

A View from the Side: Poland

Jerzy Bahr

On September 5th, 2001 we celebrate 10th anniversary of the reestablishment of diplomatic relations between Lithuania and Poland, which in 1991 restored independence they had been deprived of as a consequence of a Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. 10 years is a very short period of time for a nation. Every decade, however, differs a lot from the preceding one: one decade sees more events than the other, one decade brings up more or less active public figures in comparison to the other. Period of time we consider at the moment is a very special one. We know that sometimes during the previous decade relations between Lithuania and Poland showed they had been complicated. What the states never lacked was the commitment to end this complicated state of affairs. By virtue of this commitment two countries managed to introduce an essential turning point to relation between them. As a result, special, exemplary character of relations between Lithuania and Poland is now a well-known fact in Europe. Declaration on Good Neighborly Relations, signed on January 13th, 1992 on the occasion of the first anniversary of Soviet invasion in Vilnius was a milestone in the process of reconciliation and better mutual understanding. This declaration encouraged the development of permanent bilateral political dialogue that was completed once the Presidents of Poland and Lithuania signed a Treaty on Friendly relations and good neighborly cooperation. Once Parliaments of Lithuania and Poland ratified the Treaty the history of relations of the two countries saw the beginning of a new era.

There is another milestone event that symbolizes year 1997. I mean institutionalization of bilateral relations. That year two countries established three common institutions that coordinate cooperation between the governments, parliaments and presidents: Consultative Committee to the Presidents of the Presidents of the Republic of Poland and the Republic of Lithuania, Council on Cooperation between the Governments of the Republic of Poland and the Republic of Lithuania, and an Assembly of the members of the Parliaments of the Republic of Poland and the Republic of Lithuania. As a result of these developments, dynamics of our relations have substantially improved.

A very intensive level of political dialogue has been reached during the recent years. The momentum gathered was maintained after the latest Seimas' elections in Lithuania. We are happy to know that Poland was the first country Prime Minister of the Republic of Lithuania and Minister of Foreign Affairs chose to visit after taking their office. Moreover, Poland was among the first countries Chairman of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania visited.

I am convinced that 10th anniversary of restoration of diplomatic relations is an auspicious occasion. We have a wonderful opportunity to evaluate the results of this period and consider the guidelines for our future cooperation.

Constant improvement of a-rapidly-improved mechanisms of economic cooperation is one of the most important elements in our relations. Besides, I think this is an advantageous moment to complete resolving the latest issues in our relations,

especially those concerning the status and psychological well-being of national minorities.

It is our pleasure to acknowledge successful development of cooperation in the area of the European integration. In this respect I would like to refer to the recent visit of Chief Negotiator J.Kulakowski in Vilnius. We hope that Lithuania and Poland become members of the European Union during the Union's first enlargement round.

Also, it is in our mutual interest that Lithuania succeeds in becoming a member of NATO. Poland has advocated the continuity of the "open doors" policy. Thus, we support efforts of Lithuania to join the Alliance. This is the position we have confirmed for many times. In this context, we are highly interested in developing a variety of forms of cooperation in security and military fields.

We are happy that our views on main aspects of foreign policy coincide more and more. In this context we would like to put special emphasis on the need to intensify multilateral cooperation in the Baltic Sea region. We are pleased to acknowledge that activities of the European Union in the region have been expanding. We aim at deepening trilateral consultations between Lithuania, Poland and Russia in order to prepare guidelines for future cooperation with the Kaliningrad region. Our sincere aim is to mould such mutual relations and relations with neighbors so that the functioning border regimes and Shengen commitments consolidate good neighborhood and serve the needs and expectations of the citizens. Finally, this human aspect would be the final test of our capabilities to withstand challenges of the 21st century.

Political realm in our relations is a very important one. However, in Lithuania-Poland's relations special focus should be always paid to cultural events. We are happy that in this area there are many events. Common heritage of both Nations' Republic is imperative in building mutual understanding among our elites and our societies.

Therefore, I would like to conclude by putting forward the idea, which, as my intentions tell me, should not be taken as a warning, but as an encouragement, instead. We should work toward ensuring that modern forms of cooperation amongst young people become stronger. These forms of cooperation are well known in Europe. One may get an impression that there is a lack of understanding of how important it is that the matters we talk about and write about every day on every occasion are transmitted into the minds of Lithuanians and Poles.

An Interview: Zbigniew Brzezinski Interviewed by the Journal “Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review”

This year Lithuania and Poland celebrate the 10th anniversary of the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between them. Today relations between the two states are labeled as “strategic partnership”. Majority of politicians from the Western democratic countries say this relationship is an example other countries should follow. Do you endorse this kind of position?

I agree that the Polish-Lithuanian strategic partnership provides a very constructive example of genuinely positive and significant regional cooperation. It is a factor of stability in Central Europe, and it is facilitating the entrance not only of Lithuania but also the other Baltic states into NATO.

In the Bratislava speech (May 11th, 2001), you mentioned three alternative NATO enlargement scenarios. In Your opinion, which scenario is to be pursued during the enlargement process?

I believe that a likely prospect is that the NATO alliance will, in the end, endorse some formula similar to the one that I proposed in my Bratislava speech: An invitation to the seven candidate states to join NATO, with admission dependent on a staggered and sequential ratification process. In other words, a pledge that the seven will become members of NATO will be followed by the commencement of the ratification process immediately for those states that have fulfilled all of the necessary requirements; followed by annual reviews of the degree to which others of the seven have completed their preparations and justified the commencement at that point also of the ratification process.

4. What are the latest developments in Washington on the subject of NATO enlargement?

The predominant point of view within the Bush administration is in favor of enlargement in keeping with President Bush's speech in Warsaw, which envisaged NATO membership for the countries between the Baltic and the Black Seas.

What is your assessment of the latest statements by the US Administration, and first of all the speech of President Bush delivered in Warsaw, concerning the membership of the Baltic states in NATO? Does it mean that the US Administration will stand for the invitation of the Baltic states in Prague, 2002?

President Bush's speech was a genuinely important historic commitment, containing an important strategic vision. I believe that it clearly indicates that the enlargement of NATO in the year 2002 has to be genuinely significant, not limited to only one or two newly invited members.

Speaking about the evolution of thinking in other NATO states, namely, Germany, France and the United Kingdom, have you noticed any symptoms of change, which could be important for the prospective membership of the Baltic states in NATO?

In my view, France has already moved very significantly forward with its commitment to include the Baltic states in NATO. President Chirac in effect declared France's determination to support that objective in the year 2002. Germany is still not quite as clear in its posture, but I believe that important Germans increasingly realize that it is in Germany's strategic interest to do so and that Germany bears a moral responsibility for what transpired in the Baltic countries in 1940. The United Kingdom right now seems to be very skeptical and perhaps even quietly opposed. Certainly the British diplomats are whispering in a fashion which seems to imply a negative attitude, but it may change over time.

Given that the Baltic states are invited to become members of NATO when the second wave of NATO enlargement is launched, could you try outlining the reaction of Russia to such a development?

The Russian leadership will proclaim its opposition and the Russian public will remain indifferent.

In Your opinion, has Russia reconciled itself to the idea of NATO enlargement?

The Russian political elite, despite its resentments, realizes that NATO enlargement is inevitable.

Is there any possibility Russia could embark on drastic measures after the NATO enlargement takes places?

No.

What is the future, the perspectives of Kaliningrad region development?

If Russia develops into a normal, democratic, post-imperial, European state that truly respects the desires and independence of its neighbors, then the Kaliningrad Region will become Russia's gateway to Europe and perhaps even an experimental stage in that process of Russia becoming a genuinely European country. If Russia chooses to isolate itself in nostalgic and futile hostility toward the West, then at some point in the future the Kaliningrad Region will become an independent Russian Baltic republic.

What is the role of Lithuania and Poland in this process?

The role of Lithuania and Poland is to help Russia become a constructive European state by maintaining normal and friendly relations with it and helping, whenever appropriate,

on the humanitarian level – especially in the case of the suffering people of Kaliningrad – but without any nationalistic or territorial ambitions regarding that region.

Ukraine occupies an important position in the East European region. In Your opinion, what role does Ukraine play in the process of building the democratic Europe?

Ukraine eventually will be a member of the European community, both in its political as well as security dimensions. If Russia becomes increasingly European, Ukraine will probably do so together with Russia; if Russia does not, Ukraine probably will become associated with Europe ahead of Russia.

Orientation of Ukraine has been described as pro-Western. What are the perspectives for the maintaining of this orientation?

The basic culture of Ukraine is Western in that it partakes of the shared traditions of Christendom, and much of Ukraine was subject to feudal and social arrangements more typical of Central Europe than of Muscovy.

The Baltic region is an authentic phenomenon. Countries, which endorse different security strategies, “gather” here. Sweden endorses the policy of “hard” neutrality, Finland is bound to the Treaty neutrality, Baltic states aspire to join NATO, Russia opposes the enlargement of NATO, Poland, Germany and Denmark are the members of NATO. What influence does the region exert on the dynamic processes taking place in the Euro-Atlantic security environment, and to what extent?

The Baltic region is a good example of constructive diversity. It should be a source of reassurance to the Russians that inclusion of some states in NATO does not mean the inclusion of all states in NATO – and that individual states have the right to make their own decisions in that regard – without such decisions automatically being viewed as threatening to Russia.

Thank you!

A View from the Side: Lithuania

Darius Degutis

Two weeks Warsaw held a historic event. President of the United States of America George W. Bush arrived in the capital of Poland. During visit the US President submitted what in fact is a principal stance in support of the continuity of NATO enlargement, transparency of this process, and its “proximity” to the states-candidates. One could claim that the choice of the site of a visit – that is, Warsaw, the capital city of Poland – was by no means accidental. In some respect it entitles Poland to a new role – the role of a chain between West and East Europe. This signifies a new value for the entire North-Central European region. Beyond doubt, Lithuania as a neighbor of Poland and as a good friend whose bilateral relations with Poland are known as strategic partnership gains additional weight as well. In this new situation, at least it looks like new, the two states affirm their common goal – direct their effort towards the establishment of an integral and indivisible, stable and secure European house that is devoted to ensure the welfare of people and which is construed on the basis of new values.

Novelty, freshness and vitality are the features which could contribute a lot to the unique forms of Lithuanian-Polish cooperation established during the last decade and the daily efforts of the institutions responsible for implementation of them. The upcoming decade is a new epoch both in physical sense. Besides, if compared to the beginning of the 1990s it could launch a totally new geopolitical phase. In the forthcoming few years Lithuania should be entrusted membership in NATO, both states should be invited into the EU. Our states will be given means and channels to become part of the cause of creating the aforementioned new values and implementing them.

Present relations between Lithuania and Poland are identified by dynamics and intensity of their relations. More and more often a question arises: what is hidden behind this façade called ‘excellent political relations’? Are the various opportunities structures of cooperation provide exercised sufficiently, is their content filled? First of all, this could be said with regard to the development of economic ties, not least because we are soon to be bound by common rules of the game, common EU free trade area, and common obligations on custom duties. In the coming years, save Lithuania and Poland are joined together in the NATO and EU framework, commercial contacts, various economic projects will soon have the focus shift onward to them. Once Lithuania becomes NATO member, foreign investors, among others, will have the opportunity to enjoy its enhanced security. The example of Poland confirms this – Polish membership in NATO is one of the main factors for the huge influx of foreign capital into Poland.

We are happy of the fact that Poland has become one of our main foreign trade partners. In 2000 the turnover of trade amounted to almost half billion USD. As regards imports, Poland is the third largest trading partner of Lithuania, as regards exports – it occupies the fifth spot. Fine to know that in comparison to 1999 in 2000 the volume of trade between two countries increased by 50 percent. On the other hand, we must not water down the fact that Lithuania’s trade balance vis-à-vis Poland is negative. It reached 58.4

million USD deficit in 2000. This amounts to an invitation for Lithuanian businessmen 'to recall' one of the Europe's largest markets and to learn healthy management aggressiveness from the Poles.

One of the opportunities open – the trade fair of the Polish producers "POLEXPO", held annually in Kaunas. We should not forget exhibitions of Lithuanian goods in Poland. There is no doubt in my heart that Lithuanians will soon "launch into" Poland and start organizing equivalent trade fairs in Bialystok, for instance. (Kaunas maintains close relations with Bialystok).

Lithuanian Embassy in Poland has embarked on stimulating commercial contacts. The Embassy seeks to provide assistance for businessmen of both countries. Of course, one should not limit to activities in Poland, or in nearby region of Suwalki. Our main purpose is to develop cooperation between various cities and regions.

We welcome Polish investments in Lithuania even if they are not that huge (50 million USD), for instance – "Warta" and the Panevėžys' glass factory, POLSAT and the Baltic TV station, insurance sector, computer production and trade, agriculture. Although each of these joint enterprises is highly important and valuable, I must pay special attention to the activities of "Kredyt Bank" in Lithuania. This bank was the first foreign bank, which came to Lithuanian market. It took six years of successful activities that the Bank expanded its activities into the largest cities of Lithuania. I tell you – you need not be afraid to use "Kredyt Bank" bank machines even in Poland – You will be welcomed with scriptures in Polish, English, and in Lithuanian language.

Unfortunately there is still a number of issues unresolved, which hamper the business development. One is a strange view of the rivers of truck congested at Budzisko-Kalvarija border passage station. Queues, which extend 10 to 15 kilometers, gather tens, hundreds of Polish, Lithuanian, Dutch, Latvian, Estonian and Russian trucks. They waste hours, sometimes even days, waiting at the border. And time is the money. One of the solutions to the problem – An Agreement between Lithuania and Poland on joint implementation of border procedures. Today, frontier-guards and customers replay each others' functions. Examples of border practices on Lithuanian-Latvian, Latvian-Estonian borders prove what is evident - one inspection would be enough. The Polish Parliament has not ratified exactly such kind of a Treaty, signed in 1997. We hope this Agreement, equally important to both states, will be implemented in the nearest future.

In the end I would like to share my vision of the future: prosperous Lithuania and Poland are united by a common European trade area with no frontiers, no customs, with modern international motorway trucks from all over trucks would use for control-free transportation of commodities. Businessmen, given that they want to leave Warsaw for Vilnius for negotiations, choose between traveling by plane and using super fast railway. In the latter case it would take three hours to reach Vilnius. There is no doubt businessmen pick traveling by train. I hope that this is not only a vision. I hope it turns out as a reality.

LITHUANIAN-POLISH ECONOMIC RELATIONS: MAIN CHARACTERISTICS

In 1990-1991, Lithuania and Poland commenced to re-establish mutual relations, which broke down in the middle of the last century. Modern relations of the two states grew out of the realities of the end of 20th century. In my opinion, relations have been very pragmatic.

During the last decade Lithuania and Poland proved they are committed to advancing economic reforms. These reforms have changed not only the economic life of the two countries; structure of the economy of the states – trading partners of Lithuania and Poland – has been changing as well. In other words, understanding of the dynamics of the economic relations between Lithuania and Poland would be superficial if put aside from the overall context of the emerging global economy.

Original and one of the most important factors in the emerging global economic environment – the process of privatization. United Kingdom was at the heart of the process started in the beginning of the 80s. Recently, OECD published a report on the extent of privatization in the world. The report covered period from 1990 to 1999. During this period of time, the report claims, 850 billion USD have been transferred by the states into the private hands. It is said that 40 percent of the privatized property belong to countries of Central and Eastern Europe. The value of property Polish Government has privatized since 1990 amounts to 12 billion USD. This makes up to 10 percent of the average GDP of this period. During the same period the amount of property Government of Lithuania privatized reached 2 billion USD. *The main result of privatization both in Poland and in Lithuania is the following: today, more than 70 percent of GDP is produced in the private sector.* Videlicet, the level of cooperation between the two states depends on the initiative of private companies, based on the logic of economic utility.

