group of countries – more citizens decide to leave than foreigners to come. The conclusion is quite obvious: emigration cannot be ignored by government and it should be treated as a pivotal phenomenon, which contributes to functioning of a whole nation and its image in the international sphere.

CONTEMPORARY MIGRATION MOVEMENT AND ITS IMPLICATIONS – STATISTICAL OVERVIEW

In order to understand the potential of the Polish emigration movement, we must take a closer look at selected historical conditioning of Polish emigration processes (Kaczmarczyk 2008, p. 14-17).

From the XIXth century Poland has been one of the biggest net emigration countries in Europe and what could be perceived as its characteristic, this situation has not reversed even during the transformation, which brought such a tremendous breakthrough for the Polish nation. From the very beginning, the migration movement was differential: on the one hand, long-term emigration was observed (1.7 million Polish emigrants who left country between 1860 and 1940 settled in the USA), but on the other hand, short-term exists were also a part of the migration movement – Germany and France prevailed as the destination countries for the short-term migration.

Implications of the Second World War reached the area of Polish migration. First, as a result of military action, 5 million Poles (20% of Polish nation) found themselves outside the Polish land. Therefore they had to make a choice (or were forced to) and decide where the place of their living would be. In addition, in the following years nearly 4 million Poles were resettled by force.

After the period of forced massive migration between 1945-1948, the migration politics of the People's Republic of Poland government had been extremely modified – it was a typical move for countries in East Europe. First symptoms of a "thaw" revealed in the politics concerning the German minority – the most measurable effect of this quality change was the number of German minority members living in Poland, which increased 27 times in 1956 comparing with the period 1950-1955. Although the migration of the German minority was restricted by the financial possibilities of potential migrants, the different types of migrations (economic migration and short-term migration) started to appear.

In the late 60's. and following decades the migration movement changed its character – economic and short-term migration started to be the dominant types of migration. According to research it was a time of a particular game – a game between citizens and the socialist system (Kaczmarczyk 2008, p. 16). The game's rules could be described as follows: officially there was a very restrictive migration politic, but informal actions were taken up in order to make the migration possible. Such a complicated situation was practical and politics-led: in some cases the approval for leaving the country seemed to be a better solution for the government. Although the vast majority of the migration was directed to the socialist countries, the western-directed foreign mobility could not be ignored at that time – between 1971 and 1980 nearly 4.2 million citizens migrated to the countries of Western Europe (Kaczmarczyk 2005, p. 86).

The decade of Solidarity and transition contributed to the changes in the migration movement – emigration became a mass phenomenon. Dariusz Stola (Kaczmarczyk 2008, p. 16) describes this outbreak as follows: in 1984 588 thousand Western-directed exits were registered, in 1985 1.1 million, in 1988 2, 800 million, in 1989 19 million Polish citizens emigrated. This statistic compared with the offi-

cial data of Central Statistical Office (report of the Central Statistical Office shows that only 270 thousand Polish citizens had left the country) revealed the character of migration in late 80's – research conducted by Barbara Sakson (Kaczmarczyk 2008, p. 16-17) proved that vast majority of *Solidarity* era migration was “invisible”, which means that it was not registered.

In the late 90's and first years of the XIXth century around 400 thousand Polish citizens were working legally in the EU states. It is recommended to add 100-500 thousand of those migrants who were employed illegally (Boni 2005, p. 182). Traveling facilities implemented after 1989 and visa waiver resulted in an explosion of seasonal employment – shortly before Poland's accession, there was 250-280 thousand seasonal workers employed in the EU-15 (Boni 2005, p. 182).

The day of 1st May 2004 should be perceived as a significant breakthrough in history of modern Europe – nevertheless its adjudication is one of the most discussed issues. For some people it opened the door for a better life but for others it is identified with the beginning of foreign workforce invasion. It is assessed that after the 1st May 2004 17% more Polish citizens emigrated permanently than the year earlier (Rosiek, p. 81). However, this data should be interpreted very carefully because of the variety of different sources concerning the migration movement and fluctuation of emigrating and immigrating processes (Jaźwińska, Kaczmarczyk, Napierała 2008, p. 47-48). The most accurate data sourced from immigrants' registration systems implemented in Great Britain and Ireland – countries that opened their borders for Central European employees straight after the enlargement of the EU (Wiśniewski, Duszczuk 2007, p. 24). Furthermore, accurate migration statistics, giving a real picture of the EU migration movement, are pursued by Germany, Norway, Denmark and Iceland.

