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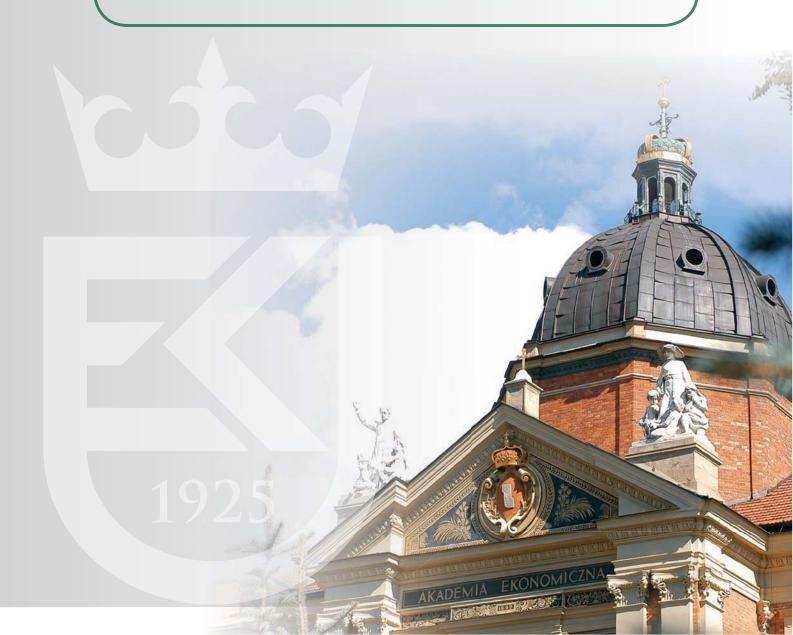
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The Importance of Cultural Diversity for the Processes of Social Life

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The Importance of Cultural Diversity for the Processes of Social Life

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Abstract

The paper is focused on the problems stemming from cultural diversity in contemporary post socialist Poland, however these questions are more general since the world in which we live is becoming smaller, more tightly connected with economic, political and social ties. IN such a situation , one might say that dialogue is one of the most important problems of our contemporaneity. This issues have become subject of discussion not only in scientific reflection but also in public debate. For Poland nowadays, this debate is crucial because Poles have to cope not only with the suddenly acknowledged cultural and religious diversity within Polish society, but also to shape anew the relations with new and old neighbors. The question is whether we are equipped well enough to deal with the new challenges? Reviewing the data about the attitudes towards "the others" we must conclude that here, in Poland, we need a higher degree of tolerance and understanding than ever before. These challenges for the socialization processes are to be met in order to ensure a "good quality" of international relations on micro-, middle- and macro level of social life.

Key words: cultural diversity, social life, Polish-American relations

JEL classification: Z1

The Importance of Cultural Diversity for the Processes of Social Life

Anna Karwińska

1. Introduction

Cultural diversity is common at all integration levels of social life, from the micro to macro scale. Today we can talk about the accumulation of cultural diversification that is connected with many processes of social change. The world in which we live is becoming smaller, more tightly connected with economic, political and social ties. It becomes easier to move from place to place, due to modern means of transport, and "opening" of the frontiers, it becomes easier to contact continuously and immediately due to electronic media. Phones, especially mobile phones, faxes, Internet, etc. make us citizens of the "virtual global village" in which there are an infinite number of possible contacts and interaction between people who do not share the same physical space. This gives the sense (often illusory) of universal access, participation in continuous spectacle on a global scale. But in reality, in this outwardly "for all" social space there are various divisions arising from the diversity and plurality of cultures, ways of life, the existence of closed worlds, available only for the chosen ones. Experiencing stigmatizing foreignness and non-acceptance relates to both individuals and entire social communities. At the same time, in the ideological sphere, religious and cultural diversity is seen as a resource, as a social asset that enables development through the use of diversity in experiences and points of view. Unfortunately, this "asset" can be a source of conflicts and social problems, since awareness and experiencing this diversity does not have to mean the ability to function in the conditions of multiculturalism.