Until 1989, the river of Elbe divided Europe into two political camps with economic lives of their own. In the meantime, ten former communist states carry on membership negotiations with the European Union. Thus, we approach the second

factor important to Lithuanian-Polish economic relations – intensifying relations of the former states with the European Union members. Nearly 50 percent of Lithuania and Poland’s exports are directed to the European Union’s member countries. As a result, economic life of Lithuania and Poland is increasingly dependent on the “health of the economy” of the European Union. The extent varies, however. Respective economies of Lithuania and Poland are characterized by a different degree of their openness, displayed by an export/GDP proportion indicator. In Lithuania this indicator amounts to 35-40 percent, in Poland – to 10-15 percent. On the basis of this data, we may conclude that Polish economy is far more closed than the economy of Lithuania. Besides, it points to the fact that Polish economy is better protected from outside pressures. Degree of economic openness determines the share of attention Government pays for internal and external economic policies. 21 percent of Lithuania’s GDP is produced by exports. Taking this into account, the Government of Lithuania must consider foreign trade as a priority, Lithuania-Polish economic relations including. As regards the Polish Government, it is more interested in finding the solution of internal economic problems. Therefore, speaking about the cooperation of two states on the institutional level, Lithuania took lead over the initiatives in trade sector, given that its stakes are higher.

Dynamics of the economic relations between Lithuania and Poland in 1991-2001 were to a large extent influenced by different internal and foreign policy agendas of these states, i.e. 1990-1992. Lithuania confronted the problem of political independence, Poland, in the meantime, embarked on the original economic reforms, known as the “shock therapy”. In 1992, Lithuania and Poland signed a Treaty on Economic Cooperation and the Protection of Investments. The Treaty laid down the basis for a further economic development of these countries. In the next three years two countries signed an impressive package of interstate treaties and agreements: in 1993-1994 it included treaties and agreements on non-visa regime, on the avoidance of double taxation of capital and income, on the functioning of Kalvarija-Šipliškės customs house. The aforementioned Treaties created favorable conditions for the daily cooperation of businessmen. Later on, in 1994 Lithuania and Poland signed the “Treaty on Good Neighborly Relations”. On June 6th, 1995 Lithuania and Poland signed the “Free Trade Agreement”.

Thus, throughout 1992-1997 period legal basis of the interstate relations has been molded. End of this process, namely, erection of the legal basis, coincided with the completion of privatization of small and medium companies in both states.

Since 1997 relations between Lithuania and Poland developed to obtain institutional structure. Following institutions are established: the Assembly (it is formed out of the members of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania and Seimas of the Republic of Poland), Consultative Council of the Presidents, and the Council on Cooperation between the Governments of Lithuania and Poland (first session of the latter was held in August 1997). 1998 saw the establishment of the Council on Economic Cooperation.

Today some of the most pressing economic issues on the interstate institutional level are related to the customs system. Already in 1998 the list of taxed commodities was highly asymmetric: Poland collected taxes from 2800 commodities manufactured in Lithuania, whereas Lithuania taxed only 700 titles of Poland-manufactured commodities. This asymmetry the list of the industrial goods charged with taxes bore has been constantly diminishing, however. Figures shown in Table 1 (*Amount of foreign trade between Lithuania and Poland*) reflect this.

Table 1

Lithuania–Poland foreign trade balance* (Mln. litas)							
	1991**	1997	1998	1999	2000	2000**	2001***
Exports	0,7	360	449	545	832	5,5	316
Imports	-	1.104	1.272	1.095	1.076	4,9	356
Balance		-744	-823	-550	-240		-40

* Based on the sending country.

** Comparative proportion in total exports or imports

***Exports or imports, January-April.

In Table 1 we may see that in 1997-2000, Lithuania's exports to Poland increased by 131 percent; imports decreased by 2.5 percent. Trade balance between Lithuania and

Poland is still negative; on the other hand, trade deficit decreased by 67 percent. Moreover, it is evident that during the period from January to April of this year, Lithuanian companies exported commodities amounting to 316 million litas. This figure almost equals the level of exports as of 1997.

According to the data on exports as of 2000, Poland occupied the fifth spot (5.5 percent of total exports of Lithuania) behind Latvia, Germany, United Kingdom and Russia. In 2000, Poland was third in imports (4.9 percent of total imports) keeping behind Germany and Russia.

On June 1st, 2001 Lithuania became member of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Membership of Lithuania and Poland in this organization provides for new opportunities and bases as regards the regulation of the interstate economic relations, settlement of disagreements on trade including.

Total amount of exports of Lithuania augments very fast. However, the structure of exports shows signs of deterioration, i.e. the degree of diversification of commodities shrinks constantly. Table 2 displays the fact that almost 50 percent of exports refer to mineral products.

Table 2

Structure of commodities, Lithuanian exports to Poland, %

	1997	1998	1999	2000
1. Mineral products	26,9	31,3	31,0	48,1
2. Pulp of wood or of other fibrous cellulosic material; paper and paperboard and articles thereof	16,9	14,8	11,7	10,7
3. Plastics and articles thereof	14,4	5,4	2,8	1,0
4. Textiles and textile articles	11,1	11,8	14,1	9,3
5. Machinery and mechanical appliances	9,5	9,6	9,4	6,4

At the same time the structure and amount of imports from Poland to Lithuania have remained stable for many years (see, Table 3).

Table 3

Structure of commodities, Lithuanian imports from Poland, %

	1997	1998	1999	2000
1. Products of the chemical or allied industries	22,1	18,1	17,6	17,7
2. Machinery and mechanical appliances	13,7	16,9	13,1	12,3

3. Plastics and articles thereof	12,2	12,1	12,0	11,7
4. Prepared foodstuffs, food stuff, alcohol and non-alcohol drinks		9,3	7,8	7,5
6,3				
5. Pulp of wood or of other fibrous cellulosic material; paper and paperboard and articles thereof	7,9	8,1	9,3	10,3

It is known that foreign trade is closely related to the *transport sector*. Table 4 shows that Lithuanian exports reach Poland via railways, motorways and on the board of sea transport. Amount of sea-transported goods increased in the aftermath of the Bank and financial crisis in Russia, 1998. Major part of imports from Poland (92 percent) reach Lithuania by means of motorway transport.

Table 4

Imports and Exports of Lithuania and Poland by means of transport, 1997-2000 m.
(mln. tons)

Means of transport	1997		1998		1999		2000		2000, perc.	
	Export.	Import.	Export.	Import.	Export.	Import.	Export.	Import.	Export.	Import.
Motorway	158,8	212,4	175,6	252,2	228,9	265,2	277,8	274,7	35	92
Railway	180,2	30,0	350,7	41,3	329,9	22,4	463,3	20,6	59	7
Sea	2,7	2,6	6,5	6,0	28,6	20,2	49,2	22,9	6	0,8
Air	0,02	0,07	0,04	0,09	0,07	0,09	0,11	0,09	0	0
Transport on its own Motion	0,35	0,47	0,27	0,34	0,19	0,09	0,27	0,29	0	0
Iš viso:	342,1	245,6	533,1	299,9	587,7	289,8	790,7	297,9	100	100

Tables display the obvious: there are only three means of transport important to Lithuanian-Polish trade, namely, motorway, railway and sea transport. The importance of any given mean of transport for the state, Lithuania or Poland, is not symmetrical, however. For Lithuania railways are important (59 percent of total commodities transported). Motorway transportations take the 35 percent share of total amount of transportations. Amount of commodities transported by sea has been growing as well (6 percent of the total). Speaking about Poland, road freightage matter above all (92 percent of total commodities transported). It implies that the flow of commodities in Lithuanian-Polish trade, given the means of transport, is asymmetric: Lithuania is highly interested in developing cooperation in almost every segment of transport whereas Poland – in the motorway segment alone.

Motorway, railway and sea transport infrastructure is closely related to the activities of the customs (border passage facilities). Disorganization of their functioning affects the volume of trade between Poland and Lithuania. Activity of the border passage facilities is regulated on the level of interstate institutions.

Therefore, foreign economic policies – custom duties, activities of border passage facilities, etc. – of both Lithuania and Poland is still an important factor that bears repercussions on the total amount of trade between the two countries.

Polish investors are more active than Lithuanian investors. As for January 1st, 2001, there were 111 Polish investors registered in Lithuania. Total amount of their direct investments reaches 204.93 million litas. As regards the total of foreign direct investments in Lithuania, Poland is eleventh (2.19 percent of total foreign direct investments in Lithuania). The amount of foreign direct investments increased by 25.77 percent in 2000.

As for the January 1st, 2001 there were 526 joint companies with Poland and 238 Polish capital companies recorded in the Register on Companies, Republic of Lithuania. Proportion of the Polish capital within the founding capital is valued at 62.49 percent, or 120.61 million litas.

Thus, because of high activity of the Polish investors in Lithuania, the Government of Poland is concerned with the legal aspects on the protection of investments in Lithuania.

Investments of Lithuanian companies abroad are very low. The same applies to their investments in Poland. As of January 1st, 2001 direct investments of Lithuania into Poland amounted to 1.444.000 litas, which made up for 1.23 percent of the total direct investments of Lithuanian companies abroad. In year 2000 Lithuanian companies' foreign direct investments fell more than two times, i.e. by 50.7 percent.

Table 5

Polish investments in Lithuania
(beginning of each year, thousands. US dollars)

--	--

Number of investors						Direct foreign investments					
1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001*	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001*
49	62	112	107	113	111	5340	7120	9675	28990	40735	51232

*Number of investors and the amount of investments, January-April.

Development of the Lithuanian-Polish relations sways certain economic stereotypes characteristic to Lithuania's businessmen. For a long time Poland acted as a transit country for Lithuania. Commodities from Lithuania crossed it to reach Western Europe. Nowadays, numbers of Lithuanian businessmen finally realize understand that Poland is a huge market, one of the largest markets in Europe. They noticed what great potential lies in that market. Given this, the volume of trade between Lithuania and Poland is bound to be growing.

Translated by Mindaugas Žičkus

About the Lithuanian-Polish Power Bridge

Jonas Kazlauskas¹

Hardly anyone can say when precisely Polish-Lithuanian cooperation in the field of energy commenced. It is common knowledge that neighboring countries always find common interests and common problems that can only be solved with the help of mutual agreements. This article will deal only with one aspect of the cooperation – the implementation of the project to lay a power transmission line between Poland and Lithuania. To be exact, we should perhaps say that we have tried to lay the line, - which in some parts of the article is called “bridge” - as it is still not constructed.

Lithuanian energy specialists started discussions regarding the connection of Polish and Lithuanian power systems as early as 1995. The discussions were conducted by the Polish Power Grid Company, the German company “Preussen Elektra AG”, the French company “EDF”(Electricite de France) and the American company “Stanton group”.

However, a substantive agreement was reached at the end of 1997 when AB “Lietuvos Energija” (Special Purpose Joint Stock Company “Lietuvos Energija”) and the Polish Power Grid Company (Polskie Sieci Elektroenergetyczne S.A.) prepared two documents for signature i.e. the Agreement for the construction of the transmission line Lithuania-Poland and a Power supply contract. It was anticipated that the construction work would be carried out in stages. During the first stage it was planned to construct a power transmission line from Alytus in Lithuania to Hancza in Poland. It had to be constructed on a tower of a 400 kV transmission line but initially it would have worked with 110 kV voltage. The capacity of transmission in the first stage was 50MW. The planned start date for the construction was February 1998, to be completed by the end - December of 1999. The power had to be supplied to an “island” in the Hancza district. The price of the electricity to be sold by Lithuania to Poland was fluctuating between 2.55 and 2.9 US cents for a basic kilowatt-hour, and from 6.65 to 6.95 US cents for a peak kilowatt-hour of energy. Final figures had to agree when the contract was signed. The supply was expected to be carried out by 2005.

It was planned to construct the power transmission line Alytus-Kruonis in Lithuania and Hancza-Elk in Poland during the second stage of the project. This would give the units (two units were planned) of Kruonis Hydro Pump Storage Plant the opportunity to work for the Polish power system and export peak energy. From a technical point of view it was possible to increase the transmitted capacity of such a line, provided, of course, that it was necessary.

AB “Lietuvos Energija” had to obtain the consent of the company’s shareholders in order to sign the contract. At the time (and now) most of the shares belonged to the State, and were held by the Ministry of economy. AB “Lietuvos Energija” failed to obtain consent from the Ministry of economy. Their main objection was that there was insufficient transmission capacity. The Ministry of Economy was preparing proposals for the

¹ This article presents the narration of a story that started in 1997 and is still continuing. It would be perfect to finish this story at least by the year 2005. The article introduces factual information, which is presented in chronological order and, with just a few exceptions, without the commentaries of the author. The readers may draw their own conclusions.

construction of a more powerful line. The Polish Power Grid Company announced an international tender for the acquisition of peak energy on the 14 November 1997 when it did not sign the contract with Lithuanian power specialists.

The Minister of Economy approved the conditions of the tender “ On the export of power to Western and Central European countries while creating necessary technical, organizational and financial preconditions” through his order of 31 October 1997. The Minister formed a commission from the representatives of the Ministry of Economy and AB “Lietuvos Energija”. The commission was responsible for sending the conditions of the tender to the companies according to the selected list, summarising the proposals of the companies as well as presenting a report on further stages of the tender, its procedure and the date of the announcement of the tender. The list of the companies who were to be invited to tender, in accordance with its conditions, is as follows: British Energy, CallEnergy Company, Inc., Enron International, Leastrom Development Corporation Limited, Preussen Elektra AG, The Stanton Group, Inc., Vatenfall AB International.

The conditions of the tender stated that the Ministry of Economy would need precise information covering all possible variants of the projects to transmit power to Western and Central European countries, and announced the tender to the Company or the group of companies, requiring them to buy no less than 6TWh of power from Lithuania each year and to sell it to the consumers of Western and Central European countries, and also ensure that the necessary technical, organizational and financial preconditions were in place. In addition, it was stated that the Ministry looked forward to receiving the technical proposals made in accordance with the project concept, which could later be specified and adjusted, from a technical and commercial point of view. Later on the second stage of the tender would be carried out when the additional documents could be sent for tender, the final technical proposals submitted and prices announced.

Transmission of power should start by January 2002 at the latest to comply with the conditions of the tender. The contract is for 10 years, but with the possibility to extend. Proposals would have to be delivered by 10 December 1997.

Here we have to stress that a very short period of time was given to prepare for such an important proposal. In fact, invitations for tender were not issued until the beginning of November, and therefore only 1,5 month was left for the preparations of proposals. This period of time was really too short to prepare a project on this scale. It was thought that the companies more or less knew the situation and the representatives of the Ministry had a number of meetings with them and discussed all issues. However, when the companies delivered their proposals, they noted that they had been given insufficient time to prepare their proposals, and as a result they were not as comprehensive as they could have been.

The commission considered the proposals and stated that:

1. Proposals had been received from the following companies:

ENRON; Power Bridge Group consisting of CallEnergy Company, Siguler Guff and Company, Stanton Group and Duke Engineering and Services; Leastrom Development Corporation. British Energy and Vatenfall informed that they had decided not to take part in the tender.

2. None of the companies were able to meet the criteria stated in the tender.

3. None of the companies were able to present a comprehensive business plan.

The commission concluded that they would have to announce a second stage of the tender and invite applications from the three companies that already participated in the first stage. In addition, it was decided to invite all the other companies interested in the project. The commission recommended that companies should submit their proposals within three months of the date of the announcement of the tender.

The Ministry of Economy took account of the outcome of the discussions with the companies that had expressed an interest in the project to connect the Lithuanian power system with the systems of Western and Central European countries, as well as the recommendations of the commission, and suggested that the Government of the Republic of Lithuania should announce an international tender for implementation of the project. The Government of the Republic of Lithuania adopted the resolution of 8 February 1998 and authorized the Ministry of Economy to announce the tender and to state in its conditions that no less than 6 TWh of power would be exported at an average prices of 10 cents for one kilowatt-hour.

The Ministry of Economy formed the commission (the chairman – the Minister, three representatives of the Ministry of Economy, and one representative of The Institute of Energy and one from the National Control Commission for Energy Pricing and Energy Activities) based on the resolution of the Government. The commission was responsible for considering the proposals, selecting the successful candidate, and presenting the results of the tender for the approval of the Government of Lithuania. Also, the Ministry of Economy approved the conditions of the tender, which stated additionally that the necessary power transmission lines and other installations to ensure the transmission of power to Poland had to be constructed from the funds of the company. The preliminary route of the transmission line was to Kruonis-Alytus-Elk (Poland); using a power transmission – 400 kV overhead line with permanent power sources based n Lithuania. The transmission of power had to commence no later than on the 1 January 2002, in accordance with the contract awarded to the successful company.

The tender was announced in the international press on the February 11, 1998. Eight companies purchased tender documents. Three proposals were submitted by the closing date, from Enron Europe Ltd., Closed Joint Stock Company “Stella Vitae” and Partners and Power bridge Company. Having considered all the proposals, the commission concluded that none of the tenders met the requirements of the tender completely. In addition, the commission decided not to consider the proposal from CJSC “Stella Vitae” and Partners because some of its proposals were inconsistent with the nature of the tender.