Polish emigrants formed the largest immigrant group in the EU countries – in Sweden one in two immigrant has Polish citizenship, in Great Britain 60% of foreign workers came from Poland (Rosiek, p. 82). According to BAEL research, in the IV quarter 2003 there were 200 thousand Polish citizens staying abroad, in IV quarter 2004 287 thousand and in IV quarter 2005 almost 420 thousand Poles had left their homeland. The exaggerated emigration movement data are also worth highlighting because they represent the misjudgments commonly promulgated in society, which often led to migrants' disapproval in countries they settled in: data saying that 2-4 million Polish citizens emigrated from Poland soon after the 1st May 2004 is false due to the fact that after Poland's accession to the EU many emigrants working illegally (and staying abroad before the 1st May 2004) simply revealed their presence and decided to register themselves. Moreover, the actual picture of emigration is blurred by the process of crossing borders repeatedly – a few times a year (Kłos 2006, p. 1-4). Some of the most accurate data is collected by the *European Citizen Action Service* (Straser 2006, <http://www.ecas.org>). In 2006 an ECAS report based on detailed country migration data analysis shows 1.12 million Polish citizens having left their homeland after the 1st May 2004 – this estimate encompasses both the emigration and seasonal emigration. There is no doubt then that Polish immigrants represent a strong force which could not be ignored by the vernacular government and foreign governments and nations.

THE *NEW POLISH EMIGRATION* FEATURES CONSIDERING THE POLISH EMIGRANT POPULATION IN LONDON

The abovementioned statistics do not give the full picture of the *Polish New Emigration*. They represent, however, the general Polish migration movement tendencies hidden in migration directions and fluctuation of exacerbation of migrants' flow. Nevertheless, in order to understand the *New Emigration* it is indispensable to describe at least a few pivotal features, which distinguish the contemporary Polish migration movement from traditional Polish emigration. Basic *Polish New Emigration's* characteristics could be gathered into few groups:

- 1) emigration period – permanent emigration is not the prevailing form of contemporary Polish emigration movement. According to different data, 60-70% of emigrants left Poland for a period shorter than 12 months returning afterwards to their households in Poland. The time-limited emigration could, however, transform into permanent emigration – the conclusion is then that every short-term living place change has “potential” to convert into permanent settlement (another problem connected with this phenomenon and which could not be analyzed here is the methodological consequences influencing the whole sphere of migration researches) (Kaczmarczyk 2008, p. 6). Short-term emigration could be also considered in the terms of foreign labour supply and demand (Rosiek, p. 82): the vast majority of Polish emigrants were employed in seasonal sector,
- 2) emigration motivation factor – commercially motivated emigration constitutes the largest part of the Polish emigration movement – according to BAEL research, 80% of emigrants left Poland in order to gain some money. But, what is definitely worth stressing, emigration has stopped being the way to save enough assets to lead a life on a higher material level after returning to the homeland but, due to the growing prices of properties (both abroad and in Poland) and zloty's growth comparing to British pound and Euro, started to be the way to work and obtain a salary enabling the leading of a fair life (Jończy 2009, p. 73),
- 3) emigrants' age and education profile – *New Emigration* age issue is not a subject for discussion: there is a wide consent among researchers that emigration is a young people's domain (Jończy 2009, p. 70). The education issue however tends to be the point where controversy takes over. Soon after (and well before) Poland's accession to the EU prognosis said that country would have to face a massive outflow of well-educated population. However, these assumptions were negatively verified by the reality. AIG and “Gazeta Wyborcza” report (Zbonikowska 2010, <http://www.prawopracy.org/content/view/97/32>) results revealed that young people declaring intention for taking job abroad want to stay only for a particular period of time (from 2,3 months – 39% to one year – 25 % of respondents). People with higher education intend to make big money in a short period and afterwards return to Poland in order to lead a normal life. In their opinions, working abroad does not give the opportunity for professional development (basically this is coincident with the contemporary tendency to employ foreigners in subsidiary sectors of the economy – this issue will also be discus-