One might say that in such situation dialogue is one of the most important problems of our contemporaneity. This issues have become subject of discussion not only in scientific reflection but also in public debate. At the beginning of the '90 the very important article of S. P. Huntngton "The clash of civilization?" has appeared. It was very significant in seeking for the answers regarding the future of the world, it was widely commented in the next few years. As the author has stated in the foreword of his next book dedicated to this issue: "this

article has aroused people from all cultural circles". Huntington argues that main danger in global politics is the conflict between civilization accepting different assumptions concerning religion, norms, the sphere of god ant truth. (Huntington, 1997,s.6). So this is about the answers on the essential questions for each culture. It is also important to point out the considerations of another author, who defines the fundamental conflicts of the modern world. They have their source in the clash of dogmatic fundamentalism referring to the "tribal" particularism present in diverse societies and cultural circles on one hand and the commercial civilization emerging from globalization and expanding mass culture on the other. This processes are diminishing the meaning of such categories as national matter or national identity (Barber,2000). Especially dramatic evidence of reality of this conflict were the events in the heart of New York, terroristic attack at the World Trade Center Towers, that has changed appreciably our perception of the world and sense of security.

During the recent decades some phenomenon that shape the world now and in the nearest future are increasing. They are important for strengthening and extending the socio – cultural diversity in almost all regions of the world. Being metaphorical one might say that the dominant type of social environment becomes a borderland. As a result of various processes social and cultural order is being constantly disturbed, and typical for the the border flow, mixing of various components is becoming a reality lived by the people , regions, cities and other local systems.

2. Cultural diversity as a resource for development.

Diversity can be viewed as a condition for the survival of the system in the world of nature, as in the world created by humans. However, social attitudes towards diversity of cultures or religions are not necessarily clearly positive. At the dawn of *homo sapiens* difference was seen as a threat. The ability to distinguish "us" from strangers was an important element of the survival strategies of the groups, so each of them has developed a clear and explicit ways to confirm the identity of its members. This has led often to a specific marking "foreign" as enemies, and virtually eliminated any possibility of taking joint action. However, along with the socio - economic development, attitudes associated with a desire to cooperate, rather than sustaining the conflict became necessary, and the term "we" had to be extended in the circumstances that require building alliances, conducting trade.

Nowadays the attitude of diversity acceptance has become in many cultures the element of so called political correctness, that can be described as set of rules obligating to respect the otherness and even its exploration that leads to its acceptance. Of course, this cultural demand is not Universal: in many circles, especially the more traditional, conservative, or more closed, the perception of diversity as a threat is often widespread and accepted.

Therefore it is important to ask the question about the implication of diversity for the developmental processes in society at different levels of social life from micro to macro scale. Cultural diversity is an important factor attracting the intellectual capital. Florida's thesis that the creative class appears where there are "three T ': technology, talent and tolerance (Florida, 2002: 33) is worth attention in the context of the meaning of the development of local capital, primarily because of the third "T"- tolerance[1]. Places which are characterized by openness and diversity, have a chance for significant economic development because they can attract and retain people with high creativity potential (Florida, 2004:39). In light of the research results, it may be indicated that members of the creative class choose a place to live and work due to the characteristics of communities and, in particular the social, religious and cultural heterogeneity, attitude of openness to foreignness, otherness and tolerance in broad sense. Community composed of coexisting groups differ from each other, conflicting, confronting, but accepting the possibility of being "different" (Florida, 2003)

As far as the meaning of cultural diversity for the formation of social capital is concerned, the significance of diversity of socio-cultural environment for the possibility to build public trust and break barriers should be especially worth considering. Integration of local environment was usually done on the basis of existing common values. Difference of opinion, values, behavior was seen as an impending factor, although it was possible to reach a compromise in various situations. What is more, attention was paid to the fact that diverse groups and individuals within a social entity are dependent on one another in the course of public life.