The Minister of Economy of Poland and the Polish Power Grid Company were informed of the announced tender.

The commission decided (six members for, one against) to start negotiations with Power Bridge Group on April 6, 1998. It was decided to start the negotiations with Enron Europe Ltd., if within the period of two months any result could not be reached in negotiations after the winner that was approved.

The Government of the Republic of Lithuania approved the results of the tender on April 16, 1998. AB “Lietuvos Energija” commenced negotiations with the winner of the tender, Power Bridge Group.

The Government of the Republic of Lithuania approved the results of the tender on the April 16 1998. AB "Lietuvos Energija" started the negotiations with the winner of the tender, Power Bridge Group.

AB "Lietuvos Energija" and the Power Bridge Group published a communiqué on the November 2, 1998. It is worthwhile to cite apart of this communiqué:

"The contract regarding the implementation of the project of the transmission of Lithuanian power to Western Europe has been signed. The supplementary contract of the project determining the obligations of both sides has been signed by Mr. Anzelmas Bačauskas, Director general of AB "Lietuvos Energija", and Mr. Josef Novy, Vice-president of "Duke Engineering & Services Co" representing Power Bridge Group on the October 31, 1998. The contract comes in force after the approval of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania and when the necessary guarantees will be granted. The consortium of Power Bridge Group pledges itself to invest finances into the project and to find purchasers of the exported power. Every year Lithuania pledges itself to supply 6 TWh of power. In addition, the Government of Lithuania and AB "Lietuvos Energija" will help the consortium of Power Bridge Company to deal with legal questions, to get necessary permissions and the right to use the plot of land that will be used for the construction of the line of power transmission in the territory of Lithuania. It is planned that power would be transmitted to Europe via new high-tension current line by the January 1, 2002. It is foreseen to export up to 6 billion kWh of power every year. The line constructed by Power Bridge is a missing element in the "Baltic ring" energy system. It will connect power grids of Western Europe and the Baltic States, and at the same time will enhance the security of Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian energy systems. If AB "Lietuvos Energija" supplies the planned amount of power to the consortium of Power Bridge Group, every year it will earn up to 600 million of litas".

All the expressed ideas seem to be very nice and they give a very rosy outlook of the future. To forestall the end of this story, it is necessary to say that all the business with this company ended only with this rosy outlook. The contract has never been duly finished and signed. It is possible to write a separate article on the course of negotiations and its results. Both sides were accusing each other. Finally, AB "Lietuvos Energija" presented an official communiqué to the representatives of the consortium of Power Bridge Group stating that it broke off negotiations with the consortium because the consortium was not fulfilling its engagements of the contract. It was a number of reasons of such behavior: the leaders of the consortium changed and finally the consortium fell to pieces, thus nobody could negotiate and continue the negotiations and the implementation of the project. The consortium had to find a new investor in order to continue the project. In fact, AB "Lietuvos Energija" did not have any hopes to finish negotiations successfully, and in addition to that, all deadlines stated in the conditions were also missed. The question was referred to the Government's decision. It decided to authorize the Ministry of Economy to reject all proposals presented for an international tender on the financing of the project of the connection of Lithuanian and Western European energy systems as well as to cancel the tender by its resolution of March 30, 1999. This possibility was included into the conditions of the tender and all participants were informed about its presence. The Government of the Republic of Lithuania nullified the results of the tender by the previously mentioned resolution. The Government with its resolution authorized the Ministry of Economy to prepare new conditions for an

international tender on the integration of Lithuanian power system into the systems of Western and Central European countries. Moreover, the Government stated that apart from Lithuania, Poland and Germany could also take part in the project.

Thus, 11 months had passed from the moment of the start of the negotiations with Power Bridge Group and the project was still stuck in the same place. We can not say that the time was wasted for nothing. The negotiators of AB "Lietuvos Energija" acquired the experience of negotiations, thoroughly discussed all paragraphs of the contract, got into every technical detail and etc. It an input for the future.

There was one more effort, even though also unsuccessful, to attract an investor into the project of the connection of the Lithuanian power system with the systems of Western and Central European countries. As it was previously mention, the Government of Lithuania authorized the Ministry of Economy to prepare the conditions of the new international tender and to present them for the approval of the Government. The conditions that were approved were called "The conditions of the new tender for the selection of the strategic partner for the implementation of the project of the integration of Lithuanian power system into Central and Western European power systems". The conditions stated that this tender had to select the strategic partner that would implement the new international project of the integration of Lithuanian power system into the systems of Central and Western European countries. Poland, Lithuania and Germany could take part in it. Kruonis hydroelectric power station could be involved in the project as a Lithuanian side. We may see that new aspects and a new "lure" for the attraction of the strategic partner do appear.

The conditions were sent to 16 companies that were previously contacted and in one or the other way expressed their interest in the project. However, the time period for the submitting of the proposals was also very short. The Government on the May 5, 1999 approved the conditions, and the deadline for the submission of the proposals was by the June 21, 1999.

This tender also did not take place. It was canceled one day before the opening of the envelopes with the proposals (on the 21st of June). The envelopes were not opened and were officially returned to the companies together with information about the cancellation of the tender.

The change of the Governments toll place in Lithuania. While canceling the tender, the new Minister of Economy stated that they wanted to prepare a new transparent and clear tender that would correspond to Western standards of tenders. He remarked that the conditions of the tender were not very clear.

Eventually the situation in Europe has changed too. The Directive of the EU on common regulations of the market of power came in force on the January 1, 1997. The market of the power started to function in many countries of the European Union. Three Baltic ministers responsible for the energy had signed the agreement on the cooperation in the field of energy on October 29, 1998. One of the priorities stated in agreement was the establishing of common market of the Baltic power. In addition, the strategy of the energy of the Baltic States was adopted in April of 1999, and it also gave the priority to the establishment of common power market. The situation in the field of energy was influenced by the previously mentioned factors, thus the connection of Polish-Lithuanian energy systems became the strategic objective of Lithuania. We could participate in the Western power market, provided such connection was implemented. It was a new

approach to the issue of the connection of Polish-Lithuanian energy systems. In the future common Baltic energy market has to be integrated into the markets of Western European countries according to the strategy of Baltic power. This goal could be reached only if Polish and Lithuanian power systems are connected. Therefore, it was a very logical decision to cancel the tender that actually was meant only for the export of Lithuanian power to Western European countries. In the future we have to speak about Lithuania's (together with the two other Baltic countries) participation in the market of the Baltic countries, Western European countries as well as in the markets of Scandinavian countries (via "Baltic ring").

In addition, we have to emphasize the fact that the cooperation with our Polish colleagues has been very weak during the above-mentioned period. From time to time we were just informing Polish partners about the tenders that were organized by us. In fact, any negotiations took place during that period. This fact could be regarded as one of the reasons why our tenders were so unsuccessful.

The cancellation of the tender put an end to our one-sided efforts to construct so called "bridge". It also started a new era in Polish-Lithuanian cooperation in the field of energy. A new work group was established at the Ministry of Economy, and it has reviewed a conception on the integration of Lithuanian energy system into the systems of Western European countries and prepared its new version. The Board of the Ministry of Economy considered this new project, approved it and proposed to discuss it with the Polish colleagues. A number of meetings with Polish side were carried out during that period. Finally, the Ministers of Economy of Poland and Lithuania signed a memorandum on the connection of Polish and Lithuanian power systems on the October 18, 1999. A joint work group was established following the memorandum, and started its work in November 1999. Besides, two subgroups were also established for the considering of specific issues. Polish and Lithuanian experts analyzed and discussed a number of variants of project implementation, prepared a report and an Executive Summary with the conclusions. The previously mentioned documents were discussed, harmonized and signed during the joint meeting in Warsaw on the April 27-28, 2000.

A total price of the implementation of the project is approximately 380-410 million Euros according to the calculations of the work group.

The main conclusion of the report is that the project will be profitable only if 50 percent of its total price is covered by the grant that could possibly be obtained from the EU (or other sources).

The Minister of Economy of Lithuania has presented the project together with the conclusions drawn by the joint work group to the European Commission and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. The further negotiations showed that it was necessary to do a feasibility study in order to obtain the assistance from the EU.

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development promised to find funds for the preparation of the feasibility study. The European Commission assured that the project was given the priority.

The Prime-ministers of Poland and Lithuania met in Warsaw on the December 5, 2000. The question of the "bridge" was among other questions to be considered. The Prime-ministers authorized Polish-Lithuanian Economic Cooperation Commission to consider this issues in one of its meetings as well as to establish a special subgroup that would

present its conclusions on the plan of further actions for the implementation of the project to the Council of Cooperation of the Governments of Poland and Lithuania. The subgroup was established on the December 21, 2000. The members of the subgroup have met four times from its establishment. They agreed that the main decisions would be made after the feasibility study and its conclusions were carried out. The sides decided to do some things on their own, even though the feasibility study was not prepared. In fact, they agreed to consider the questions of the first stage of the constructions. The decision was made that the following things were to be carried out:

- Converter in Alytus
- Single circuit 400 kV transmission line on the double circuit line's tower Alytus-Elk
- 400/220 kV Transformer (about 360 MVA) in Elk

Furthermore, it was decided what kind of actions had to be taken in order to implement the first stage of the project by the 2003 in Lithuania and by the 2005 in Poland. The Polish side assured that the earlier dates of the implementation of the project were not realistic.

The question on the establishing a joint company was also considered. It was decided to review this question when the feasibility study was prepared.

I have already mentioned that the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development is looking for funds to finance the preparation of the feasibility study. According to the latest information the bank was allowed to use funds from Phare but the European Commission wanted to know about technical conditions for the preparation of the feasibility study. The EC is in this process, and we do hope that the procedure of the selection of the candidates that will be preparing the feasibility study will soon be started. It is expected that the study will be prepared this year.

We would like to draw the attention of the readers to the beginning of the article where the events of the first stage of the constructions of the unsigned contract are presented and to compare them with the scope of the constructions of the first stage according to the data of the latest agreements. Volume of works as well as technical indicators is almost the same. However, there is no discussion on selling-buying of power in the latest agreements that have been reached in the negotiations. The situation has changed dramatically and not for our benefit during the last four years. The principal of "it is better to have a bird in the hand than two in a bush" was not used in this case.

The article does not have an ending because the story is not finished, it is still continuing. Despite all disasters the project is slowly but surely moving forward. It is not possible to imagine that the project of such scope could be implemented very quickly. Since political and economic interests as well as the interests of various groups do clash here.

Translated by Giedrė Matelytė-Garbačiauskienė

Leaving history behind? Poles and Lithuanians in the year 2001

The Polish membership in NATO, the Poland's support for the Lithuanian membership of NATO, the forthcoming membership of Lithuania and Poland in the EU, are building up the new institutional infrastructure of the Polish-Lithuanian relationship. Historical awareness and myths notwithstanding, it is the historic change in Europe after 1989, new international involvement of Lithuania and Poland, and the new political orientations in both independent countries that are making the strategic partnership of both nations possible and desirable.

However, Poles and Lithuanians have not referred to themselves as "us" for more than a hundred years now. Since that time both nations have viewed each other as "alien" or at least as "different". Owing to vivid historical memory of societies, remote events and characters are often closer to the members of such societies, they seem to be more important, and finally they are often remembered better than events that occurred or people who lived in much more recent past or even contemporary ones. This capability of historical memory seems to exert significant influence on the way contemporary Poles see Lithuanians and the relations with Lithuania. This capability also manifests itself in mutual relations between other nations.

Upon signing the Polish – Lithuanian Treaty in the spring of 1994, politicians on both sides decided to get rid of that entanglement and declared to abandon historical arguments, which they deemed to be the domain of professional historians. Upon signing the Treaty President Lech Wałęsa stated that *Poles and Lithuanians are the nations entangled in history. We should overcome this entanglement. /.../ Therefore it would be of benefit to leave historical research to historians* – and his Lithuanian counterpart Algirdas Brazauskas definitely agreed.¹ The politicians sitting at both sides of the negotiating table shared the view that any references made to the past could introduce elements of destruction and tension.

The Treaty was followed by numerous agreements: a very important free trade Agreement of 1995, then the agreement on the creation of the international battalion signed in 1997. The same year abounded in many new Polish – Lithuanian

¹ *Lithuania*, 1994, 2(11) – 3(12), 131 – 134.

institutions: the Consultation Committee of the Presidents of both republics, the governmental Cooperation Council and the common Assembly of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania and the Sejm of the Polish Republic. Moreover, Poland promised to support Lithuanians in their efforts to join NATO and the European Union and Poland has never abandoned its policy of support.

However, as early as 1998, during an autumn meeting of Polish and Lithuanian intellectuals, outstanding Lithuanian analyst drew everyone's attention to the fact that mutual amicable relations exist mainly in the sphere of declarations, symbolism and celebrations. Permanent good relations between the politicians of both countries do not extend to the relations between both societies. According to the analyst, from this perspective Polish elaborate gestures of support for Lithuanian NATO and EU aspirations seemed inadequate to Polish capabilities to influence those structures².

Politicians, even if they notice particular shortcomings of bilateral relations, are far from such pessimistic assessments. *Our relations should be set as a model to be followed by other nations* – that is the opinion of the Lithuanian Minister of Foreign Affairs Antanas Valionis published in a Polish quarterly³. His Polish opposite number Wladyslaw Bartoszewski agreed with him and upon his last visit to Vilnius (April 2001), particularly during his televised statement, highlighted, on numerous occasions, the exceptionally positive nature of Polish – Lithuanian relations. These statements are striking if we look back at the situation prior to 1994. At that time nobody even attempted to convince anyone that Poles and Lithuanians excelled (positively for good measure) in dealing with historic backlogs.

The tactics of taking a future-oriented attitude would thus seem to have yielded blessed fruit in the form of “exceptionally good relations”, “strategic partnership”, and “the model for other nations”.

However, there are still two flaws marring this optimistic picture. The issues of inadequate ties between non-governmental organizations and the lack of youth exchange programs or mutual tourism have been debated (the issue touched upon

² Raimundas Lopata, “Rozwoj stosunkow Polsko - Litewskich po 1990 roku [Development of Lithuanian-Polish Relations after 1990],” *Pozostawione historii. Litwini o Polsce i Polakach* (ed. by Katarzyna Korzeniewska, Vladas Sirutavičius), Krakow: Znak, 1999, p. 138 - 140

³ *Litwa i Polska na drodze w XXI wiek [Lithuania and Poland on the Path to the 21th Century]*, Lithuania, 1(38)/2001, p. 56

also by Ambassador Eufemia Teichman).⁴ There is no need to convince anyone that those areas are crucial to overcoming stereotypes. Back in November 1998, at the meeting of the Parliamentary Assembly, its Polish chairman Jan Król suggested “launching systematic studies concerning mutual social and media-presented views”; so far the proposal, however, has not been implemented. Meanwhile public opinion polls reveal, despite the fact that the number of those Poles who dislike Lithuanians has slightly decreased since 1994, that our Lithuanian neighbors are still listed, along with Germans, among the nations toward which the Poles have more negative rather than positive feelings.⁵ Lithuanians like Poles less than Russians and much less than Germans, and they only like Western neighbors more than their basketball adversaries (Serbs, Croats, Slovenians), with whom they have little contact except for sport.⁶ There is a radical disproportion between a relatively positive attitude towards Lithuania as declared by Polish politicians and relatively negative feelings towards Lithuanians as declared by the Polish society at large.

One could argue that the impact of political changes must be long-term and public opinion polls have certain limitations. It certainly applies to the issue of national minorities, and mainly to the Polish minority in Lithuania, which is proportionately much larger than the Lithuanian minority in Poland, and more visible historically. While discussing minority issues, Polish and Lithuanian public statements abound in with terms such as: “problem”, “difficulties” or “obstacles”. The issue of Polish Lithuanians is characterized by dynamism and a kind of polymorphism: following the debate on the obligatory final secondary level examination in Polish and another commotion over the issue of land recovery, the controversy over the spelling of surnames has become another evident problem.