sed later). Young graduates agree to work below their qualifications but they apparently have no intention to stay at this level of professional and personal development and, according to the mentioned report, they plan to return to their homeland. Paweł Kaczmarczyk (2008, p. 7) claims that while traditional Polish emigration (*The Old Emigration*) could be i.a. characterized in terms of having a high education, the after-transformation emigration education is on a considerably lower level due to the dominant social group which were resettling: *the Old Emigration* was constituted of the well educated upper class, intelligence etc., people who emigrated after the transition period belonging to the group of "transformation losers" (in order to find their place after experiencing defeat in changing homeland reality, they decided to take a chance and left Poland). According to statistics (Kłos 2006, p. 3), during the period between 1981 and 1988 16% of Polish emigrants had the higher education (comparing to 8% rate of Polish citizens having the higher education in that period, it proved that Poland experienced significant loss), whereas between 1989 and 1991 this rate abated to 12%. 13% is the rate of high-educated emigrants leaving Poland between 1992 and 1997. The situation had been systematically changing the closer to the date of Poland's accession to the EU – between 1998 and 2001 participation of emigrants legitimating with higher education in the total number of emigrants averaged 15%. Taking into account the emigrants' age, it is worth mentioning that 25% of the total number were in the 25-29 age range, whereas only 18% (the smallest rate in emigrants' population) were numbered among the 45+ age range. What is more, the youngest part of Polish emigration movement was simultaneously the best educated – 18% had the high education diploma, 33% finished different types of secondary school and 49% legitimated with lower education. The constant augmentation of well-educated young Polish citizens emigration has been also apparent after the 1st May 2004. Although the precise data is not available (due to methodological controversies connected with the process of emigration movement measurement), BAEL research overview proves that at least 60% of emigrants do not cross the 35 borderline age and 60% of all emigration population are represented by secondary school graduates (Kudlicki 2006). In this context it seems that Polish society suffers from "brain drain" – outflow of young high-educated people who (in the event of staying in their own country) might contribute to their homeland's development. The problem of "brain drain" is widely discussed within many social circles: beginning from scientists, through local communities, finishing at government level. However, "brain drain" is not so obvious as everyone thinks. P. Kaczmarczyk (2008, p. 7, 13) contends that the *New Emigration* should be rather perceived in terms of young well-educated people surplus outflow than in terms of "brain drain" – there is a group of young people with university diploma who are not able to find a job in Poland and therefore decide to emigrate. The assumption that "brain drain" leads to some kind of irremediable loss for the whole of society is, in Polish emigration movement context, false, because the outflow of those graduates who can not find suitable employment in Poland could be treated as advantageous (as an opportunity to eliminate higher redundancy). Additionally, "brain drain" should be

regarded as a permanent loss of young well-educated population – however, as was mentioned earlier in this paper, Polish emigration movement has rather temporary than permanent character. Nevertheless, there is one more problematic issue connected with the *New Polish Emigration*: apparently “brain wastage” is more malign for Polish society quality and social capital than the “brain drain”. “Brain wastage” takes place when a highly-educated population has to work below its qualifications. The labour market in developed western countries is divided for sectors that require qualified specialists (demand is relatively small) and for sectors that need unqualified work force (demand is of greater size). As P. Kaczmarczyk claims: “This type of migration could lead to depreciation of people’s capital but, on the other hand, it augments the probability of returning to the home country” (Kaczmarczyk 2008, p. 33).

The New Emigration profile described above is general. Since this paper is dedicated to *Polish New Emigration* organisations in London, it is indispensable to characterize this population in a more detailed way. Looking closer at the Polish community in London would allow us to better understand its character and recognize the grounding of its activity embodied in a wide spectrum of non-governmental organisations, which constitute a particular platform for building a strong, independent, self-confident and self-conscious community struggling, from one point of view, to forge a better position in British society, and, from the other point, being a representation of the Polish nation and Poland abroad. It seems that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2009 report gives a solid overview of Polish communities around the world including the British one (*Foreign Affairs Ministry Report*, p. 255-265).

As already mentioned, statistical estimation of the *Polish New Emigration* size in Great Britain is almost impossible because of the unregistered emigrants’ return and the pendulous character of foreign mobility. According to the report of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the total number of Polish people in England and Wales is estimated at 850 thousand, in Scotland 70 thousand and in Northern Ireland 35 thousand. Official data from June 2006 points that from May 2004 to June 2006 427 thousand people from the new EU countries registered in the *British Workers Registration Scheme* system (264 thousand of Polish emigrants) (Cienski 2006). If we add to this self-employed Polish emigrants, there would be around 600 thousand legally working Polish emigrants in 2006 (“The Economist” 2006) (according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs report, the Polish emigrants population was, after the Indian origin people and Irishman, the third largest national group in Great Britain). To illustrate the Polish emigration movement complexity, it is worth noting that those 264 thousand do not stay in Great Britain permanently. Moreover, the *British Workers Registration Scheme* register only the fact of first employment, there is no information available about the pendulous migration movement and there is also a population of Poles working illegally which is not registered at all (Wiśniewski, Duszczyk 2007, p. 24). The Ministry Foreign Affairs report results show that in 2008, comparing with 2007 32% less Polish people registered in the Workers Registration Scheme (in 2007 there were 150 thousand whereas in 2008 only 101

thousand registrations). The *Polish New Emigration* majority in Great Britain was constituted of people from 18-34 age range, which is symptomatic for the whole population of the *Polish New Emigration*.

The structure of employment does not differ from the general structure of the Polish New Emigration population employment. In other words, Polish emigrants are, in particular, employed in such sectors as industrial production, hotel and gastro-nomic services, agriculture, trading, construction and health service. Therefore, comparing this data with the emigrants' age and education we may surmise that "brain wastage" is a common phenomenon in the *Polish New Emigration* population. Being employed in secondary sectors, working below qualifications and expectations, theoretically does not encourage emigrants to engage in any kind of civil society oriented activities, leads to depreciation of social capital and a passive attitude.