Bonds in local societies were traditionally formed on the basis of „face to face" relations and in conditions of certain limited experience of the directly experienced reality. Behavior, values, opinions different from the set and accepted „norm" were clearly visible

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[1] It is worth to mention that Florida has considered the tolerance as the most crucial in his formula.

and hard to take. Nowadays, the vast majority of people functions in a few realities at the same time, which include the reality created and widespread by media. It imposes an undeniable openness to other, diverse opinions and beliefs. This specific relativisation of own views originates from the feeling of uncertainty, lack of justification for „the only right" of the things we know and think about in the conditions of constant confrontation.

It should be mentioned that the existence of many organizations and associations in a multicultural environment is essential, especially in the conditions of a civil society. It creates many more possibilities to create synergy in conditions of cooperation. In consequence, it produces higher efficiency. Although attitudes of closing and marginalization, creating rules to separate other people are present. It is important which tendency is the dominant one.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that the socialization process in a diverse environment allows experiencing difference in a safe form. Unfamiliarity is habituated to some extent, „local aliens" are partially „kindred", they are neighbors, play given social roles within a community. They are ingrained, which means they are different than „other foreign aliens" and a general trust can be created more easily. One of the elements of this process is gaining the ability to cooperate, getting used to and flexible towards behavior and opinions, and consequently acquiring the competence to make „bridges and gates" instead of „walls" in relations with others.

Various fields of culture are enriched by the flow of new information, values, evaluation, patterns, that should be addressed to, modified or confirm the previous choices. Additionally, new ideas or material objects result in the necessity to make them familiar, place in the existing systems or justify rejection of them.

Thanks to intercultural contacts individuals and communities learn mutual respect for one another's arguments, tolerance and openness. The range of individual and collective wisdom is widened, together with the knowledge of foreign languages. We know more about history, geography, customs; we can place views and opinions of „aliens" in a broader context and understand them better in this way. The knowledge about us gains, too because of a look „from a different angle".

Diversity, by creating challenges, should also incline to make new, adequate cultural answers in a negotiating tone, taking into consideration the needs and ambitions of various parties. Weaker, lacking leaders, less numerous cultural groups or those of bad reputation can

be threatened by the process of cultural invasion and, as a result, symptoms of deculturation and withering of certain elements.

The openness in society is the only way to develop the dialogue between culture and to solve the problems of cultural differences, intolerance and even hostility. But it is a long way from exclusion to understanding and openness and the time of changes and of transition are always difficult for many groups and individuals . Too many changes, in politics, economics , culture, in every sphere of social life - this is a challenge to social stability and this is a source for feelings of uncertainty. In order to know how to deal with these burdens, the people and institutions responsible for socialization should be aware of the state of the social consciousness, which groups are perceived as strange or unacceptable by other groups and why.

3. Intercultural relations in Poland at the beginning of the 21st century

In today's Poland there are 1,5 million citizens belonging to various minority groups (including among others: Germans, Ukrainians, Byelorussians, Slovaks, Jews, and Gypsies). This is surprising for many members of Polish society because they still believe that Poland is as homogeneous and free from any kind of ethnic problems as it was once presented in official socialist ideology. It is thus worth mentioning that in post-war Poland there were at least two generations growing up without actual experience of ethnic or religious confrontation and, consequently without the need for developing an „understanding attitude" or without seeking adequate information about the „other". During the period of socialist regime in Poland there was no debate on tolerance; the terms „multiculturalism" or „a dialogue of culture" have no social significance, and only a few have had a real chance to practice in this dialogue. The openness and democratization of the Polish society have enabled minority groups to express their needs and expectations for partnership, respect and dialogue.