Both problems: minority issue and less positive toward the Lithuanians among Polish ordinary citizens than politicians call for an explanation by reference to historic imagination. Let us heed the fact that in many statements delivered by Polish elements of the Jagellonian myth are present. They were inculcated in them in the process of socializing and history education: all Poles who graduated from the

⁴ Lithuania, 1(38)/2001

⁵ Michał Strzeszewski, *Polska i świat* [Poland and the World], *Nowa rzeczywistość. Oceny i opinie 1989 – 1999*, (ed. by Krzysztof Zagorski, Michał Strzeszewski) Warszawa: CBOS – Wydawnictwo Akademickie Dialog, 2000, p. 209

⁶ On the scale from 1 to 7, Lithuanians like most the Swedish (5,45), while the Roma Gypsies are most disliked (2,47). Russians (4,49), Ukrainians (4,74), **Poles (4,24)**, Croats (3,62) and Serbs (3,56) are in between. Data from: www.cbos.pl/cbos.pl.htm, CBOS report 165, *Attitudes of Poles, Czechs, Hungarians and Lithuanians toward Other Nations*, November 2000.

12th grade know about the existence of Lithuania and they know that it is an important place of some kind for the Poles. Minister Bartoszewski confessed publicly to Lithuanians the same kind of devotion and associations in April this year. Prior to that, unionist associations were also revealed by some commentators of a leading Polish political daily *Gazeta Wyborcza* upon the creation of the common Polish – Lithuanian Parliamentary Assembly in 1997.⁷ Let us leave a broader and more profound analysis of those statements to sociologists and texts analysts. The purpose is to reveal that the Jagellonian era still constitutes a reference point for the Polish political elite and for some it is still the basic line of thinking about Poland and Lithuania. One should bear in mind that the Jagellonian point of reference is a viewpoint reserved to representatives of some social groups, mostly to politicians, intellectuals, civil servants, clergy.

At this point we come to another “shadow” cast over the Polish –Lithuanian relations, namely the problem of the Polish minority in Lithuania. The problem is associated with a different way of collective representation of the history of Poland than the one discussed above. We are not talking about the historical awareness or knowledge here. Poles at large, but also some politicians, have different historical conceptions regarding Lithuania from those persisting in the minds of the elite. The historic Polish – Lithuanian Commonwealth is not a key value here. We are taking about a myth. The key value here is that of the Borderland (*Kresy*), i.e. the territory that “used to be Poland”. For the Polish public and part of the political elite the presence of the Polish minority (e.g. in Lithuania) is a symbol of the idea of the Bordeland (*Kresy*). The realization of the *Kresy* idea of the Polish history has been reflected in activities of public institutions. The biggest and most active of them - Fundacja “Wspólnota Polska” - supports Polish diaspora world-wide (including Polish minority in Lithuania). The social impact of the myth has never been an object of a systematic research. However, it has sparked off social activity on many occasions, such as, for example, charity actions for the Polish children living in the Vilnius area in the autumn of 2000, presenting Lithuania to the Polish public in the way objected by the Lithuanian Embassy.⁸ It is the strong impact of the *Kresy* myth in Poland that could be one reason why, in spite of good mutual relations being constantly publicised, the issue of the Polish minority – additionally highlighted by

⁷ *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 44, 1999/02/21, 7

⁸ *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 241, 2000/10/14 – 2000/10/15, 20

the media – still prevents beneficial relations between the states from taking roots among the public at large.

It should be stressed that the above description stands merely for some of Polish historical opinions bearing reference to Lithuania. It is a simplified description. For instance, it does not allow for the differences between political parties and ideologies within the political elite. The view adopted in this description intentionally narrows the perspective: real political objectives and interests are only indirectly visible. The description is supposed to present the context of the articulation of those political interests as well as the objectives and the ways of their realization to be discussed during this conference. To conclude: not only myth and historical memory count. Indeed, common political objectives and their implementation by Lithuania and Poland exert an ever growing impact on historical memory and national myth – making alike.

Lithuanian-Polish Military Cooperation

Andrius Krivas

Successful Polish-Lithuanian military cooperation **is one of the most vivid expressions of strategic partnership between Poland and Lithuania**, and the Ministries of National Defense and Armed Forces of the respective countries are particularly proud of this fact.

The significance of this cooperation is manifold having a look from the perspective of the Ministry of National Defense. Military cooperation with Poland, a large friendly neighboring country, is a form of bilateral relations in the sphere of such a vital importance. At the same time it is the cooperation with a NATO country which has fresh and essential experience of joining North Atlantic Treaty Alliance that Lithuania could also profit from. In addition, it is the cooperation with a country that actively and strongly supports Lithuania's aspirations to become a member of NATO. Poland's acceptance to NATO was very useful for Lithuania because it strengthened future political support for Lithuania's membership inside the Alliance. Political support of Poland through bilateral Defense cooperation means becomes practical assistance for Lithuania in developing armed forces and implementing in it NATO standards and procedures.

The legal base of our Defense cooperation was started in 1994 when the Ministries of National Defense of both countries concluded mutual cooperation agreement. Polish-Lithuanian Inter-Governmental Agreement on Defense Cooperation replaced the previous agreement in 2001. This step raised the status of the agreement (from interdepartmental to interstate) and emphasized the political importance of the cooperation in the field of Defense that both countries share. New political realities are reflected in the text of the new agreement i.e. Poland's membership in NATO and its political support of Lithuania's wish to become a fully-fledged member. Annual plans of military cooperation including a wide spectrum of Defense activities are being composed from 1994 within the framework of the previously mentioned agreements. The scope and quality of this cooperation is intensively growing. The plan for the year 2001 foresees 63 bilateral cooperation activities and it is two and a half times more compared with the plan for 2000 (25 activities).

The legal base of military cooperation with Poland was extended in 1997 when the agreement on the protection of the exchange of classified information was signed as well agreeing to establish combined military unit LITPOLBAT (during the process of the implementation of the agreement a number of less important bilateral interdepartmental agreements were prepared). A mutual comprehension memorandum regarding the participation of Lithuanian infantry platoon in NATO-led peace keeping operation in Kosovo as a part of the Polish battalion of the international KFOR force, was concluded in 1999 based on the political will expressed by the parliamentarians of both countries.

As **the contents of such cooperation** is very broad I am going to emphasize only several priority trends.

The best known project of Lithuanian-Polish Defense cooperation is the combined **battalion LITPOLBAT**, assigned for the restoration and maintenance of international peace. The battalion is formed from the soldiers of national military units of the respective countries. Lithuanian Alytus Motorized Infantry Battalion sends its soldiers to LITPOLBAT. Joint LITPOLBAT Headquarters are located in *Orzysz*, Poland. The

combined battalion is formed from soldiers, equipped and prepared for the participation in international peace keeping operations according to a special program. The culmination of this year's preparations will be taking part in the multinational military exercise "Amber Hope 2001" that will be conducted in August-September in Lithuania. The combined battalion is very important because it is the only joint permanent military unit with a NATO country. Thus, it could have a significant role in involving Lithuanian Armed Forces into integrated NATO military structure.

The Ministry of National Defense is grateful for Polish direct military support which is being rendered to Lithuanian Armed Forces for many years. Poland donated surplus used Polish military materiel as well as completely new equipment in 2000: armored vehicles, weaponry, trench-mortars, ammunition, radio-stations and etc. The value of such assistance reached approximately one million US dollars during the last year. One more dimension of Polish military support to Lithuania is training of Lithuanian soldiers in Polish military training institutions.

One of the most successful achievements of Polish-Lithuanian military cooperation is the joint **participation of soldiers of both countries in NATO-led peace keeping operation in Kosovo** as a part of KFOR forces. 30 Lithuanian soldier platoon, which rotates every half a year, has participated in this mission as a part of the Polish contingent since autumn 1999. Currently Lithuanian platoon is integrated into a part of the combined Ukrainian –Polish battalion (POLUKRBAT) serving with the Polish KFOR mission. This cooperation is one of the methods of how Lithuania is trying to contribute to a common international endeavor to support peace in Europe. This contribution is quite modest but active and highly appreciated by our partners. In addition, it is very important for us that our soldiers take part in a real NATO mission in order to practice operational NATO standards and procedures.

The importance of the cooperation in the field of **air space surveillance and control** is gaining momentum. It is connected with common efforts of Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Western partners, to develop a regional air space surveillance system, BALNET, that has been recently established. This regional system as well as the Lithuanian national system has to be integrated into a common NATO air space surveillance and early warning system in the process of integration of the Baltic States into NATO. Technically and in geographical respect this is possible only via Poland and with its active participation. At present Polish and Lithuanian specialists together with professionals from the other two Baltic countries are working on technical and political aspects of this issue.

Since being accepted, Poland has shared its **experience on joining NATO** with Lithuania willingly. This experience more effectively helps Lithuania to look for its individual way into the Alliance. The Ministry of National Defense of Poland shares information about the specific tasks that had to be carried out by the Armed Forces before joining NATO and at the very beginning of membership in the Alliance: what kind of technical parameters had to be applied, how legal base had to be modified, how many and in which ways the personnel had to be trained for work in NATO and with international Headquarters. Poland explains to us how to plan national budget, how to protect classified information as well as shares what kind of mistakes have been made and what kind of difficulties have been met in this process. Knowing this information Lithuania may avoid many difficulties in the future.

Participation in **multilateral military cooperation forums** gives a special dimension to Polish-Lithuanian cooperation in the field of Defense. This participation as well as joint participation in NATO-led operations very convincingly shows how Lithuanian-Polish cooperation in the field of Defense develops beyond the borders of just pure bilateral cooperation and gains new significance in a much broader regional context. I would like to mention just one such forum – traditional Polish-Danish-German Defense cooperation triangle and the activities of BALTSEA group.

The main achievement of this trilateral Polish-Danish-German Defense cooperation, (which started in the middle of last decade) is the establishment of multinational (three countries) land forces Corps “NorthEast” which is within NATO framework. Its headquarters are located in Szczecin, Poland. This cooperation has successfully assisted Polish Armed Forces in meeting NATO membership-related requirements when Poland was aspiring for membership in the Alliance. Therefore, Lithuania (as well as the two other Baltic countries) got very early interested into the possibilities to take part in the activities of the triangle and use all the advantages of such cooperation. The political form of this involvement takes place in the form of the participation of the ministers of Defense of the Baltic States in regular meetings with their colleagues from Denmark, Poland and Germany. On the practical level Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian officers participate in military exercises of the “NorthEast” Corps. Lithuanian officer undergoes training in the Headquarters of Corps as well as assuring the coordination of mutual participation in international exercises. Besides, the officers of the Corps Headquarters from Poland, Denmark and Germany plan to take part in the previously mentioned exercise “Amber Hope 2001”, which will be held to be in Lithuania.

The group, which is called BALTSEA (Baltic Security Assistance Management Group), was established in 1997 and it is the working forum of specialists from ministries and Armed Forces who are in charge of rendering military assistance of Western countries to the Baltic States. The forum consists of the three Baltic countries and fourteen countries that support them in the field of security and Defense. Once a year the officials from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs also take part in the forum. The network of work authorities that are in charge of separate fields of assistance and specific cooperation projects (for example, BALTBAT, BALTRON, BATNET and BALTDEFCOL) is also established. The activities of the group help to ensure that the rendered assistance of the countries that support Baltic countries does correspond to the planned needs, that the assistance is given to the spheres that need it most, that it is not overlapping; and how to use most effectively the resources that are being allocated and get the biggest profit. It is very important for us that Poland would be among those fourteen supporters and would directly and indirectly contribute to the implementation of cooperation projects of the Baltic countries in the field of Defense and ensure effective international support of our security.

Polish-Lithuanian military cooperation, which is very active at the given moment, has potential to develop further. As an example I would mention several perspective spheres where common work has already been started. They are as follows: scientific research in the field of Defense, Defense industry, joint procurement, international policy of weapon control, integration processes into the EU, with which our countries have started negotiations. Here I have to stress the significance of the development of European security and Defense policy as a part of common EU foreign and security policy.

Summarizing I can say that Polish-Lithuanian Defense cooperation is a significant element in the bilateral relations of both countries and in the strategic partnership. This cooperation is one of the ways of joining NATO looking at it from the political perspective as well as from practical readiness. Long time ago it became an important part of the broader regional security and the Defense cooperation network, which helps to ensure peace and stability in Europe.

Translated by Giedrė Matelytė-Garbačiauskienė

EDUCATION OF NATIONAL MINORITIES IN LITHUANIA

Nearly all over the world humanism, democracy and civil society are recognized ideals. Powerful and independent state rests on them. Trying to assure that these ideals are met the determinant role falls on a school. Education and the level of people's intelligence are the factors nation's culture, its independence and abilities to manage its issues are measured upon.

The Republic of Lithuania has given clear priority to education. This sphere of development is supported by the state. According to the Law on Education adopted in 1998 education is based on humanistic cultural values of a nation and the world, democratic principles and recognized fundamental human rights and freedoms. Education is a prerequisite for cultural, social and economic progress of the country, it strengthens solidarity among the people and among the nations, it advances tolerance and cooperation.

The undergoing reform in Lithuania refers to educational experiences of both Lithuania and Europe. In their respective documents they point to the following educational principles:

1. Nationality: commitment to Lithuanian culture, care for the preservation of identity and historical continuity. Lithuania's education preserves and further promotes multinational culture of the country. It acknowledges that experiences national minorities bestow enrich Lithuania's culture.
2. Resumption: openness in maintaining universal moral virtues and the nucleus of nationality.

Thus, Lithuania's educational system is based upon the heritage and fortune of European culture: individual values, humanism, equality of the people, freedom of conscience, tolerance, and endowment of norms and principles pertaining to every democratic society. Educational standards laws and legal acts of the Republic of Lithuania regulate correspond to democratic standards established in international legal documents. They emphasize the due that education has to cherish interdependent understanding and tolerance of every nation and every racial or religious group without exception. Education must do everything so that persons who belong to national minorities understand culture and language of their country, and take constructive participation in the activities and daily life of the society.

While implementing the policy of education Lithuania recognizes the needs of national minorities – to preserve the essential elements of ethnocultural identity: language, cultural heritage, customs and religion.

The Republic of Lithuania recognizes and abides by the principles and standards set on the international level. Lithuania is a member of the United Nations, the Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Council of Europe and other international organizations.

During a 10-year-period of independence Lithuania has adhered to a number of international treaties, which aim to protect human rights. Besides, it has signed and ratified treaties with the neighboring states.

Lately aspirations of Lithuania to integrate into the European political structures have had a significant influence upon Lithuania's education. One can remember that according to the terms EC adopted in Copenhagen in 1993, Central and East European states would become members of the European Union only if democratic stability, superiority to laws, respect for individuals and national minorities is ensured. History proves that Lithuania has rich and harmonious traditions of multinational coexistence.

In the history one could barely find a nation or a state with one nation, and no other nation, living in it. To forget the cultural heritage of mutual coexistence of different nations means to impoverish and deny the true cultural image to our country.

It is hard to imagine Vilnius apart from the cultural contribution of such distinguished people as Pranciškus Skorina, Antokolskis, Adomas Mickevičius, Pushkinas, and others. Developing the respect to citizens of other states and active maintenance of ones own cultural identity – is one of the most important tasks united Europe faces. What we know as the culture of mankind is the result of joint creative efforts of various nations.

Latest census of population, 1989 provides data about 109 nationalities that lived in Lithuania at the time. According to it, national minorities made up 20,4 percent, or 751.000, of the entire population of Lithuania. In 1997 the percent fell to 18,4 (682,9 thousand). Therefore, it is evident that during 1989 – 1995 the number of non-Lithuanian residents decreased by 114796 thousand. This has happened due to the

demographic and migration processes (repatriation, withdrawal of foreign army, decreased immigration).

At present Russians constitute the most numerous ethnic group in Lithuania (as for January 1st, 1997 their total number amounted to 304.800 or 8,2 percent of mean-time Lithuanian population). They are followed by the Polish (256.600 or 6,9 percent respectively), Belarusian (54.500 or 1,5 percent respectively), Ukrainian (36.900 or 1,0 percent respectively), Jewish (5.200 or 0,1 percent respectively) and other nationalities – 24900 or 0,7 percent. Speaking about the national minorities in Lithuania there is a variance not only in numbers or percentage; there is a variance with respect to the duration of habitation in the country, territorial distribution, and level of national consciousness.

Non-Lithuanians are dispersed throughout the entire territory of the country. However, they concentrate for the most part in the eastern and southeastern Lithuania, as well as in the cities of Vilnius, Klaipėda, Visaginas. There is unequal distribution according to their nationality as well. For example, the majority of Polish-speaking population (approximately 90 percent) lives in Vilnius and in the neighboring regions. Russians, Ukrainians, and the Jewish population reside for the most part in large cities in the southeastern Lithuania. Due to historical reasons, southeastern Lithuania (Vilnius region) and eastern Lithuania (city of Visaginas) have become multinational and multicultural regions. Persons of Lithuanian origin are in the position of a national minority there.