Improvement of personal existence and taking advantage of new chances of personal development are the motives, which prevail in the Polish emigration environment as dominant causes for leaving Poland. What is distinctive for this population is: greater mobility potential, ability to be flexible in changing conditions and non reluctance in taking irreversible life decisions. Again, this characteristic shows the great dynamics and unsteadiness of the Polish emigrants population, which could be treated as an obstacle in building an enduring community aware of its rights and ready to fight for better life for the whole of Polish emigrants population and conscious of its role in promoting Poland abroad and building a positive Polish image in foreign countries. Later, in this paper, I will return to this issue.

Considering the emigrants position in Great Britain, it has to be said that the *New Emigration* status is less stable than the status of the traditional emigration members which settled in a new country permanently and therefore were able to gain a relatively high social status. Members of the *New Emigration* are often treated as a cheap workforce from Central Europe and are not able to work in good positions, especially if they intend to stay only for a limited period. Of course, the highly-qualified group of Polish specialists could vaunt a better status in British society but, in the end, it is achievable for only a small part of the whole of the *Polish New Emigration* population. Moreover, the situation has been complicated by the world financial crisis, which has led to an aggravation of living standards of whole societies. A fraught atmosphere has been particularly seen in countries with high rates of immigrants who have been identified as an additional burden for the state finance system and as a group which tends to claw job posts back. Suffering from general problems connected with the financial crisis, Polish emigrants have been turning to local authorities for social service benefits which has inflamed even more the conflict between the British and Polish communities. Being one of the global financial crisis victims and an object of British antipathy do not facilitate self-motivation and adoption of various kinds of pro - social activities.

Having found themselves in the multicultural society accepting life patterns so unfamiliar for Polish emigrants, they are experiencing serious problems which, in theory, make it more difficult, if not impossible, to become a strong, one-voice community and contributes to the process of creating and strengthening a negative image of the Polish immigrant community. The different character of the pro-

blems show the scale of obstacles the *Polish New Emigration* has to overcome in order to gain respect and regard in British society.

The first problematic issue is connected with conflict between the traditional and the *New Emigration*. Members of the *Old Emigration* have founded a great number of active and recognizable (not only in the Polish circles) organisations, which have been helping generations of Poles coming to Great Britain to conserve the unique bond with their homeland. Nevertheless, together with ageing process, the *Old Emigration* is not capable of continuing its work. However, what is particularly devastating in the context of building a cohesive Polish emigrants' community, the *Old Emigration* members do not allow the *New Emigration* to participate in their organisation on equal terms – emigrants coming to Great Britain after 2004 (and earlier as well) are often treated as an economically-oriented population, which does not understand the value of being Polish and is not able to represent their country properly because it has not experienced repressions for fighting for Poland and therefore is not capable of maintaining the real Polish spirit. As G. Babiński says: "In the past by virtue of the complicated historical fate of the Polish nation emigration and its effects were very firmly positioned in that more general national and political context. It was just like that in which all larger emigration tides took place in rather dramatic, untypical, not peaceful and normal periods and circumstances. Therefore, the emigration, even this purely economic one, was always surrounded by an aura of explicit and emotionally unambiguous value judgments, obligations and patriotic – national actions" (Babiński 2009, p. 35-36).

The *Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs* in the light of the *Federation of Poles in Great Britain* report indicates that another problem is connected with the violence aimed at Poles living and working in Great Britain - in 2008 there was 20% more cases concerning violent behavior towards the Polish population which, it seems, is sourced in the global crisis and increasing redundancy (*Foreign Affairs Ministry Report 2009*, p. 257-258). We observe demonstrations of British citizens who were trying to express their anxiety over losing jobs in favour of cheaper Polish workers who were ready and eager to work for smaller salaries. This kind of anxiety could be obviously easily understood, however, fear referring to the possibility of losing jobs and lowering of living standards should not result in such actions aimed at national minority populations.

Considering the *New Polish Emigration*, there are few more main problems which should be pointed out:

- 1) an insufficient level of English skills which results in a worse position on the labour market (Polish immigrants are offered marginal posts, only a very small group has a chance to gain a better position)
- 2) insufficient knowledge concerning employees' rights and employers' obligations which provide employers with opportunities to take advantage of unware Polish immigrants
- 3) vulnerability to dishonest job agents' activities – being unfamiliar with their rights and not having enough language skills to communicate effectively, Polish immigrants are very prone to become objects of dishonest job agents' activities

- 4) low awareness concerning British social law, in particular the areas covering children care – Polish immigrants are extremely distrustful about contacts with British social services which lead to misunderstandings associated with social services' interventions in matters of child safety and life risks.
- 5) Difficulties in finding themselves in multicultural and multinational British society accepting norms and customs unknown for Polish immigrants (*Foreign Affairs Ministry Report*, p. 258-259).