But nowadays, Poles have to cope not only with the suddenly acknowledged cultural and religious diversity within Polish society. After many years of official "friendship" and "integration" within Soviet Bloc countries, Poland, Russia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Ukraine and other post socialist societies are seeking a new paradigm of co-existence and co-operation. These and other developments require adequate attention. The question is whether we are equipped well enough to deal with the new challenges? New expectations of the socialization

processes emerged due to the challenges Poland has been facing since it joined the European Union, particularly the need to "catch up" with the top ten countries not only in the area of economy, but also in social and cultural spheres. The top ten countries have much better educated people, and are more advanced towards the information age society, as well as to the society based on knowledge. To compete successfully with those countries we need an appropriate education strategy. We need new social and cultural elites that will be able to (due to their educational background and firm roots not only in their native culture, but also European and world traditions) provide "spiritual guidance" in this complex, multi-cultural world, promote tolerance and understanding, and appreciate the potential of variety.

Being open to variety is the only way a society should follow in order to foster a multi-cultural dialogue, to solve the problems imposed by multicultural environments, the lack of tolerance or plain hostility. However, there is a long way from exclusion to understanding and openness, and the time of changes, particularly the radical ones, is always difficult for communities and individuals alike. Too many changes in the realm of politics, economy, culture, and any other walk of social life, take place in a relatively short time breed uncertainty. To know how to deal with such problems, the people and institutions responsible for socialization must be informed about the state of social awareness. They must know which groups, and for what reason, are perceived as "strange" or "difficult to accept".

Enhancement of political socialization with new elements, the development of political self-awareness in relationships with others, coupled with at least a basic level of cultural criticism are prerequisite to success. The skills to be acquired include an aptitude for understanding and a proper assessment of inter-human relationships inside various cultural circles, as well as amongst them.

Education, started at the possibly earliest stage at school seems to be the only instrument for solving problems. It seems quite unlikely that all levels of the system of education will be soon brought to international standards. There are financial, organizational, and cultural problems (stereotypes and prejudice), hence at least higher education should provide the qualifications necessary for functioning in multicultural and multinational environment. At this point we might formulate a few expectations. Europeans should be multilingual, they should speak the languages of their neighbors (as it used to be the case in Vilnius or Lvov) or other cultural centers. We should communicate with our neighbors via

modern means of communication, but also through more traditional channels such as literature and art. We should develop the competencies necessary for the dialogue; they should be considered a prerequisite to education, especially at a higher level.

The economic and political transformation in Poland breeds the feeling of uncertainty. For many people that is a difficult time which does not facilitate understanding of other peoples' problems. Particularly, when "strangers" may be "blamed" for certain problems. Under the circumstances of social discontent and uncertainty about future prospects, stereotypes, or even accusations of "strangers" are formulated very easily. As long as foreigners are perceived as an exotic element enhancing local folklore, enriching the cultural offer (other kind of music, ethnic cuisine, architecture, etc.) they are welcome and accepted. However, the moment they become competition on the local labor market, they stop being tolerated, they become the outcasts, or even scapegoats.

Today there are newly emerging threats that jeopardize establishing satisfactory relationships with 'Strangers'. After a long period of isolationism, Poland opened its borders to all kinds of refugees. Polish people perceive refugees not only as victims of political persecution in other countries, but also as persons interested in improving their material status. Many Poles think their country is too poor to aid 'Others' .Most refugees who take jobs in Poland without work permits compete with those native Poles with lower labor market opportunities due to insufficient education, skills not in demand, or residence in high unemployment areas. All these factors contribute to the raise of xenophobic attitudes.

Education for dialogue has become an important part of education in Poland and is realized within both formal and beyond formal education. A crucial role is played by various exchange programs run practically in every educational institution on secondary level. Possibilities created by exchange and internship programs, which are implemented by most colleges and universities, are the most important in the stimulation of tolerant attitudes and interest in other cultures. In the near future, the graduates of higher education will occupy various positions in social, political, economic, cultural structures. That requires dialogue competences, ability to solve problems resulting from different value systems or norms and rules valid in particular environments. What is more, the effect of an efficient education for dialogue should be the ability to deal with stereotypes, that originate from different sources, e.g. events from the past. It is significant whether ethnic or cultural differences are ceasing to be a conclusive element in approaches to perception of other people as fellow citizens,