Development of education in these particular regions of Lithuania formed in the course of history depends upon the dynamic interaction amongst diverse cultural, ethnic, linguistic and religious customs. For this reason the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania, the Laws on National Minorities and Education guarantee the right of national minorities that reside abundantly and compactly in some given area of Lithuania to establish state or state-financed pre-school institutions, secondary education schools. National minorities are granted the right to hold lessons in their mother tongue. Groups, faculties and branches at the universities and colleges can train educators, teachers and other specialists necessary for fulfillment of the needs of national minorities. For ethnic groups residing non-abundantly and non-compactly classes and optional groups are established at secondary education schools. The same applies to Sunday schools.

Resolution, “The regulations of integration of the schools of national minorities into the educational system of the Republic of Lithuania” No. 76, issued on December 22, 1922 by the Ministry of Culture and Education sets fundamental regulations that define the position of national minorities’ school in the Lithuanian educational system. They define the educational principles that apply to national minorities in a democratic state. These principles are established in the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania, Concept of Education of Lithuania, Laws on National Minorities and Education and international legal documents, - all of these documents regulate issues related to the education of national minorities.

In Lithuania pre-school training institutions and secondary education schools of all levels organize the teaching process. In this process they adhere to the general principles of education. Children and youngsters are given the right to acquire secondary education on the basis of their national culture and in their native language. By doing this, schools help children and youngsters integrate into the Lithuanian culture and become full participants of the activities and daily life of Lithuania and its society.

Education of national minorities of Lithuania is based on following principles:

- 1) Civic harmony, integration and solidarity;
- 2) Open society and sociocultural integration;
- 3) Priority to a person and family in their educational needs;
- 4) Maintenance of ethnocultural identity of the peoples of Lithuania; cultural cooperation for the sake of the cultural progress of Lithuania;
- 5) Adaptation to international legal principles and standards of the Council of Europe and other organizations;
- 6) Universal application of education;
- 7) Further expansion of policy on national minorities.

Following regulations illustrate efforts to provide equal opportunities for representatives of national minorities to obtain secondary education:

1. Given that a student (schoolboy/schoolgirl) moves from one school to another and the language of proceedings is different from the previous one, s/he is given the right to attend extra classes and eliminate insufficiency, which occurred due to the change of language.

2. There are well-organized classes for non-Lithuanian students aimed to teach Lithuanian as a foreign language. In this situation schools that instruct students in Lithuanian language apply the foreign language teaching methods.

3. There are plans to organize common written exam of the Lithuanian language for everyone at school. These plans aim to provide equal opportunities for everybody, be that Lithuanian, Russian, Polish or other national, to study in universities and colleges in Lithuania.

4. The state bears the responsibility to cover all the expenses and mismatch of costs between Lithuanian and non-Lithuanian schools save these differences occur because of the fulfillment of the needs of education of national minorities.

Article 45 of the Constitution of Republic of Lithuania defines that persons, who are the citizens of Lithuania and belong to some national minority group, have the right of independent organization and execution of various activities, ethnic-cultural affairs, education, charity and mutual support activities including. The state provides financial and any other necessary support for national minorities.

Article 2 of the Law on National Minorities defines that the Republic of Lithuania guarantees the right to advance national culture and education, the right to study in mother tongue, including the use of mother tongue in the pre-school institutions and schools. Besides, they have the right to organize themselves in groups, establish departments in the universities and colleges on that account that they can prepare specialists, teachers and other professionals to supplement the needs of national minorities.

Article 12 of the Law on Education defines that “if national minorities necessitate and request, they may have pre-schools, schools and classes in mother tongue in their densely populated districts.” State, municipalities or private foundations may grant support to these educational institutions. It is not without due cause, parents (or child’s guardians) choose the pre-school or school for their children to are to attend according to the language of instruction. According to the same article these are small national minority groups and groups residing in less densely populated that may learn and improve their mother tongue by choosing classes in the state or

municipal schools. National minorities do this voluntarily. Another alternative is that they might favor Sunday schools, which they can pick too.

Article 30 of Law on Education includes the option to introduce ethno-cultural elements into the general plan of education. Article 10 of the same law defines the right of natural and legal persons, who might be either citizens of the Republic of Lithuania or foreign countries, to establish private institutions for educational purposes. In this case they would have to abide by the rules of the Ministry of Education and Science.

The education needs of national minorities are implemented by the state, private and supplementary educational institutions, such as:

1. Schools of national minorities; they preserve the traditional language of instruction;
2. Schools where Lithuanian is the language of instruction; mother tongue is a separate subject students can study;
3. Educational institutions where several different languages are the languages of instruction;
4. Schools that use extra time for teaching and learning;
5. Vocational schools; here, students obtain the degree of school education and study mother tongue as a subject;
6. Sunday (Saturday) schools.

Draft Laws on Education and National minorities and also Regulations of Education of national minorities institute, adjust and legally establish modifications the system of education underwent during the decade of the independent statehood of the Republic of Lithuania.

Main regulations of education of national minorities reproduce the general framework of teaching content and teaching process for national minorities:

1. Curriculum may combine ethno-culture, history and geography of national minorities in Lithuania, on the one hand, and their historical Homeland, on

the other. This is done in order to fulfill educational needs of national minorities and highlight the multicultural environment of Lithuanian society.

2. Non-Lithuanian students have the opportunity to learn Lithuanian as a foreign language in the pre-school groups;
3. Polish and Russian students, who study in Polish and Russian elementary, main and high schools, use either original textbooks written in their native language (Russian, for instance) or textbooks translated from Lithuanian to their native language. Once these students enter high school, they are encouraged to study in Lithuanian language;
4. Rules and regulations set by the Ministry of Education and Science, and international treaties and agreements allow schools to use the textbooks published abroad;
5. Upon graduation from the main school, where instructions were given in the national minorities' language, students must pass the exam in that language of instruction;
6. Upon graduation from national minority high school, students face the right of choice: they can pass the exam in the language of instruction of the national minority schools. The community of national minority school may decide to make the exam of the language of instruction in their school mandatory, or not, introducing at the time certain exceptions for the students, whose native language is different than the language instructed at school.
7. Upon graduation from national minority high school, students must pass the exam of Lithuanian as a state language.

There are two main tasks the educational system of national minorities in Lithuania aims to conclude. On the one hand, the system is set to preserve ethnic identity of national minorities, their culture and mother tongue. On the other hand, it makes the state and society of Lithuania richer. It does not mean, however, that every single concern that might appear because of the emphasis on ethnic distinctness is watered down. We know that emphasis on ethnic distinctness can lead to isolation. Therefore, strong efforts are undertaken in order to integrate national minorities into

the political, social and cultural activities of the state, and develop processes of integration for that sake. Persons who belong to national minorities should always be aware they are citizens of the state, and that the state will always safeguard them from any kind of assimilation.

All these aspects are the composite part of the policy Lithuania implements. The state seeks total understanding in its efforts to integrate the schools of national minorities into the general framework of state educational system. All the laws mentioned above as well as official documents of the Government and the Ministry of Education and Science firmly establish fundamental provision to maintain balance between the preservation of national identity and integration into the political, social and cultural life of the state.

Enhancing the quality of teaching Lithuanian as a state language in the schools of national minorities was pointed to as one of the main tasks for integration of national minorities into the society to become successful. Upon graduation from school, a student must know Lithuanian language very well. This is a prerequisite for him or her to continue studies at the universities and colleges because in these institutions Lithuanian is the language of instruction. Given that students' parents request, school staff may respond to this request by making such disciplines as history and geography of Lithuania, as well as other subjects, be instructed in Lithuanian language. In this process, however, difficulties appear, first of all, due to the lack of teaching personnel – teachers – particularly teachers of Lithuanian language.

Textbooks and study programs for national minorities' schools reproduce the main tasks of integration processes into the society. Such classes as native language and literature, history, geography and other subjects are organized in a way to present the cultural and historical ties of the national group to Lithuania, its common past, political and cultural background. In the same way students at Lithuanian language schools should be educated: they would obtain broader and deeper knowledge on the culture and history of national minorities in Lithuania. Introduction of such classes for students in Lithuanian language schools would, beyond doubt, yield better

understanding of multicultural pluralism of Lithuanian society and promote tolerance and ethnic cooperation.

In Lithuania, universities and colleges organize courses for undergraduate and graduate students – an unparalleled opportunity to study native languages of national minorities. Once they graduate from the course, they become specialists of the native language at the national minority schools. The teachers of the national minority schools all the time seek to improve their qualifications and develop their professional skills in order to operate in multilingual environment. Universities and colleges advance cooperation with international educational institutions. Vilnius Pedagogical University, for example, has signed treaties of cooperation with State University of Linguistics in Moscow (Federation of Russia), M.Tanko University in Minsk (Republic of Belarus), Academy of Pedagogics and Education in Riga (Republic of Latvia) and Wroclaw University (Republic of Poland).

Teachers who work in the schools of national minorities are trained and tested according to the general rules of testing. These rules are based on the instructions of educational system in Lithuania.

Schools of national minorities are financed in accordance to the same principles and criteria as Lithuanian schools. For instance, each year the state covers the expenses such as the purchase of textbooks. Equal terms apply for both Lithuanian schools and schools of national minorities. Furthermore, the latter usually receive more financial support than the former, which are Lithuanian schools. In 2000/2001, each student in the Lithuanian schools received the transfer of 15 litas (appr. 3.75 USD) to cover the costs of the textbooks; at the same time and for the same purpose each student in the schools of national minorities received 18 litas (4.5 USD).

Recently, new financing rules have been introduced to form the school budget and general teaching process. The so-called student's package is going to broaden opportunities that improve training process of students and fulfill their needs of education such as: acquisition of textbooks and other means for education, obtaining

of highly qualified training, cooperation with teachers who constantly improve their qualifications, etc.

Council of the Ministry of Education and Science endorsed general regulations on the publication and distribution of textbooks for schools (December 18, 1997, No. 52). In Lithuania this process of publication and distribution of textbooks for schools of national minorities is organized in accordance to these regulations. In the meantime, the draft of new regulations is being prepared.

In 2000, there was an additional supply of new textbooks for schools: 18 textbooks saw the daylight in Polish, 24 - in Russian, and 10 - in Lithuanian language. The latter were set for Russian and Polish schools. 4 textbooks were republished. In 2001, school libraries received 18 new textbooks in Polish, 26 – in Russian and 12 – in Lithuanian language for Russian and Polish schools.

The state is interested in publishing original and translated textbooks for national minorities in their mother tongue. For that sake it grants financial support. Once predominant, centralized system of publication and distribution of the textbooks changed, first of all because of the high costs of translation. New rules of publication and order of textbooks, which have been introduced, as well as means of education aim to establish a new structure of publication and order of textbooks. It should be based on democratic principles that respond to the mechanisms of market economy and general needs of schools.

In 2000, total number of schools in the Republic of Lithuania reached 2246, the number of Polish schools - 74, Russian – 68, Belarusian – 7, and 72 combined schools:

Schools according to the language of instruction, as of 2000

Language of instruction	Number of schools
Lithuanian	2031
Polish	74
Russian	68
Russian-Polish	26

Lithuanian-Russian	23
Lithuanian-Polish	11
Lithuanian-Russian-Polish	10
Belarusian	1
Russian-Belarusian	1
Lithuanian-English	1
Total	2246

Two schools, Sholom Aleichem Jewish school in Vilnius and Herman Zuderman German school in Klaipėda, are the exceptions in the education system of national minorities in Lithuania. They differ from the common model of schools of national minorities. In these schools education is based on ethnic identity and culture, though almost all classes are instructed in Lithuanian language.

There are private schools for national minorities as well. Certain ethnic minorities such as Poles, Belarusians, Ukrainians, Germans, Armenians, Karaites, Tatars and Greeks have established their Sunday schools. The program of education in such schools or classes contains lectures of mother tongue of national minorities.

There are 586294 students in Lithuania: 41162 students – in Russian schools and classes, 22303 – in Polish, 214 – in Belarusian, 202 students - in Jewish and 364 – in German schools.

Number of students according to the language of instruction

Academic year	Number of students according to the language of instruction			Total number of students
	Lithuanian	Polish	Russian	
1990/1991	409 295	11 407	76 038	501 740
1991/1992	414 119	12 611	72 762	499 692
1992/1993	415 971	13 881	67 506	497 359
1993/1994	422 216	15 312	58 743	496 387
1994/1995	434 469	16 613	57 655	508 887
1995/1996	46 336	17 898	55 237	519 659
1996/1997	459 799	19 212	52 315	531 480
1997/1998	475 253	20 263	49 347	545 042
1998/1999	490 589	21 038	46 325	558 160
1999/2000	508 373	21 826	44 058	574 486
2000/2001	522 569	22 303	41 162	586 294

The rules of integration of schools of national minorities into the system of education in Lithuania are set in laws and legal acts. They comply with the democratic rules set in international documents. Stimulation of mutual understanding and tolerance between all national, racial and religious groups is the main purpose of education in Lithuania. Program of education encourages studies and understanding of the culture and language of national minority. It puts together their confidence so they participate actively in the life of the state. Lithuania's system of education preserves the heritage of national minorities because it is this heritage that enriches the culture of the state.

Generation of multicultural, humanistic and democratic environment and integration of different ethnic groups into the society require time and efforts. Critical approach and constructive actions are necessary if we want to ensure that cooperation and consolidation between diverse cultures perseveres.

Remigijus Motuzas

Jan Nowak-Jazioranski

Two Sisters: *Polonia's* Support to Lithuania

Reconciliation of Lithuania and Poland is surely one of the happiest developments of the last decade. The Commonwealth of both nations will not return. Lithuania, and Poland are today equal and sovereign states. But our common past has left a feeling of family. As I have said before, Lithuania and Poland are like two sisters who once lived under the same roof and today live separately - but they remain sisters.

Poland, already under the protective umbrella of NATO, now has the historical opportunity from within the alliance to become the zealous champion of Lithuania and its security. It should lobby tirelessly for the acceptance of Lithuania into the Atlantic Alliance. It is unacceptable that the border of NATO should be allowed to separate our two countries.

Presidents Aleksander Kwaśniewski and Valdas Adamkus (like his predecessor, Algirdas Brazauskas) are working together in this spirit. They enjoy the full support of both governments, both parliaments and both nations. The Polish president, prime minister and minister of foreign affairs do not miss any opportunity in their meetings with Western statesmen to urge that Lithuania be admitted to NATO.

No other two countries have so many common institutions as Lithuania and Poland. To name a few: Polish-Lithuanian Consultative Committee of Presidents, Polish-Lithuanian Parliamentarian Assembly, Inter-Governmental Cooperation Council, and The Polish-Lithuanian Forum of Territorial Governments. The Polish Club of Friends of Lithuania publishes Polish and Lithuanian views in the quarterly, "Lithuania".

Some old stereotypes may still linger. There are still problems to be solved. But solutions can be found with patience goodwill and understanding, particularly with regard to the Polish community in Lithuania and the Lithuanian minority on the Polish side of the border. Indeed, I believe an important turning point was reached in 2000 when the Polish citizens of Lithuania appealed to the Polish American Congress to mobilize their rank and file members in an effort to win security for Lithuania. The appeal deeply moved and motivated millions of American of Polish background. I feel confident that at the right time the Polish American Congress will encourage the very active Polish-American community to send letters and telegrams to the American President, Administration, senators and congressmen demanding their support for Lithuanian membership of NATO with the same zeal that they displayed in support of Poland's membership. The massive support of *Polonia* may play a strategic role in influencing the decision of the US government.

Since harmonious cooperation between our two states was never better than now, Polish citizens of Lithuania and Lithuanian citizens of Poland no longer face a conflict of loyalty. They may remain faithful to their national heritage they may educate their children in their mother tongue, send them to Polish or Lithuanian schools and to be at the same time loyal citizens of their Lithuanian or Polish state.

The Polish artist Jan Matejko, depicted the common victory of Lithuanians and Poles in the Battle of Grunwald. In his gigantic painting he placed the leader of the Lithuanian troops, Grand Duke Vytautas, in the very center of his picture. The painting "Battle of Grunwald" can thus be seen as a symbol of the restored brotherhood of our two nations. Poland and Lithuania will support each other and together will join the Community of European Nations.