All of the above mentioned obstacles mean that the Polish emigrant community not only has to overcome these problems which require much (sometimes too much) effort and causes stressful situations but also seems incapable of building a cohesive group with potential to fight for their rights and represent Poland abroad. Moreover, such problems cause a negative perception of the *Polish New Emigration* population in British society – Poles are seen as an unstable, incoherent and internally divided group of people who arrived on those Isles in order to gain money but not to try to achieve something more ambitious. This Poles' status results in destroying Poland's positive image abroad. The *Polish New Emigration* image will be analyzed in the next part of this paper.

THE *POLISH NEW EMIGRATION* IMAGE IN GREAT BRITAIN AS A ONE OF THE FACTORS IN POLAND'S INTERNATIONAL IMAGE

The international image of a nation is strongly connected with notions such as "national character" and "stereotype".

In "National character and national stereotypes" there are four basic definitions of the "national character" (Kunczik 1990, p. 32):

- 1) "Certain psychological traits or features characteristic of the citizens of a given nation (...),
- 2) Modal personality (...),
- 3) Basic personality structure,
- 4) System of attitudes, values and beliefs held in common by the members of a given society" (Kunczik 1990, p. 32).

Apart from the fact that there are more definitions of the phenomenon of the "national character", it is highly disputable if there is anything like "national character" in reality. Researchers emphasize that "even if differences in intelligence or temperament between the populations of two countries were to be defined, as a rule the differences between the groups are a lot smaller than the breadth of differences within the individual populations" (Kunczik 1990, p. 33). Therefore national character defined as modal sets of virtues in a given society could not be considered as a real phenomenon – in fact, societies constituted of individuals are too complex to have something as individual – related as a "character".

Attitudes toward other members in social life could be regarded as expressions of our knowledge, emotions and readiness to act toward them (Matsumoto, Juang 2007, p. 98-103). The most distinctive definition of "stereotype" was created by

W. Lippmann who sees stereotypes "as routine judgments, simple and frequently inadequately founded. Most are imprecise and are defended by many people with great conviction" (Kunczik 1990, p. 37). Being justified or unjustified exaggerated opinion associated with a particular object, a stereotype is indispensable in that sense that it allows us to avoid the necessity of analyzing too much information in a short period of time. We are not able to absorb everything in detail – therefore we must organize objects in wider categories, which makes the first contact possible.

In literature such concepts as "attitude", "stereotype", "prejudice" or "image" often overlap. Different authors use them in various contexts. In other words – there is no exact delimitation between those notions, however there are some noticeable differences. As Michael Kunczik claims: "the term image became popular especially in the U.S.A. in the 50s and was used to describe the aura of a person in public life, a party, a product, a nation, a people and so forth. The image can be seen as something created and cultivated by its possessor, i.e. something which can be actively influenced by public relations activities. By contrast, prejudices and/or stereotypes can be treated as being created by the environment and being ascribed" (Kunczik 1990, p. 37-38). In other words – image could be treated as an active whereas stereotype as a passive category. Image creation (at least in a part) is dependent on the possessor's will and goals – either person, party etc. choose those aspects they want to be exposed to a wider public or, in a situation of possessing a negative image, take proper action to change it. Stereotypes are much more deeply rooted in people's minds and therefore are less prone to be changed. Indubitably those two notions reinforce each other – image could be based on previously formed stereotype and stereotype could be transformed (to some level) by the long-term change in image. The same mechanism concerns a national image, which "can then be understood as the cognitive representation which a person holds of a given country, or more simply put, what a person believes to be true about a nation and its people" (Kunczik 1990, p. 38).

Regarding problems which reveal the weakness of the *New Polish Emigration* population, it may seem that the Polish immigrants image is expressly negative. Nevertheless, British media and press analysis and scientific research point out that it must rather be perceived as much more complicated.

British press releases, articles and media programs indicate the dual nature of the *New Polish Emigration* population image. Nonetheless, it seems that a negative perception is prevailing. J. Fomina and J. Frelak from the *Institute of Public Affairs* suggest that such unfavourable perception sources could be found in eurosceptic and anti-immigration attitudes represented by an average British press reader (*Brytyjska prasa o Polakach*, <http://fakty.interia.pl/news/brytyjska-prasa-o-polakach,1064079>). Such attitudes are very complex issues because they are connected with various different questions concerning first of all, the anxiety of losing a strong position in Europe due to the process of European Union enlargement, secondly referring to the necessity of living among foreigners who are not familiar with a specific British life style, thirdly connecting with concerns of decreasing standard of living as a result of employing cheaper workforce from Eastern Europe. Being reinforced by mentioned factors, the negative Polish immigrants'

image is hardly changeable and it requires a great effort to transform it in if not to positive, then at least to a neutral one.