neighbors, co-workers, colleagues – students, etc. There is another vital issue, especially in relationships with neighbors. It regards the fact if we can overcome bad historical experiences and build relations based on rational, not emotional, grounds. In the case of Poland, gaining competence to cooperate within a multicultural world is becoming more and more significant as our society, which has been relatively homogeneous for over twenty years, is evolving into a more diversified one. It concerns not only the flow of immigrants (including refugees) to Poland or the presence of students, workers, artists descending from other cultures. Ethnic and cultural minorities, that have not been active for many years, are appearing within Polish society. It is one of the effects of democratization processes and formation of civil society. Therefore, how do we pass the exam from education for life in a homogeneous world?

As the CBOS report proves our attitudes toward the others has changed during the last years. To some nations we feel more acquainted, to other less. (table 1 and 2)

Tab. 1. Acquaintance to other nations

Nationality	The answers of respondents according to the date of researches (%)						
	1993	1998	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010
Italians	63	55	54	50	52	54	52
Americans	62	61	58	45	49	47	45
French	61	58	51	45	48	49	51
British	47	50	51	46	50	51	50
Hungarian	47	44	48	43	45	48	49
Swedish	44	43	46	42	43	45	44
Austrians	41	43	40	31	36	43	43
Czech	38	41	50	49	52	53	53
Spanish	-	-	-	47	53	52	51
Japanese	-	35	39	32	30	42	42
Greeks	-	-	44	44	47	46	47

Source: Raport CBOS „Stosunek Polaków do innych narodów". BS/12/2010, January 2010, available : www.cbos.com.pl

Tab. 2. Detestation towards other nations

Nationality	The answers of respondents according to the date of researches (%)						
	1993	1998	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010
Romanians	66	66	55	62	52	40	35
Ukrainians	65	59	48	50	42	31	29
Russians	56	55	43	61	47	41	31
Serbs	55	50	42	51	43	27	23
Gypsy	-	69	60	65	58	51	47
Germans	53	39	31	34	33	32	28
Jews	51	48	46	50	45	32	27
Bulgarians	47	41	30	32	34	20	18
Lithuanians	43	34	24	23	24	17	15
Byelorussians	41	48	36	37	39	26	23
Czech	28	22	15	14	14	14	9
Arabs	-	-	54	59	66	49	43

Source: Raport CBOS „Stosunek Polaków do innych narodów". BS/12/2010, January 2010, available at: www.cbos.com.pl

It is clear from both tables that the Polish feel more appreciation towards the nations that belong to rich, developed, stable "West". It can be said that the West of Europe is our point of reference. It is also characteristic that our attitude towards our closest neighbours is improving. Especially the antipathy towards the German and the Lithuanian is decreasing, which seems to be a breaking in some adverse experiences from the past.

In the last case the crucial thing are the changes in Polish and German, Polish and Russian and Polish and Ukrainian relations (table 3, table 4 and table 5)

Tab. 3. Polish- German Relations

Reconciliations of Poles and Germans	Respondents' answers In %%								
	VI 1998	IV 1999	V2000	V 2001	IX 2002	VII2003	X 2004	VI2005	VI 2009
Possible	68	73	76	76	80	75	62	74	78
Impossible	24	26	23	23	19	24	30	24	16
It is hard to say	6	1	1	1	1	1	8	2	6

Source: Report CBOS, BS/113 /2005, „Opinie Polaków o stosunkach z sąsiednimi krajami, Warszawa 2005, www.cbos.com.pl, Report CBOS, ,BS/97/2009 „Ocena Stosunków Polski z Rosją, Ukrainą i Niemcami, Warszawa 2009, www.cbos.com

Tab.4. Polish - Russian Relations

Reconciliations of Poles and Russians	Respondents' answers In %%						
	V 2000	IX 2002	V II 2003	IV 2005	V 2006	VI 2008	VI 2009
Possibile	73	76	76	80	75	62	74
Impossible	25	23	23	19	24	30	24
It is hard to say	2	1	1	1	1	8	2