OPINION

10 years of Lithuanian-Polish Reconciliation

Česlovas Okinčycas

Speaking in historic terms, 10 years is not a long period of time. Notwithstanding this rule, last ten years in Lithuanian-Polish relations are tantamount to the entire era.

Understanding of the present is impossible unless we pay proper attention to history. History of Lithuanian-Polish relations counts close to 600 years. Approximately two hundred years before Columbus discovered the American continent, King of Poland Kazimieras the Great married the daughter of the Grand Duke of Lithuania Gediminas, Aldona. It took about two hundred years for two states to be joined together in a Union. Since 1569 two states had a united state of their own exist. It lasted until XVIII century.

The state was brought to an end through partitions carried out by aggressive neighbors. Aiming to save the Joint State, on May 3, 1791 Polish-Lithuanian Seimas passed the Constitution, second Constitution in the history of the world (the first being the US). It had far surpassed its own epoch - it implemented such ideas as the national sovereignty and civil rights in practice. I am proud of the fact that Lithuanian-Polish elite was the forefather of the ideas of universal liberties and democracy.

Breakdown of the state brought no end to cooperation and joint fight for freedom. This fight lasted until the 1863-1864 rebellion.

Cooperation between Lithuanian and Polish nations ended in the second half of the XIX century, when the epoch of nationalism spread all over Europe. These nations chose different paths of establishing the national statehood.

Despite the fact that later on the period of animosity started (it lasted for twenty Interwar years), this period was characterized by numerous episodes of mutual understanding and common power.

For that sake we may remind the fact that Stanislav Narutovič was one of the signatories of Lithuania's Act of Independence, - the brother of Gabriel Narutovič, future President of Poland.

Juzef Pilsudski – one of the Polish heroes and one of the founders of the state of Poland was, to tell the truth, born in Vilnius region. He sought to implement the idea of federation between Poland, Lithuania and Ukraine. However, the nationalism, exceptionally strong at that time, acted as an impediment for those wishing to establish such a confederation in Central Europe.

In 1938 everyone could witness the recovery of the relations. On the other hand they were crushed by the war.

Since 1945, 45 years had to pass until Lithuania and Poland regained freedom and could formulate their international relations according to their vision and to their interests. As far as one can tell, Poland was semi-sovereign, communist-ruled; Lithuania, on the other hand, was a Soviet Republic, with no sovereignty available.

In 1989 whole Lithuania observed first elections in Poland, elections where “Solidarity” took part. This year “Solidarity” and “Sąjūdis” – Lithuania’s independence movement – entered into relations amongst themselves. Once Lithuania declared its independence, Poland backed Lithuania’s efforts to consolidate its position while fighting for true independence. Two weeks after the declaration of the Act of Independence first delegation that came to Lithuania and visited the Supreme Council of Lithuania-Lithuania’s Seimas was a Polish one. It was headed by Bronisław Geremek, then chairman of the most numerous “Solidarity” parliamentary guild. On this occasion the two sides signed first joint document. It reflected the commitment to ensure future cooperation and the will to acknowledge that meantime borders are unchangeable. I am pleased that I had the honor to participate in a yet unofficial international meeting.

In April 1990, at a time when the Soviet Union using all available means tried to threaten Lithuania, I attended the famous Convention of II “Solidarity”, an event, which took part in Gdansk, Poland. There I presented the delegates words of welcome from Vytautas Landsbergis – leader of “Sąjūdis” and Chairman of the Parliament of Lithuania. This Convention passed the resolution which voiced support for Lithuania’s aspirations to become independent state, demanded the cessation of economic blockade and “demonstration of Soviet power” on the Lithuanian territory.

In January 1991 Lithuania’s independence confronted most dangerous threats. One has to remember Soviet military intervention in Vilnius, and in that respect a visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Algirdas Saudargas to Poland, where, on the basis of secret proposal Polish counterparts conferred him the right by the to establish Government of Lithuania in exile, if necessary. My capacity was to accompany Minister Saudargas, and I was the first representative of the foreign country to speak in front of the forum of the Polish Senate. I appealed to the Polish people on behalf of Lithuania. I appealed through the media to the entire world. I appealed in order to gain support for Lithuanian independence and to ensure that the Soviet aggression is condemned. Indeed, Lithuania secured such a moral support of the Poles.

This support took several forms. One of these – a group of the members of the Polish Seimas embarked on activities to remain in the parliamentary building. One or the other Member of Parliament stayed in this building, which was threatened by Soviet pacification, overnight. This action lasted for three months. Members of Seimas participating in this action expressed their solidarity and readiness to fight for the independence of Lithuania. The official Poland, however, extended no recognition of Lithuania as a sovereign state – the position many Lithuanians condemned so much.

Nowadays we understand that Poland was unable to do this first of all because of the international situation (Western countries had not granted *de jure* recognition to independent Lithuania). Second factor was the status quo of bilateral relations with

the Soviet Union (at the time Poland sat at the table of negotiations over the removal of Soviet army from its territory).

It was the Polish society that expressed its growing support for the case of Lithuania's independence. This support took the shape of manifestations in front of Soviet diplomatic and consular missions.

Situation underwent an essential change after the Moscow putsch failed. On August 26, 1991 Prime Minister of Poland Jan Krysstof Bielicki informed the Prime Minister of Lithuania, Gediminas Vagnorius of the following: "today the Government of Poland has made the decision by which it expresses readiness to enter into normal international relations with the Republic of Lithuania. Motivating this decision, Prime Minister recalled that the Polish Government in exile never recognized the occupation of the State of Lithuania, Soviet Union carried out in 1940, condemning it. This act of condemnation manifested the understanding of the Polish nations.

This Moscow putsch forced the collapse of the Soviet Union. It laid favorable grounds for normal relations between Poland and Lithuania to be reestablished. At the same time it brought about a serious crisis Lithuania and Poland faced later.

Putsch unveiled the lack of loyalty Councils of Vilnius and Šalčininkai districts (Polish party and kolkhozes nomenclature monopolized control there) shared with regard to the independent state of Lithuania. Parliament of Lithuania, in response to such a position of theirs, dismissed the Councils. By way of doing this, the Parliament forced out the opinion as if it devalued the positions of these Councils. Polish community was deprived of the means to be represented on the municipal level.

This woke up the reaction of the Polish society, and the Polish Government had to react. Lech Wałęsa and Vytautas Landsbergis reciprocated by writing 'spiked' letters to each other. The former blamed the Lithuania for exercising group responsibility, the latter emphasised that the act is aimed at post-communists, not Poles. All in all, the relations suffered a blow.

As mentioned above previous disloyal position of the leaders of the Polish society vis-à-vis Lithuania was the main reason behind the dismissal of the Councils.

In view of the Vilnius conflict with Moscow they backed Moscow and made no secret of their sympathies for the Soviet Union. This fact is not a fact our nation should be proud of. It is not worth respect. We, the Poles, were always proud of the fighters' for freedom slogan "For the sake of freedom of ours and yours". To tell the truth, these slogans were realized by Tadeusz Kosciuska – a Pole, born in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

An idea of creation of the East Polish Soviet Republic, Vilnius region, western Belarus, and Ukraine including, was bestowed as one of the possible alternatives to Lithuania's drive for independence. A well-known Polish activist Jan Ciechanovic disseminated this idea. In the second part of the last decade this person referred to Bosnian Serbs as an example Poles in Lithuania should follow (Newspaper of the Polish Union in Lithuania).

On March 11, 1990 an event bearing historical significance was held in Lithuania. That day deputies of the Supreme Council of Lithuania cast their votes over the Act of Independence. Even the Russians supported the act. Only six deputies withheld from voting. They were Poles.

I am proud of the fact that I am among the group of three Poles – signatories of the Act of Independence. I feel anguish over the position of those deputies who did not vote for the independence of Lithuania. Referendum on the maintenance of the Soviet Union, boycotted by Lithuanians, received the Polish minority support. Moreover they boycotted the referendum on the removal of Russian Army.

On the other hand, today we may acknowledge that Lithuania, dealing with disloyal leaders of the Polish community and yet unable to detect true intentions of the Polish Government, also made substantial mistakes.

First of all, commissars were appointed to replace the dismissed district Councils. They impaired education of the Poles, abandoned the process of reprivatization. Non-privatized land local Poles had been waiting for, was allocated to Lithuanian nomenclature.

As a result, Lithuanian nationalistic elements that demanded lituanization of Vilnius region rejuvenated. At the time it looked like most of the decision Government of Lithuania passed were contrary to these requirements. There no doubt the latter caused concern amongst the Poles, even those Poles who were loyal to Lithuanian authorities. From time to time, we must not forget, irresponsible behavior of the Polish minority acted as a catalyst of reaction. Nationalism of both Lithuanians and Polish was getting the stronghold.

In this atmosphere, the “Declaration on Friendly Relations and Neighborly Cooperation”, Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the two countries, Saudargas and Skubiszewski signed in January 1992, challenged by nationalists of both countries, was a proof of foresightedness politicians shared. This event marked the improvement of adverse relations that had become such as a result of the dismissal of the district councils.

In 1992, in the light of these developments, first Ambassador of Poland, Professor Jan Widacki arrived in Lithuania. In his opinion¹, Lithuanian-Polish relations have entered the period of normalization. Preliminary terms, rights international norms and standards corroborate, aside, and save Lithuanians back activities of the Polish minority that cherish national self-consciousness, develop education, culture, societal and cultural life, this could be the beginning of the Treatise “On Bilateral Relations and Good Neighborly cooperation” between the two states. In his activities the Ambassador aimed at creating the legal infrastructure of the Treaty (interstate, intergovernmental, interdepartmental agreements) before the Treaty was signed. It would mitigate difficulties of mutual cooperation, set privileges for citizens of both countries, and, besides, would encourage all-embracing economic, scientific and cultural cooperation. For these plans to be implemented an atmosphere of mutual trust

¹ *Annual Polish Foreign policy report*, 1997, p. 152-153.

had to be created. Having the events of 1991-1992 in mind this was hard to accomplish.

The mission of the ambassador I could observe in close proximity was a very difficult and dangerous one.

Since the every beginning a number of Lithuanian nationalistic elements held the belief that Ambassador insidiously tried to polonize Vilnius region, thus, wanted him to be declared *persona non grata*.

Later on radical leaders of the Polish minority required the same. These leaders could not live up with the fact that the Ambassador refrained from supporting their demands, which were very remote from European standards. Forestalling the events, one should remind that when the Ambassador Widacki completed his mission in 1996, history of Lithuanian-Poland relations never saw better relations between two countries develop. Serious politicians – be they Lithuanians, be they Poles – had no doubts that this new status of relations between the neighboring countries is the result of his efforts. By the way, the new Ambassador, H.E. Professor Mrs. Eufemia Teichmann, carried through the undertakings of Mr. Widacki in the direction of Lithuanian-Polish reconciliation. Her activities were marked by success.

On April 26, 1994, as a result of two years of negotiations, Lithuania and Poland signed a Treaty to regulate neighborly relations. The Polish side was represented by President Lech Wałęsa, Lithuanian – by President Algirdas Brazauskas.

The signing of the Treaty was preceded by a number of events: highest level personal visits, signing of numerous detailed bilateral agreements, erection of the border passage stations, transfer of arms and equipment to Lithuanian army.

Once the Treaty was signed and ratified, Lithuania and Poland entered into entirely new phase of their relations. They became friendly, indeed, and based on mutual trust.

On his visit in Warsaw (February 1995), President Algirdas Brazauskas, speaking in front of the Polish Seimas, proposed, among other things, the creation of a joint military battalion for UN peacekeeping purposes and joint air surveillance control system. In his speech Algirdas Brazauskas cited Juzef Pilsudski. He knew that at that time Lithuanian historians considered Pilsudski the foe of Lithuania.

In two years, Vytautas Landsbergis, then Chairman of Lithuanian Seimas, spoke to the Polish Seimas. On the occasion of commemorating joint fight during the January events, chanted the first stanza of the Polish anthem. This fact serves as an illustration that bilateral relations got rid of tension, they have become sincere and natural.

On the initiative of Algirdas Brazauskas two countries established joint battalion. Called LITPOLBAT, the battalion now serves the peacekeeping mission in Kosovo. One must emphasize that the United States, Canada and other states contributed a lot to the creation of this battalion.

Military cooperation has become highly successful. As mentioned above, it was the first time that military equipment was handed over before the Treaty was signed. Poland offered Lithuania armored transporters, cars, helicopters, guns, and other equipment. Both countries were implementing the "Program for Peace" program at the time.

Once Poland became NATO member, it embarked on supporting Lithuania's efforts to join the aforementioned Alliance.

Due to mention, former Ambassador of Lithuania to Poland, Antanas Valionis now has taken over the post of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania. This appointment recognizes the significance of his efforts as regards the creation of Lithuanian-Polish relations and the importance of relations for Lithuania.

Very often do the high-standing officials from either Lithuania, or Poland open their agenda of foreign visits from the capitals of the neighboring states. This bears highly symbolic meaning. After Aleksandr Kwasniewski became President of Poland (in March 1996) Vilnius was the first capital he visited on an official trip. The same applied to Bronislaw Geremek, since 1997 – Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland.

In 1998, after becoming the President of Lithuania, Valdas Adamkus decided Poland is the first destination he should visit on a foreign trip.

This trip was later followed by a trip to Vatikan. There the President of Lithuania met the Great Pole, the Pope. In his last-year speech at Krakow's Jagellonian University President Valdas Adamkus claimed the following: "Our relations are the best Lithuanian-Polish history has ever seen. This is a favorable ground for our future cooperation".

Lithuanian society is ready to appreciate Polish nations for its goodwill during the first stage of independence. In 1997, on the occasion of the centenary flood Poland suffered Polish-speaking radio station "Znad Wili" took up the victims-relief initiative and collected 250 thousand US dollars for that sake.

Position of President Adamkus, various non-governmental initiatives, cooperation "at the bottom" prove that substantial transformation has taken place during the last several years.

Lithuania views the entry of Poland into NATO as a mutual success. It did not only expand the zone of stability in Europe – Poland now is the strongest advocate of Lithuania joining NATO. On February 16th, 1998 at the commemoration of the 80th anniversary of the restoration of Lithuanian Independence in Lithuanian Seimas, President Aleksandr Kwasniewski declared the following: "There is no security of Poland without the security of Lithuania".

One should pay attention to the status Polonia occupies in Lithuania's aspirations. Poles outside Poland were more than important when they supported the idea of Poland's membership in NATO, at the time of "to be, or not be to be" for the Poland. First of all I have in mind Poles in the US. I dare assert that they should be the first we

should thank for Poland's entrance into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, NATO. Today Lithuania Today Lithuania needs their help and their support. The support that has been declared for us on behalf of the Polish organizations in the US, has laid favorable ground for further activities of extraordinary enterprise, which are aimed to fulfill one cornerstone task – that Lithuania joins NATO.

While touching upon the Poles outside Poland, I had in mind Poles in Lithuania as well. Declaration they adopted in the name of Heads of State and Government and the Parliaments of NATO Member States, the people of Poland and members of the Polish community states that “The membership of Lithuania in NATO meets the interests of not only the citizens of Lithuania, including three hundred thousands of Lithuanian Poles, but also interests of Poland and the people of the entire region supported by all democratic nations. This declaration serves as an example for Lithuania's political elite.

Authorities in Lithuania extended a very positive assessment on this declaration. It is a true reflection of the position Polish organizations disseminate with respect to Lithuania's entrance into NATO. Most of them have roots in Poland and act as good citizens. Furthermore – these are the citizens who make full use of the rights pertaining to them. It seems very important that we hand the solution of some issues, especially those dealing with the national minority, into the hands of national minorities. At the moment in Lithuania the situation is very interesting: Viceminister of education and science, Deputy head of Vilnius region, Deputy director of the Department of national minorities – all of them represent the Polish national minority. Poles are members of Seimas, they dominate in the municipalities of Vilnius and Šalčininkai districts. Therefore, the bridles of managing the affairs of the Polish community lie in their hands.

Oftentimes, in various political fora Lithuanian-Polish cooperation is presented as an example, a standard states should follow in their relations with their neighbors. If we happen to move further than the Council of Europe and European Union establish at the moment, all we will do by this is contribute something new to international organizations. In this case we would bring new solutions to the European Union that are far more favorable for national minorities.

Common history, common language and common foreign policy priorities bind Lithuania and Poland together. Cooperation during important moments reinforced the feeling of strategic partnership.

