

KRYNICA
FORUM
2023



MAŁOPOLSKA

September, 13-15

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THE
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Summary
report

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Krynica Forum 2023 is a conference in which political, economic, military decision-makers, experts, and international community representatives participated. Krynica-Zdrój, a city located in the heart of Europe, has for three days been the venue of principal discussions on the continent's security in the new geopolitical and economic reality. The programme of the conference focused on three dimensions of the new security architecture: the strategic, energy, and climate security. Forum participants pondered what is at root of the phenomenon of Poland's economic development model and how to shore it up as well as how to best leverage the potential which results from the country's particular geographical location and from the cementing of political and economic bonds.



HIGHLIGHTS

THE PRESIDENT OF POLAND'S PARTICIPATION IN SIX EVENTS

- Krynica Forum 2023 opening debate with the President of Lithuania Gitanas Nausėda
- 'Heart of Europe' concert
- Opening of the Polish-Korean Forum
- Opening of the NATO ambassadors' panel
- Opening of the Polish-Lithuanian panel
- Opening of the National Development Council panel with Marshals of three provinces taking part



FOREIGN GUESTS

- **Gitanas Nausėda** – the president of Lithuania
- **Han Duck-soo** – the prime minister of Korea
- **Borut Pahor** – the president of Slovenia from 2012 to 2022
- **Øystein Bø** – the ambassador agrée of Norway to the Republic of Poland
- **Muriel Domenach** – the permanent representative of France at NATO





- **Peter Bátor** – the permanent representative of the Republic of Slovenia at NATO
- **Kęstutis Budrys** – the senior advisor on national security to the president of Lithuania, head of the National Security Group
- **Ahn Dukgeun** – the minister of trade in the ministry of Trade, Industry, and Energy of the Republic of Korea
- **Eom Dong-hwan** – the minister of the Defense Acquisition Program Administration (DAPA)

THE PRESENCE OF MINISTERS AND DEPUTY MINISTERS OF POLAND'S GOVERNMENT

- **Henryk Kowalczyk** – minister-member of the Council of Ministers, chair of the Council of Ministers' Economic Committee
- **Andrzej Adamczyk** – minister of infrastructure
- **Jacek Sasin** – minister for state assets
- **Jadwiga Emilewicz** – secretary of state in the Ministry of Funds and Regional Policy, Government Plenipotentiary for Polish-Ukrainian development co-operation
- **Małgorzata Jarosińska-Jedynak** – secretary of state in the Ministry of Funds and Regional Policy



- **Artur Soboń** – secretary of state in the Ministry of Finances
- **Edward Siarka** – secretary of state in the Ministry of Climate and Environment, Government Plenipotentiary for Forestry and Hunting

THE PRESENCE OF REPRESENTATIVES FOR DIVERSE POLITICAL CIRCLES

Including Urszula Nowogórska, Bogusław Sonik, Elżbieta Achinger, Józefa Szczurek-Żelazko, Piotr Sak, Ireneusz Raś, Stanisław Bisztyga, Patryk Wicher, Rafał Komarewicz, Filip Kaczyński.



SEVEN THEMATIC STREAMS

- I. Strategic security
- II. Energy security
- III. Climate security
- IV. Ukraine – support, co-operation, reconstruction
- V. Polish-Korean Forum
- VI. Business and economy
- VII. Looking forward

PRESTIGIOUS EXPERT PARTNERSHIPS

- Two patron panels of the Jagiellonian Club
- Six patron panels of the National Development and Entrepreneurship Council to the President of the Republic of Poland
- A patron panel of the National Security Bureau
- Two patron panels of the Ministry of Infrastructure
- Three patron panels of the city of Kraków
- Two patron panels of the State Forests
- Three patron panels of the Małopolska Region
- Two patron panels of PGE Polska Grupa Energetyczna S.A., an energy supplier
- Two patron panels of Jastrzębska Spółka Węglowa S.A., a coal company
- A patron panel of KGHM Polska Miedź S.A., a mining company
- A patron panel of PKO Bank Polski, a financial institution
- A patron panel of TAURON, an energy company
- A patron panel of Bank Pekao S.A., a financial institution