Source: Report CBOS, ,BS/97/2009 „Ocena Stosunków Polski z Rosją, Ukrainą i Niemcami, Warszawa 2009, WWW.cbos.com

Tab. 5. Polish- Ukrainian Relations

Reconciliation of Poles and Ukrainians	Respondents' answers in %%								
	VI 1998	IV 1999	V 2000	V 2001	IX 2002	VI 2003	XII2004	VI 2005	VI I 2009
Possibile	48	57	67	64	73	63	81	74	84
Impossible	37	40	32	35	25	37	14	22	7
It is hard to say.	15	3	1	1	2	0	0	4	9

Source: Report CBOS, BS/113 /2005, „Opinie Polaków o stosunkach z sąsiednimi krajami, Warszawa 2005, www.cbos.com.pl and Report CBOS ,BS/97/2009 „Ocena Stosunków Polski z Rosją, Ukrainą i Niemcami, Warszawa 2009, WWW.cbos.com

The analysis of attitudes towards Germany and Ukraine shows the existence of important modifying factors. Age is crucial – the younger the respondents, the more optimistic they are about the chances for a lasting reconciliation. Then education; the higher it is, the more positive forecast for future relationships. Political orientation is not significant for these opinions. The relations of Poland and Russia are most complex. Recent developments as tracing Russia-Germany gas pipeline by-passing Poland, or commentaries on Polish-Russian relationships in the media of both countries prove that point. Recently because of the traumatic experience of governmental plane crash in Smoleńsk the Polish - Russian relations have become more tense. Quite often Poles view now Russia as a country which is "ill-disposed towards Poland" . Many Poles do not believe that Russians are honest in the process of explanation of the causes of airplane crash in Smoleńsk, and this, in turn affects the Polish-Russian relationship.

The quality of relations Poland enjoys with other nations is becoming more and more important due to the fact that after joining the European Union Polish contacts with other member states have become more direct. It will be important to see how direct contact, news at firsthand about the others will modify the attitudes and stereotypes..

One of the changes in Polish perception can be noted in case of Polish- American relations. Americans become a very significant group of references for Poles a long time ago. There is, in Polish social culture a long tradition of „The United States - a land of promises". The influence of the American Culture on Polish culture is recently often discussed in Poland as a kind of „cultural" problem. The beginning of the 90s brought about the massive impact of western style commercials on Polish TV. and a tremendous development of all kinds of promotion and advertisement activity. Polish economy as well as the quality of Polish goods enjoyed little respect both internally and internationally, so it was not surprising that many firms advertised their technology as "American" or, in the ,more general sense- "Western", and used foreign names for their products, or even formulated advertisements in English. It is worth mentioning that sometimes notions incorporated from other countries, especially from the American culture did not exactly fit the Polish reality and were being sometimes used in a different way than in the original context creating something "in between" .

Recently the Americans, as they have become more known, more „domesticated" using a figurative expression have received slightly lees sympathy in Poland compare to the nearest past. After the first burst of enthusiasm where the Poles finally have gained free access to American culture and American products (a s a result of openness), now the perception of the US and American culture in particular, is determined less by mythology, and more on tangible, experiential real relations between these two countries. It might be the explanation for a visible change in the verbalized attitudes towards various societies as presented in table 1 – a process of relatively lowering level of attraction to Americans can be seen between the beginning of the '90s and a year 2010.

Tab. 6. How does USA influence the modern World?