Research conducted for ComRes (*Brytyjczycy o Polakach: Dobrzy i zaradni pracownicy, ale nic więcej*, <http://www.bankier.pl/wiadomosc/Brytyjczycy-o-Polakach-Dobrzy-i-zaradni-pracownicy-ale-nic-wiecej-1650189.html>) agency which encompassed representatives of every region in six age categories reveals that British society does not look at the Polish immigrants community through a prism of alcoholic and laziness stereotypes. Conversely, British consider Poles as hardworking and resourceful people who are indispensable for their economy to function properly and effectively. Michał Garapich argues that it is cultural proximity, which constitutes the foundations of acceptance of (although sometimes only partial) Polish immigrants by members of British society. As he claims: "We [Polish immigrants] are not differentiated by skin colour, specific cuisine etc. Additionally, we shift between Poland and Great Britain all the time, therefore we do not function in society This is the ideal model of the emigrant" (Pelowski, <http://gazetapraca.pl/gazetapraca/1,73343,3410391.html?as=2&startsz=x>).

From another point of view however, Polish immigrants are seen as a threat for the British employees who have higher job requirements. It is worth emphasizing that this issue has been the main axis of British antipathy towards the Polish community. The *Ministry of Foreign Affairs* report (2009, p. 260-261) highlights to this problem as well pointing out that until the end of 2008 the British press had presented the *New Polish Emigration* in either positive or neutral light. Latterly, however, the situation has changed radically and authors have started to concentrate on "taking British jobs away" and "manipulating with the social benefits" issues.

ComRes research (*Brytyjczycy o Polakach: Dobrzy i zaradni pracownicy, ale nic więcej*, <http://www.bankier.pl/wiadomosc/Brytyjczycy-o-Polakach-Dobrzy-i-zaradni-pracownicy-ale-nic-wiecej-1650189.html>) explicitly points out that although the *New Polish Emigration* is accepted, Poles are still treated like "strangers". British are already accustomed to Poles' presence on the Isles, nevertheless they seem not to understand Polish immigrants and, what is more important in the context of building a single multicultural society, they are not eager to know them better and to establish a closer bond.

Moreover, there are some articles, which show Poland as a fundamentalist country based on bureaucratic mechanisms, which forces young and ambitious Poles to leave their homeland and emigrate (*Brytyjska prasa o Polakach* 2008, <http://fakty.interia.pl/news/brytyjska-prasa-o-polakach,1064079>). Again, a dual picture is being created: from one point of view, we could observe the *New Polish Emigration* being positively assessed by British press as a group of ambitious and hardworking people but, from the other point, we have to face the negative image of Poland being perceived as a country which is not able to become a real democracy and which does not have anything interesting to its population of young, well-educated and motivated people. British press article analysis reveals therefore that the image of the *New Polish Emigration* is a very complex phenomenon. Although the Polish immigrants population contributes to the development of British economy, it is perceived as a serious threat for British employees. British

tend to see Polish immigrants as strongly economically motivated and not afraid of hard work. At the same time however, they are not eager to include people from Eastern Europe into their social structures as equal partners. Simultaneously this rather unfavourable picture is being transferred to Poland's image as a country, which "produces" immigrants who overflow these Isles bringing a totally different life style, customs, behaviour and values.

This situation conceives an area for the *New Polish Emigration* organisations, which could become one of the most important links in the chain of activities aimed at an improvement of Poland's international image. Associations gathering young, passionate and positively energetic Polish emigrants, have a great potential to build a positive image of their homeland. This is grounded, first of all, on a cultural capital potential and secondly on the fact of being "in the right place in the right time" – the *New Emigration Associations'* advantage over the organisations creating the Poland's image located in Poland is founded on the fact that they are acting abroad inside a given society which does not approve of the Polish presence. Being closer to the core of building the negative Polish immigration image, they have an opportunity to recognize pivotal problems, recognize principal needs and react adequately. In the next part of this paper chosen associations of the *New Polish Emigration* will be presented.

NEW POLISH EMIGRATION ASSOCIATIONS AND THEIR ACTIVITY AS ONE OF THE PILLARS OF POLISH PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

After characterising the *New Emigration* population, its problems, needs and hopes, it is high time to take into consideration *New Emigration* organisations and look closer to their activities, goals and methods used in order to achieve their priorities. In this section I will describe only a few previously chosen *Polish New Emigration* associations – those, which in my opinion, are representative of the potential hidden in the young Polish emigrants community in Great Britain. Unfortunately, limited space does not allow characterization many more associations.