As for today, the new quality Lithuanian-Polish cooperation has acquired the international standard of its own. We understand that our common voice has its regional dimension. I believe our good-neighborly relationship means more stable, better economically developed Central European region. Lithuania's relations with Poland give a good example of what can be achieved through genuine partnership and cooperation. I am convinced that this symposium will also contribute to the development and strengthening of relations among Poland and other Central and Eastern Europe countries.

I am indebted to my destiny that I had a chance to participate in numerous events that were important to both nations. We have infused lots of enterprise to make relations what they are today. However, there is still lots of work waiting for us if we want to use the opportunity we have now. We hope we make full use of it.

What happened to Lithuanian-Polish relations over the last ten years is in fact a realization of the vision of Jerzy Giedroyc and the entire Paris "Culture". Most prominent representatives of the Polish *émigré* took active part in realization of this vision, including Jan Nowak-Jezioranski, Zbigniew Brzezinski (Lithuanians call him the greatest demolisher of communism, and majority of the Poles of Lithuania - an example of the American citizen who disregarded his Polish roots).

Translated by Mindaugas Žičkus

Poland and Lithuania – selected aspects of economic development and cooperation¹

Wojciech Paczyński

Transition record in Poland and Lithuania – an overview

Both Poland and Lithuania certainly belong to the group of the most successful transition countries. After the sharp output contraction in the beginning of transition, economic growth resumed as early as 1992 in the case of Poland and in 1995 in Lithuania. Interestingly, the countries adopted different stabilization strategies. In both countries exchange rate was used as a nominal anchor. However, while Poland resolved to different modes of the crawling peg regime, Lithuania adopted a currency board in 1994. Consequently, disinflation process was much faster in Lithuania. Several important structural reforms have been implemented in both countries that formed a solid basis for a development of market based economies. Undoubtedly, the reform agenda still remains vast, in particular in fiscal sphere and labour markets (both countries suffer high unemployment). Significant progress has also been achieved in the accession dialogue with the EU. While Poland started the formal entry negotiations as early as March 1998, and Lithuania only in February 2000, the latter proceeded much faster and by June 2001 surpassed Poland in the progress measured by the number of closed chapters of negotiations. Certainly, the size of Poland's economy to a large extent determines the more difficult and slower progress of negotiations.

In 1995-1998 both countries maintained a steady and high by international standards rates of growth. The Russian crisis of 1998 represented a major external shock to their economies. However, Lithuania, being significantly more exposed to Russia (via trade in goods and services, investment, and financial links), suffered more than Poland. In fact Lithuania experienced a prolonged period of recession during 1998-1999. As this happened in the environment of the political crisis (three successive governments over the period of six months) and weakening fiscal and external positions, the country found itself at the brink of major financial turbulence. The confidence in the currency board was eroded and some voices suggested the need for devaluation. Thanks to responsible policies undertaken by the authorities Lithuania managed to restore investors confidence, allowing for renewed access to domestic and international capital markets at low spreads. GDP growth resumed in the first quarter of 2000.

In Poland, financial markets proved to a large extent invincible to the impact of the Russian crisis. However, it badly hit registered and shuttle trade with CIS countries. Economic growth slowed somewhat but remained healthy at 4.8 percent in 1998 and 4.1 percent in 1999. From the current perspective it is visible that the crisis had some positive effects on both countries as it forced the re-orientation of export markets and the necessary restructuring processes in the enterprises. The production sectors apparently managed to enhance their competitiveness that enabled the impressive export performance observed in 2000 and 2001. In fact exports remained the major engine of growth in that period.

¹ References: IMF (2000). Republic of Lithuania. Staff Report for the Article IV Consultation and First Review under the Stand-By Arrangement, www.imf.org; RP Embassy (2001). Ambasada Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej. Wydział Ekonomiczno Handlowy. Wilno, *Sprawozdanie Ekonomiczne za rok 2000* (The Embassy of the Republic of Poland. Economics and Trade Department, *Economics Report 2000*), mimeo, Vilnius 2001

The year 2000 and the first months of 2001 were marked by a slow but steady rebound of economic activities in Lithuania and a slowdown in Poland. Manufacturing and trade activities pushed the overall growth in Lithuania. In both countries domestic demand remained weak. The situation in Poland was affected by high real interest rates and worsening situation in the labor market. The prospects for 2001 remain perhaps more optimistic for Lithuania, where the growth momentum is expected to accelerate. In Poland a more vibrant growth will likely not materialize earlier than end-2001 or the beginning of 2002. The long run outlook remains very positive for both countries and in particular the membership in the EU should provide a further stimulus for catching up with more developed economies of Western Europe.

Recent trends in foreign trade

Lithuania, being much smaller than Poland remains significantly more open to trade. The exports plus imports over GDP ratio averaged some 88 percent in 2000. For Poland a respective figure was around 50 percent². As already mentioned, both countries experienced a healthy growth of exports, which in 2000 exceeded 15 percent in Poland and 26 percent in Lithuania (in USD terms). Worth noting is that this was achieved in the environment of the zloty and the litas strong real appreciation against the euro. As indicated by IMF (2000), Lithuania’s strong export performance suggests the significantly faster productivity growth than in trading partner countries or the Balassa-Samuelson effect. Moreover, Lithuania’s external competitiveness has been supported by factors such as terms of trade gains, declining prices of intermediate products, keeping wage bill in check, product quality upgrade, better marketing as well as improved business environment in general and increased flexibility in the labor market thanks to structural reforms undertaken by the government.

European Union remains by far the most important trade partner for Poland and Lithuania. In 2000, it accounted for 70 percent of Polish exports and 48 percent of Lithuanian exports. The respective figures for imports were 61 percent and 43 percent. Former Soviet Union (FSU) countries (including Baltic States) accounted for 9.3 percent of Polish exports and 11.7 percent of imports. The CIS countries (i.e. FSU countries excluding Baltic States) accounted for 16.3 percent of Lithuanian exports and 31.7 percent of imports. This last figure resulted from increased imports from Russia, which its share in total Lithuanian imports to 27.4 percent. This was a direct consequence of the large increase in the prices of oil and oil product that dominate Lithuanian imports from Russia.

According to Lithuanian statistics Poland was the third biggest import market (4.9 percent share) and the fifth biggest export market (5.5 percent share) for Lithuania in 2000. Russia and Germany recorded larger exports and imports with Lithuania, and on the exports side Latvia and the UK also outpaced Poland. Worth noting is high growth of Lithuanian exports to Poland last year. Polish customs statistics placed Lithuania as the 15th export market (1.8 percent share) and 26th import market (0.6 percent share). It should be stressed that there are very substantial differences in recording the bilateral trade flows in countries’ statistics. The table below gives the comparable data for 1999 and 2000. The differences largely result from different methods of classifying the origin country in trade flows (final destination vs. direct destination).

Table 1. Comparison of trade statistics

² Unless stated otherwise, customs statistics data are used for both Poland and Lithuania.

		1999	2000
Polish exports to Lithuania	Polish statistics	433.6	561.7
	Lithuanian statistics	273.7	269.1
Polish imports from Lithuania	Polish statistics	201.8	278
	Lithuanian statistics	136.4	208.1

Source: Polish Ministry of Economy and Lithuanian Department of Statistics.

There is a visible asymmetry in the commodity structure of the bilateral trade. Polish exports to Lithuania cover broad range of commodity groups, with the highest shares recorded in chemical industry (21 percent in 2000), machinery, mechanical appliances and electrical equipment (14.8 percent), plastic and plastic products (11.8 percent), pulp and paper (11.3 percent), and food and agricultural products (10.9 percent). On the other hand, mineral products (mostly fuels) dominated Lithuanian exports to Poland in 2000 with a share of 62.8 percent (RP Embassy, 2001).

Other aspects of cooperation³

The geography determines that Poland remains an important transit country for Lithuanian trade flows. Bilateral agreements regulate road transport. The future developments in this sphere will be influenced by the progress in projects aiming at the modernization of existing road infrastructure (especially in Poland). The recent intensification of contacts devoted to this group of problems of cooperation allows for a more optimistic outlook. The rail transportation is also likely to expand. Last year saw the opening of direct rail link from Warsaw to Vilnius (not passing through Belarus).

Another sphere having large potential for beneficial cooperation in the future is the energy sector. For some time now there have been discussion concerning the linking of countries' electricity grids. Also, Poland will participate in the costs of the decommissioning of the Ignalina nuclear power plant (even after decommissioning Lithuania will likely remain self-sufficient in terms of electricity production). There are also some prospects for cooperation of Polish and Lithuanian oil companies.

Poland does not belong to the group of the biggest home country for foreign direct investment in Lithuania. However, Poland's share in inward FDI stock has been on the rise reaching 2.2 percent in 2000⁴. It placed Poland as the 11th biggest foreign investors in Lithuania. This result is quite remarkable given the generally low level of outward FDI originating from Poland. It confirms a good climate for foreign investment in Lithuania and increasing interest among Polish companies in establishing a firmer presence in that market.

Instead of conclusions – agenda for the future

³ This part draws from RP Embassy (2001).

⁴ According to Lithuanian Department of Statistics data.

The experience of the last decade should be viewed as an indication of the high potential for intensification of the economic cooperation between Poland and Lithuania. One could note several factors that are likely to have the biggest impact on shaping the relations. First, both countries will likely become members of the European Union in the near future (most probably in 2004-2005). The impact of that event can hardly be overestimated and will be transmitted through several channels. It will diminish existing formal barriers for transfer of people, goods and capital. Also, it will have a major impact on the institutional reforms in both countries. While it is hard to prove this in a formal manner, the institutional factors likely remain important obstacles to the development of economic cooperation. It should be stressed that positive outcomes of changes in this sphere can be sizeable much earlier than the formal membership.

Second, solid growth of both economies underpinned by responsible macroeconomic policies will naturally lead to the expansion of trade and investment activities in both directions. The intensity of this process will be determined by several factors, many of which lie in the responsibility of decision making circles at different levels (e.g. development of transport infrastructure, access to information, etc.).

Third, geographical proximity combined with important elements of common history, etc. provide a valuable basis for the intensification of the movements of individuals, the growth of tourism, etc. These contacts, being very important for many other reasons, would also positively influence business relations. The more we learn about ourselves, the better will be the future of our cooperation.

Poland and Lithuania – selected macroeconomic indicators

		1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
GDP growth	Poland	-7,0	2,0	4,3	5,2	6,8	5,9	6,8	4,8	4,1	4,1	4?	4,5
	Lithuania	-5,7	-21,3	-16,2	-9,8	3,3	4,7	7,3	5,1	-4,2	2,7	3,2?	3,8
GDP per capita, USD	Poland	1995	2196	2229	2553	3288	3719	3721	4090	4008	4153	4577	4979
	Lithuania	6299	513	719	1128	1603	2100	2550	2867	2868	3012	3199	3428
CPI inflation	Poland	70,3	43	35,3	32,2	27,88	19,9	14,9	11,8	7,3	10,1	7	5
	Lithuania	224,7	1021,0	410,4	72,1	39,5	24,7	8,8	5,1	0,8	1,0	1,3	2,6

Notes: The 2001 and 2002 data are forecasts.

Presented inflation data are period averages.

GDP per capita is in current prices using market exchange rates.

? and ? indicate directions of likely forecast revisions (derived from various sources).

IMF WEO data as presented in this table incorporate IMF staff estimates and may differ from official data provided by countries' statistical agencies.

Sources: GDP and inflation data are taken from IMF, WEO database (May 2001)

Lithuania, Poland, Transatlantic Dimension

In the late eighties and the early nineties the world of Yalta, a hierarchic world of ideological battle ceased to exist. A new world order arose in which states' activities are subordinated not to interests of the block but to national interests. Security is no longer based on a fragile balance of fear and the risk of outbreak of a pan-European or global armed conflict has diminished. However, new threats have also appeared.

Those changes demanded that states redefine their place in the international system. The independent Republic of Lithuania and fully sovereign Republic of Poland, as democratic countries building a market economy, also had to find their ways to maximize their interests, first of all those related to security. After the disintegration of the Eastern Block, both countries found themselves in a security vacuum. Although the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe/Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe was valued as a “political guardian” of compliance with the CFE agreement¹ and of successive generations of CSBMs², it was soon to be found out that it would not be the main combined Euro-Atlantic institution to ensure the sense of security of survival, possession and unrestrained development. The concept of unilateral or multilateral guarantees was also rejected. Instead states began to see the opportunity for full protection of their interests in the membership in the organization that turned out to be victorious in the cold-war confrontation, and now, slowly but consistently, was adapting to new challenges – NATO. Pursuant to the decision taken during the NATO summit meeting held in Rome in November 1991, the North Atlantic Cooperation Council was established (NACC), a structure thanks to which the borders of the transatlantic security zone began to move eastward. Lithuania and Poland became members of NACC, participated in the Partnership for Peace (PfP) program, in the reinforced PfP and in the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council. It is worth mentioning at this point that Lithuania was the second country to sign the framework program of PfP; Poland did the same a day later, on 2 February 1994, as the third country. However, the main objective of both states was NATO membership. Poland achieved the objective on 12 March 1999. The Republic of Lithuania is among the states that have been

¹ Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe signed in Paris on 19 November 1990, entered into force on 9 November 1992, <http://www.osce.org/docs/english/1990-1999/cfe/cfetreat.htm>.

participating in the Membership Action Plan and have a chance of receiving an invitation to accession during the North Atlantic Council meeting, which is to be held in Prague next year at the level of presidents and prime ministers.

The ability to fulfill tasks arising from the collective security commitment and to undertake new NATO missions requires interoperability which, in turn, implies the need to adapt the infrastructure and purchase equipment. This demands substantial expenditures, but in the era of post-cold-war defense budget cuts and high unemployment, expenditures for modern armaments are not always regarded as a priority. It must be stressed that this is an all-European dilemma. Owing to the adoption of relevant legislation over the last few years, Poland and Lithuania seem to successfully overcome this difficulty and at the same time to maintain wide public support for NATO membership.

Both Lithuania and Poland attach great importance to their relations with the United States – the only world superpower of today – and also, owing to the contribution it makes, the leader of NATO. Unlike some European allies who – being anxious how the expansion of NATO could influence Russia – treated its enlargement with reserve, the American Administration energetically and effectively opted for admission of Central European states since mid-nineties. Also today, preparing NATO for the next stage of the enlargement, the United States cooperates with the countries aspiring to membership, the example of which may be the implementation of the provisions of the Charter of Partnership signed in January 1998 between the USA, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia³.

Intensive Cooperation with the United States does not mean, however, that Poland and Lithuania lack common interests with the European states. Both countries support the development of the European Security and Defense Identity (ESDI) – a path towards real transatlantic partnership. At the end of the last decade, the mainstream of the development of ESDI shifted from NATO and the Western European Union to the European Union, taking the form of the Common European Security and Defense Policy (CESDP). The United States looked at the decisions of the European Council in Cologne, Helsinki, Santa Maria da Feira and Nice with some anxiety. It was feared that the creation of European contingency forces, backed by strategic transport and the expansion of the satellite intelligence potential, would

² Confidence and Security Building Measures.

³ Charter of Partnership Among the United States of America and the Republic of Estonia, Republic of Latvia, and Republic of Lithuania, <http://www.bbn.gov.pl/pl/nato/balty.html>.

absorb the resources of the European allies - EU members and that it could adversely influence their involvement in adapting NATO to the new circumstances. At the same time, the possibility of dissolution of the Western European Union and the taking over of most of its functions (except for collective defense) by the EU caused some anxiety among countries having the status of associate members in the WEU (like Poland) or associate partners (like Lithuania; Poland was an associate partner in the years 1994 – 1999). Facing the threat of finding themselves beyond the mainstream of ESDI development, those countries began to demand to be given an opportunity to participate in the development of the CESDP, even before their accession to the EU. It should be added that a great majority of those states were invited to accession negotiations with the EU either – like Poland – at the Luxembourg meeting of the European Council in December 1997 or – like Lithuania – two years later in Helsinki. Certain EU countries believed some candidate countries have too close ties with the United States and they feared the role those countries could play in future autonomous European structures of security. Hence, they looked at the Cooperation proposal with reserve, especially in the face of tensions created by the United States' plans to build its National Missile Defense system. In this context, the situation of the countries negotiating EU accession and at the same time aspiring to or already having obtained membership in NATO, is particularly sensitive. On the one hand, NATO with its integrated military structure and half a century of experience is the only institution in the Euro-Atlantic zone to offer hard guarantees of security, backed by the participation of today's only global superpower. Poland perceives NATO as the main forum for the realization of its national security strategy. Lithuania aspires to membership in NATO for similar reasons. That is why the weakening of NATO's position through animosities among its members on both sides of the Atlantic would be, from the point of view of both countries, particularly unfavorable, the more so that it could influence their aspirations to EU membership.