Influence of USA on the modern World	XII 2006	VII 2008
Mainly positive	37%	25%
Mainly negative	24%	34%
It depends, sometimes positive, sometimes negative	16%	18%
Nor positive, nor negative	4%	12%
It's hard to say	19%	11%

Source: Report CBOS BS/141/2008, Polacy o wpływie Stanów Zjednoczonych na świat, Warszawa 2008, www.cbos.pl

Tab. 7. Relations between Poland and USA

Do you think that USA in relation to Poland	Percentage of answers
Treat Poland fair	9
Overuse power to dominate polish politics to its agenda	74
I don't know, it's hard to say	17

Source: Report CBOS BS/141/2008, Polacy o wpływie Stanów Zjednoczonych na świat, Warszawa 2008, www.cbos.pl

An important issue in this deliberation is the perception of threats for independence of Poland from other countries. Sense of security is changing in Poland in the transformation period, due to current events in politics and international economy, too (table 8).

Tab. 8. The feeling of Poland's sovereignty being threatened

Do you currently see any threats for polish sovereignty ?	Respondents' answers in %%									
	II'91	VI'93	V'95	VI'97	IV'99	V'01	VII'03	VI'05	VI'07	VI'09
Yes	44	22	33	19	27	19	27	21	13	18
No	33	65	57	65	53	67	61	65	73	73
It's hard to say	23	13	11	16	19	13	12	14	14	9

Source: BS/98/2009 Bezpieczeństwo Polski na arenie międzynarodowej, Komunikat z badań, Warszawa, lipiec 2009, WWW.cbos.com

In this context it may be interesting to point out the countries that may be the source of this treat. According to CBOS report (last in 2004) this list has changed noticeably (see table 9).

Tab. 9. The feeling of Poland being threatened by other countries

Which countries Poland should afraid of?	Respondents' answers In %%		
	II '90	V '92	IX '04
Russia (1990- Soviet Union)	25	45	44
Germany	88	58	35
Iraq, „Arab countries", „Muslim countries", „terrorist countries"	0	1	18
US	2	2	5
Belarus	-	3	5
Ukraine	3	30	5
Czechoslovakia (2004-Czech Republic)	3	2	1
None, Poland has no enemies	3	5	6
Hard to say	3	18	12

Source: Report „Na kogo Polska może liczyć a kogo powinna się obawiać? " BS/183/2004. Warszawa November 2004, available at : www.cbos.com

Conclusions

The widespread dissemination of Western cultural values, meant also the import of the notion of „a political correctness" was imported, at least in some social environments. In many social circles it is now unforgivable to express negative opinions or feelings towards individuals and groups because their nationality or „otherness". At the beginning of the 1990s in various opinion polls were about 20% of respondents indicating that there were representatives of some nationalities who were among those who „should not be allowed to visit Poland". Very few people now would dare to point out „nationality" as a basis for exclusion. We do have though an example of ethnic group which is being perceived as relatively non - accepted – namely the Gypsies . It might be worth mentioning that Gypsies have long lasting bad reputation in Poland being perceived as „beggars", „criminals", or „dirty, lazy, and dangerous ones". Only recently, there have been efforts to change that unfavorable picture, and I must add: efforts from both sides. Gypsies (or , Roma, which is how that ethnic group is now "officially" named), are more present in media not just as doubtful heroes of „crime stories", or aggressive victims, looking for the possibility to pay back those who harmed them, but as local activists, and artists: „people with a mission".

Some groups within Polish society, sometimes even political groups, try to encourage nationalistic feelings and prejudices based on commonly shared stereotypes. With slogans like: "Poland for Poles" or "German (Russian, Ukrainian etc.) Danger " such groups are able to find audiences, mostly among the less educated, poorer milieu - those people who feel insecure in a new reality, and who are afraid of losing their social status. It is not one of the

"main stream" problems but still important. Whether we want to admit it or not, the world in which our young generation is going to work and live is shrinking, and they will compete with young professionals better prepared for a dialogue, and ready for new challenges. The simply reflection that we live in a world of increasing ethnic and racial diversity and much more crowded than ages ago should help to realize that this social environment requires a higher degree of tolerance and understanding than ever before. More multicultural issues have to be introduced, skills and competencies alleviating psychological, social and cultural distances in multi-cultural relationships have to be trained on a much larger scale.

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