Poland Street was established in 2005 as a response to the need for creating a new, creative and dynamic institution aiming at representation of Polish community beliefs, hopes, and values in British society. Passionate Polish emigrants noticed that despite their visible presence in British society day-to-day life, their image and perception was far from positive. Although *Polish New Emigration* members (sometimes together with representatives of the Old Emigration) put a great effort to introduce at least some basic elements of Polish culture, music, and business into British reality, the lack of a strong, modern and forward-looking organisation had been a great challenge for those who were not indifferent to the faith of the Polish community. As it has been said before – *Poland Street* was the answer.

Defining themselves as aware European citizens, members of *Poland Street Association* aimed at creating a totally new quality – an open, non-exclusive organisation without ethnic barriers: "we aim at reaching out to other cultures and ethnic groups in London in a strong belief that knowledge of each other is the key to a just and

stable multicultural society. Poles know a lot about cultural pluralism (...). Therefore, our activities have a strong accent on intercultural communication, integration and getting to know each other" (www.polandstreet.org.uk). The *Poland Street* program is based on such priorities as: promoting human rights, employment rights, different issues connected with conscious voting, building an engaged civil society composed of various nationalities and promoting mutual cultural understanding through cultural diversity. On *Poland Street* website one might read: "as transnational, mobile Europeans, we believe in the virtues of equality, justice and democracy. But as Poles know well, these virtues are not alive without constant defense. *Poland Street* is our way to implement it on a truly European scale" (www.polandstreet.org.uk). In other words, the *Poland Street* aim is to transform a weak and conflict-divided Polish Emigration environment into a strong and dynamic emigré civil society which would be able to understand its specific situation (the condition of living in multicultural society in which approved customs, behavior and values are far from being natural for European-oriented citizens) and notice its unique virtue. *Poland Street* is composed of people who want to live in better surroundings and for whom being a part of a cohesive community makes a difference. Nevertheless, as it is shown by the goals, which are articulated by the association's officials, taking care of *Polish New Emigration* interests and fighting for the creating of a united structure are not the only priorities for *Poland Street*. It is worth noticing that among other goals, there are some specially devoted to Poland's international image:

- 1) Integration of the young Polish generation in Great Britain ("young" with regard to the duration of stay in Great Britain rather than age) and act as representatives of its interests in talks with Polish and British authorities, as well as social organisations established by the so-called "Old Emigration", which since the Second World War has been building "Poland outside Poland"
- 2) Protect rights of Poles living in Great Britain
- 3) Promotion of Poland as a modern European State with a rich and beautiful history and heritage
- 4) Reinforcement and creation of a positive image of Poles in the eyes of the British and other communities living on the Isles
- 5) Promotion and support of the representatives of Polish art and culture in a broad sense as well as social organisations of the young Polish émigré community
- 6) Influence on and development of cultural and social life of the Fourth Wave of Polish Emigration (http://www.polandstreet.org.uk/index.php?page=sekcja_ogolna&dzial=5).

Another Polish organisation is *Polish Professionals in London* (<https://www.polishprofessionals.org.uk/podstrony/o-nas>). This institution was established in 2005 and is dedicated to Polish professionals living and working in London. This non-profit organisation gathers together highly educated and skilled Polish immigrants who are aware of the meaning of immigrant integration and who notice the need to integrate (both on professional and personal level) with other Polish professionals. The *Polish Professionals in London* strives to be the voice of a group

of highly educated Poles who share similar life style, have similar aspirations and are eager to meet and build Polish community abroad. The statutes of the Polish Professionals in London association defines the following goals:

- 1) Promotion of Poles and Poland's good name abroad
- 2) Integration of the environment of Polish professionals
- 3) Support professional aspirations of its Participants (<https://www.polishprofessionals.org.uk/uploads/file/StatutPPL.pdf>, p. 1).

Although objectives enumerated above are less elaborated than the *Poland Street* objectives – nevertheless they still encompass promotion of Poland and Poles abroad which refers to the process of building a favourable image and Polish public diplomacy activities.

The third *New Polish Emigration* organisation which will be briefly presented in this paper is *Solidarni Foundation* (<http://www.solidarni.org.uk/indexpl.html>) established by a group of young Poles employed in London's financial community. The *Solidarni Foundation* aims at promoting the idea of integration and cooperation among Poles living and working in London. It also emphasizes the need to raise the knowledge of international society about Polish culture, history and heritage contributing to European and world heritage. On the *Solidarni Foundation* website the following objectives appear as points designating the direction of members' activity:

- 1) to cooperate with and assist existing organisations that provide help to the Polish community in London, in raising funds from Polish and European sponsors
- 2) to reach as many Polish volunteers as possible, in particular those working in London, who are able to offer their services free of charge to those in need, be they legal, medical or business help
- 3) to bring to public light and highlight situations in which Poles are victims of fraudulent behaviour
- 4) to promote patriotic behaviour and the concept of civic duty and solidarity via social and fundraising events (the proceeds of the latter going directly towards those in need)
- 5) to promote Polish history, culture and heritage among the British-based public.