EU membership is a matter of great importance both for the Republic of Lithuania and the Republic of Poland, also for security reasons. One of the reasons, albeit not the most important one, is the development of the CESDP as mentioned above. While the EU could become one of the most important institutions organizing peace operations, it is a matter of the future and one that will require huge investment.

Equally important in terms of security seems to be the EU Cooperation in justice and home affairs. Owing to this kind of Cooperation it is possible to combat

organized crime, which appears to be the fastest-growing threat of the beginning of the 21st century. It is typically connected with drug dealing, money laundering, people trafficking (including immigrant smuggling), arms trafficking, and dealing in fissile materials. Especially those last two criminal practices have been developing on the border of the instability zone. Both Poland and Lithuania lie on the border of Central Europe and Eastern Europe, in the vicinity of that zone.

Yet this is not the main reason, either. The key problem is the threat of marginalization. In the days of globalization and information revolution, remaining outside the developed center of the system, which is continuously increasing its advantage, may only mean the widening of the civilization gap. For the states cleaning up the aftermath of over half a century's Soviet dominance, European integration is a chance to get out of the peripheries.

The accession to the EU also means an opportunity for a change in the relations with Russia. Neither the Republic of Lithuania nor the Republic of Poland has any disputable issues in their relations with the Russian Federation; those relations are governed by international law. The states cooperate with each other on the forum of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the institutions created for that purpose by NATO. It is not an easy neighborhood, however, partly for psychological reasons – smaller states usually watch with some anxiety their bigger neighbors where imperial sentiments are still alive. To this we could add historical burdens and the fact that neither Poland nor Lithuania are treated by Russia as partners. As members of integration group which, by developing the Common Foreign and Security Policy, displays growing ambitions to also become a significant political center, they will be able to co-create the EU policy towards the Russian Federation. It should be noted that they would also become co-creators of the mainstream of transatlantic relations within the framework of the EU – USA dialogue.

Analyzing the place of Lithuania and Poland in the transatlantic zone of security, one should not disregard the issue of their location in the Baltic Sea subregion. There are two issues connected with such location: the first one is that of common identity, perceiving the Baltic Sea as *Mare Nostrum* of a uniting Europe, but there is also a problem of threats which the states of the region must face. There are environmental threats, threats to public safety (drug addiction, spreading of infectious diseases) as well as problems connected with respecting the rights of ethnic minorities, problems related to the transformation of the political system

(including the implementation of principles of the rule of law), or with organized crime. The subregion is also an example of Cooperation between many states and institutions of the Euro-Atlantic zone. Apart from bilateral Cooperation, Lithuania, Poland and Russia cooperate here with Estonia, Iceland, Latvia, Norway and the EU countries within the framework of the Northern Dimension in the external and cross-border policies of the EU. Environmental protection, nuclear safety, fighting organized crime and Kaliningrad were recognized as priorities of the Northern Dimension initiative⁴. Its implementation is supported by institutions including the Council of the Baltic Sea States, the Barents Euro-Arctic Council and the Arctic Council, and owing to the USA's observer status in the first two structures and its Cooperation and membership in the third, the venture assumes a transatlantic dimension. In the nineties, the United States showed an unprecedented interest in the presence on the Baltic, as testified by the Northern European Initiative started by the Clinton administration and the Charter of Partnership mentioned above.

In the nineties, because of the similarity of the places Poland and Lithuania occupied in the newly formed transatlantic zone, both countries developed similar interests in the sphere of security. Those interests are not identical, as the countries are not identical. Equal in the light of international law, equal in mutual partner relationships, but still different – in terms of the size of the territory, economic, demographic and military potential, and – in spite of over two hundred years of common statehood – in terms of historic experience. Nevertheless, both states seem to be aware of the fact that they have convergent interests and that with similar backgrounds they share the same goal, that is security. This awareness alone was enough to persuade Lithuania and Poland to declare strategic partnership. Will it be enough to fully overcome historic prejudice and fill the declaration with substance towards real partnership?

⁴ Presidency Conclusions: Santa Maria da Feira European Council 19 and 20 June 2000, <http://ue.eu.int/pesid/conclusions.htm>.

Vladas Sirutavičius

Lithuanian-Polish Strategic Partnership: Genesis and Prospects

The intention to discuss the content and development of the Lithuanian-Polish inter-state relations has been sparked off, at least formally, not only by the date of 5 September (on this date ten years ago, as we know, the two countries restored their diplomatic relations), but likewise by another date of not lesser importance – the middle of 2002, when it is planned to announce at the NATO Summit the second round of the Alliance's expansion. We believe that these two dates could also serve as a good background in assessing the present state of the relationship of these two states which is usually defined as "strategic partnership". (As we know, the first to use this term was the Lithuanian Minister for Foreign Affairs Algirdas Saudargas, and later – in the autumn of the same 1997 – the Polish Minister for Foreign Affairs Geremek applied the same phrase to define the Polish-Lithuanian relations.)

If a succinct definition of the meaning of these two words (which, undoubtedly, sound somehow unusual for most ordinary Lithuanians and Poles) could be found, it would be possible to state that they express inter-state relationship at several levels: firstly, very good and friendly relations at the top political level, which usually are institutionalized in one or another form; secondly, intensive cooperation in the spheres of the highest strategic importance for both countries, first of all, in the political-military (and security) area; and finally, the third level, where good and friendly political relations are "transferred" to a lower – "public" level, which means dynamic and mutually beneficial economic relations, intensive cultural exchange, cooperation at the level of various NGO's as well as individuals. Such a definition of "strategic partnership" relationship, however formal it may be, shows that the development of this relation, and its intensity (at the various levels mentioned above), neither is nor can be uniform, that it depends (in the broadest sense) on the countries' resources and, it might indeed be more important to emphasize – on the influence of the international environment. In this article, there will be no contemplation on the achievements of the partnership (there has been written a lot on this subject by the politicians of both countries), we will rather analyze two other problems: first, what factors have influenced the formation of the strategic partnership relation, and, second, what are the challenges to threaten this relationship.

It is obvious that since 1997, the Lithuanian-Polish relationship has acquired a new, particular dynamics, and political scientists as well as politicians find more than a few facts to confirm this¹. True, it would also be necessary to note here that the second “upsurge” in the bilateral relations (the first, certainly, ought to be considered the Treaty on Friendly Relations and Good Neighborly Cooperation, signed in April 1994) did not appear in an empty place. In the eve of the above-mentioned period, there occurred significant changes in the Polish-Lithuanian relationship. One of the most important events was the State Border Treaty and the Joint Declaration on the Consolidation of Bilateral Relations, signed in the spring of 1996 during the visit of the Polish President to Lithuania. There likewise were various joint statements made by the Heads of both countries, which also testified about the beginning of a new stage in the bilateral relationship. Thus, for example, in the autumn of 1996, the Presidents of Poland and Lithuania issued a statement which demonstrated an attitude of great meaningfulness for the security of both countries: that without a secure Poland there cannot be a secure Lithuania, likewise without a secure Lithuania there cannot be a secure Poland.

A significant and new feature of the already strategic partnership was the literal “institutional building of relations”. In other words, there started a vigorous and qualitatively new institutionalization of bilateral relations, which also acquired new forms of cooperation. Without going into much detail, I would like to mention that in the year of 1997, the Presidential Consultative Committee was established, the legislative powers set up the Lithuanian and Polish Parliamentary Assembly, while the executive ones – the Government Cooperation Council. The parties started to increasingly coordinate their actions in respect to various regional initiatives. The cooperation developed in other important spheres as well: firstly, in the military and energy areas, likewise in the regional and trans-border cooperation, at the level of local administrations and many others.

It is also important to mention that the strategic partnership gained the momentum namely at the time when the prospects for Poland to become a part of the transatlantic structures were becoming increasingly evident, while it was also more and more obvious that Lithuania will not be included into the first round of NATO’s

¹ Antanas Valionis, Evaldas Ignatavičius, Izolda Bričkoviėnė, “From Solidarity to Partnership: Lithuanian - Polish Relations 1988 – 1998,” *Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review*, 1998, 2.

expansion. Thus the anxiety that, with Poland getting increasingly integrated into the transatlantic Western structures, and with the prospects for its becoming a NATO member turning more definite, the relations with Lithuania “might again deteriorate”, turned to have been misplaced.² Furthermore, the “strategic partnership relation” managed to escape any deeper crisis even at the time when in 1999 Poland became a member of the Alliance, while Lithuania was left outside the “closed door” of NATO. (Just on the contrary, co-operation in the military sphere as well acquired a new momentum, which is exemplified by the formation and development of a joint military battalion LITPOLBAT and, especially, by the bilateral Treaty on Defense Cooperation, signed in February 2001.)

The more pessimistic scenarios failed to come true, we believe, due to several reasons. From the point of view of Lithuania, the Polish “shoulder”, or rather speaking less metaphorically but more geopolitically, the territorial contact with Poland (now a NATO member) acquired exceptional importance and started to be viewed as geostrategically significant (i.e. providing a counterbalance to Russia). While from the point of view of Poland (again as a NATO member), the enhancement and invigoration of strategic relations with Lithuania is also considered a matter of significance, as Lithuania, due to its relative political and economic stability and democratic development, forms an important geopolitical link connecting the Eastern Baltic region with the Central Eastern Europe (namely with Belarus and Ukraine), and thus occupies a strategically important position in the shaping of Poland’s eastern policy, which aims at becoming in the future an important factor in the formation of the common NATO’s (as well as the EU’s) eastern policy. Finally, it is also impossible to disregard the fact that the “elevation” of the Lithuanian-Polish cooperation to a higher, strategic partnership level contributes to the generation of security and stability in the Central and Eastern Europe as a whole, thus turning into a certain positive accomplishment, a kind of a token of the cooperation of these countries with their partners in the West.

On the other hand, it is not uncommon among observers to start wondering about the content of the partnership and its effectiveness. Without embarking here on an extensive discussion of the issues related to this problem, we are, nevertheless,

² Raimundas Lopata, Vytautas Žalys, “Lietuvos geopolitinis kodas [Lithuanian Geopolitical Code]”, *Politologija*, 1995, 6.

inclined to note that, in discussing the effectiveness of the strategic relationship and its prospects, the existing asymmetry between the countries could not be ignored. Even though the geopolitical orientation of the partners coincides, there nevertheless still exist considerable differences between them, which might affect the content of the cooperation. There are great differences in the cultural-civilisational, political and, eventually, in the economic potentials of Poland and Lithuania. Even of greater importance still can be the different geopolitical gravitation (i.e. the total of historically and objectively formed political, social and cultural prerequisites which influence the natural development of a state). Where the pro-western gravitation of Poland does not raise any major doubts, Lithuania is rather inclined to perform the function of a neutralizing buffer (between Poland and Russia). Suspiciousness or hostility towards the West could be regarded as one of the expressions of the above (it is best illustrated by the attitude towards foreign investments).

Nevertheless, let us return to the issue of the genesis of strategic partnership. From the historic standpoint, and resorting to the geopolitical terminology, it is possible to state that the aspiration for “strategic partnership” between the countries was determined by their *contest for power*. In other words, a state, in its strive to increase (maximize) its own power and to limit (minimize) that of its rival, was forced to search for *strategic partners*. A concrete expression of such kind of endeavor was the formation of political-military alliances aimed at facilitating the implementation of the above-mentioned effort (or a political strategy). Namely such conception, typical to the realistic interpretation of international relations, prevailed in the Europe of the period between the wars.

It is evident that the “strategic partnership” between Lithuania and Poland took shape under the influence of different ideas and in a completely different context of international relations, which certainly exerted an objective influence on the particular content of the mutual relations between the parties. In a more schematic expression, and on the most general sense, the formation of the new context was affected by the end of the bipolar world order (expressed in the collapse of the soviet political system and, finally, the disintegration of the Soviet Union itself) and the eastward expansion of the Western democratic institutes. In this context, the geopolitical orientation of both Poland and Lithuania coincided: they linked their security with their aim of joining the Euro-Atlantic and European structures. This

aspiration, or geopolitical orientation, “placed” certain “restrictions” on the candidate countries, one of the more important of which became “good relations with the neighbors”, which implied unconditional acceptance of the existing frontiers and strict compliance with the democratic standards (first of all in relation to national minorities). (Besides, the importance of the “outside factor” to the Lithuanian-Polish relations, especially to the process of “reconciliation”, was emphasized by more than a few political scientists. At the same time, authors draw attention to the still persisting atmosphere of distrust in both societies, which obviously has been mostly affected by the historically formed differences in the social-cultural development of both countries³.)

It is therefore possible to maintain that the future development of the Lithuanian and Polish relations will also depend upon the interrelation of both the outside (changes in the international environment) and inside (social, political and economic dynamics of the states and societies) factors. As both elements mentioned above are intricate enough, with equally complicated being also their interrelation, thus it is hardly possible to present their comprehensive analysis within the boundaries of one article. I, therefore, would phrase my question in the following way: what are the main challenges to the strategic partnership of Lithuania and Poland? (Probably the most serious mistake would be to get lulled by the prospects of the “real strategic partnership”, without trying to realize the potential threats to this relationship.)

I will start from the impact of the outside factors or, in other words, from the question of how the Lithuanian-Polish strategic partnership can potentially be affected by the dynamics of the eastward expansion of the Western democratic institutions and the possible developments thereof. It is highly unlikely that, even in the eventuality of the most pessimistic scenario coming true, i.e. that Lithuania is not included into the second round of NATO expansion either, it could in any way directly affect (in the short term) the content of the strategic partnership and cause any significant disturbance in the cooperation of both countries. (It would be far more detrimental if the US decided to reduce its influence and commitments in Europe. This could unleash the contest for power with the resultant direct threat to the stability of the

³ Raimundas Lopata, “Rozwoj stosunkow Polsko - Litewskich po 1990 roku [Development of Lithuanian-Polish Relations since 1990],” *Pozostawione historii. Litwini o Posce i Polakach* (ed. by

Central and Eastern Europe. Nevertheless, the European visit of President Bush has demonstrated that Washington, at least rhetorically, is trying to coordinate the interests of its national security (NMDI) with the commitments to take an active part in the European processes, and first of all, in NATO expansion.) It would, however, be wrong to disregard a possibility (in a long term) that slackened processes of Euro-Atlantic and European expansion might cause instability, and first of all it could be said about Lithuania. This would find its expression within the society in the form of “disappointment with the West”, anti-Western attitudes, increase of nationalism, while the political elite, in response to the crisis, might attempt to change the geopolitical orientation (e.g. by turning towards neutrality), which might already directly challenge the strategic partnership.

Another eventual contradiction, which could affect the strategic partnership, is inherent, first of all, in Poland’s eastern policy and, secondly, is related to the situation of the Polish community and its treatment in Lithuania. In the newly adopted (in January 2000) Poland’s Foreign Policy Strategy, Warsaw is balancing between two attitudes: to influence the democratization process of its nearest neighbors and their social-economic development. At the same time, it is noted in the Strategy that the national minorities ought to be viewed as an “important link of good neighborhood”. Thus Poland, for the purpose of the development of cooperation, is trying not to escalate any disagreement with Lithuania about the Polish national minority. Nevertheless, it is necessary to note that there exists another attitude: to promote the Polish issue in Lithuania disregarding any possible consequences either for Lithuania’s internal situation or for bilateral relations. It could, therefore, be possible to presume that, in the eventuality of Lithuania’s Western integration losing momentum, this second tendency in the policy of Poland might intensify. (From the point of view of Poland, Lithuanian integration into the western structures ought to facilitate the democratic resolution of the Polish national minority issue. This is confirmed by the address of Lithuania’s Poles [in March 2000] to the international community with an urge to support the aspiration of Lithuania to become a member of NATO.) In Lithuania any promotion of the issue of national minorities in such a context would most likely be interpreted as a threat to its statehood, which, in its turn, would again complicate the strategic partnership relation.

Katarzyna Korzeniewska, Vladas Sirutavičius), Krakow: Znak, 1999, p. 139.

Translated by Violeta Stankūnienė