Again, although the objective concerning building of a positive Polish image abroad constitutes only one point on the list, the whole spectrum of *Solidarni Foundation* activities could be considered as a strong foundation for improving the *New Polish Emigration* perception.

Having presented a few selected Polish associations (taking into consideration their objectives, process of emerging and participants in particular), something has to be said about initiatives they are organizing in order to fulfill their goals. Special attention should be given to those activities which are the result of cooperation and the process of negotiating their form and content and simultaneously promoting Poland and Poles abroad. As an example of those initiatives "The Campaign for historical truth" will be analyzed in the following part of this paper.

The "Campaign for historical truth" was a *Polish Professionals in London* and *Solidarni Foundation* response to series of articles in "The Times" presenting Poles as being responsible for Jewish extermination during the Holocaust. Giles Coren in his article in "The Times" published on 26th July 2008 argued that Polish people deliberately hurt Jews during the Second World War: "we Corens are here, now, because the ancestors of these Poles now going home used to amuse themselves at Easter by locking Jews in the synagogue and setting fire to it" (Spysz 2008, <http://www.krakowpost.com/article/1219>). These words were the beginning of Polish associations' (it is worth mentioning that both "New" and "Old" emigration joint efforts to explain to British journalists and opinion leaders of the real role of Polish nation in the Holocaust) battle for historical truth – Polish representatives defined this opinion as unfair, full of false prejudice attempting to destroy the image of Poland and Poles. The press spokesman of the *Federation of Poles in Great Britain* W. Moszczyński referring to the decision of the *British Press Complaints Commission*, which rejected the Poles' formal complaint, argued as follows: "furthermore though we successfully showed that there was no evidence provided by »The Times« of Poles locking up and burning Jews in synagogues as a recreational Easter pastime, you have used an incident in the Ukraine during the terror and chaos of the Russian Revolution, in which (as I pointed out in my letter of 28th September) there was no active participation of Poles, as justification for your Commissioners to maintain that this passage justified Giles Coren's Polonophobic jibes about Easter" (Coren exonerated in press complaint (2008), <http://www.radio-orka.fm/english/london-bridge/45-london-bridge/3826-coren-exonerated-in-press-complaint> 2008). It became obvious for Polish activists that it is indispensable to fight for Poland's good name. As a result of publishing a series of these articles a negative image of Poles and Poland emerged in British society. Although it could not be completely contravened that attacks on Jews inspiring by Poles took place, it must be, however, admitted that these were exceptions and could not be treated as an indicator of the Polish nation's anti-semitism. The *Polish Professionals in London* and *Solidarni Foundation* prepared a petition and collected over 1600 signatories from Poland, Australia, USA and South Africa who expressed their support for this battle. The petition (together with book devoted to the forgotten Holocaust issue) was handed to "The Times" editorial office. Furthermore, following actions such as meetings and conferences regarding Holocaust, Second World War and Poland's role in it were organized in order to fight for historical truth (Sławiński 2008).

CONCLUSIONS

This short overview gives a solid picture of the profile of Polish associations – their emergence should be regarded as a symptom of quality change in the *New Emigration* life. By means of newly established organisations Polish emigrants gain the opportunity to fight for their rights, status and regard in British society – they have stopped being a silent, transparent and conflict ridden mass of Poles from all around their homeland and instead, they have developed themselves in a passionate, active, self-conscious community ready to turn their ideas into reality. More-

over, their activity entered into the area of the Polish public diplomacy understood as a new type of diplomacy (it should be however noticed that public diplomacy has always been present in diplomacy but nowadays it has become appreciated as a effective tool of state image building and management). The *New Polish Emigration* organisations contribute to creating the positive picture of Poland and Poles in British society. It is also worth emphasizing that they strive to fulfill their own ideas and ideals which are signed into a Polish set of most appreciated values and virtues. *Solidarni Foundation*, *Poland Street* and *Polish Professionals in London* do not expect Polish government to be their financial support and mentor – on the contrary their members believe in themselves, believe in integration and cooperation of Poles living in London. Young, passionate members of these associations are completely aware of the significance of being a cohesive group in multicultural British society. They do not approve of the passive attitude, which is characteristic for those Polish emigrants who do not feel responsible for the rest of the Polish emigrant population suffering image devastation as a consequence of irresponsible behaviour. In other words, the *New Polish Emigration* associations constitute the Polish national version of diaspora diplomacy which is one form of public diplomacy.

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