THE PARTICIPATION OF SIX UNIVERSITY PRINCIPALS

- **Stanisław Mazur**, PhD, DSc, Prof. at UEK – the rector of the Cracow University of Economics
- **Prof. Sylwester Tabor** – the rector of the University of Agriculture in Krakow



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- **Prof. Jerzy Lis**, MSc, PhD, DSc Eng – the rector of the AGH University of Krakow
- **Prof. Andrzej Szarata**, MSc, PhD, DSc Eng – the rector of the Cracow University of Technology
- **Prof. Piotr Koszelnik**, MSc, PhD, DSc Eng – the rector of the Rzeszow University of Technology
- **Dariusz Woźniak**, PhD, Prof. at WSB NLU – the rector of the Wyższa Szkoła Biznesu – National Louis University in Nowy Sącz

ENGAGEMENT FROM SCHOLARS OF A DOZEN UNIVERSITIES

- Jagiellonian University in Kraków
- Tadeusz Kościuszko Cracow University of Technology
- Hugo Kołłątaj University of Agriculture in Krakow
- SGH Warsaw School of Economics
- Cracow University of Economics
- University of Lodz
- National Education Commission Pedagogical University in Krakow
- Wyższa Szkoła Biznesu – National Louis University in Nowy Sącz
- Poznan University of Economics and Business
- Ignacy Łukasiewicz Rzeszow University of Technology



- AGH University of Science and Technology in Krakow
- War Studies University
- Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski Krakow University
- College of Economics and Computer Science in Krakow
- Polish Academy of Sciences
- Pontifical University of John Paul II in Krakow

THE PARTICIPATION OF POLISH ARMED FORCES GENERALS

- **Lt Gen Wiesław Kukuła** – general commander of the Armed Forces Branches
- **Lt Gen Piotr A. Błazeusz**, PhD – 1st deputy chief of the General Staff of the Polish Armed Forces
- **Lt Gen Krzysztof Król** – chief of staff in the Allied Joint Force Command in Brunssum (Netherlands)
- **Brig Gen Marcin Górka** – director of the Department of Innovation in the Ministry of National Defence
- **Maj Gen (res.) Roman Polko**, MSc, PhD – commando forces, two-time GROM commander
- **Maj Gen (res.) Andrzej Reudowicz** – advisor to the Chief of National Security Bureau
- **Brig (res.) Janusz Sobolewski** – office director at the Department of Defence Projects in PGZ S.A.

THE PARTICIPATION OF OPINION-FORMERS

Including Krzysztof Wojczal, Rafał Ziemkiewicz, Paweł Lisicki, Paweł Musiałek, Michał Karnowski

MODERATORS REPRESENTING DIVERSE CIRCLES

Dziennik Gazeta Prawna, Fratria, Polityka Insight, Money.pl, Radio Kraków, Klub Jagielloński, Interia.pl



President Andrzej Duda: thank you for your presence in Krynica

The honorary patronage over Krynica Forum 2023 was extended by the President of Poland Andrzej Duda, who was present during the first and second day of the conference.

On Wednesday 13 September, President Andrzej Duda together with the President of Lithuania Gitanas Nausėda and the Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea Han Duck-soo participated in the Krynica Forum 2023 opening gala. Later, the presidents of Poland and Lithuania took part in the debate entitled 'The security architecture in the region after 24 February 2022: the special role of Poland and Lithuania in the context of Russia's aggression in Ukraine'. The conversation was led by Michał Karnowski, a journalist. Then, the president of Poland and his guests proceeded to listen to the concert 'The Heart of Europe' with eminent artists performing.

On Thursday, the president took part in the opening of the Polish-Korean Forum. 'Today, the representatives of politics and business assembling together, we are meeting in Krynica-Zdrój to continue the debate on the weighty topics in the Polish-Korean relations. I would like to heartily thank the event's organisers and express my pleasure that we can jointly testify to the ever better strategic alignment between our countries,' President Andrzej Duda said. 'I would like to also thank the Prime Minister, the whole big Korea delegation, and the representatives of Korean business alike for coming to Poland and for their presence in Krynica.'

During the meeting with Krynica Forum 2023 organisers and participants, President Andrzej Duda underscored the import of the event, held in an international format with foreign leaders participating. He also uttered words of appreciation for the Kosciuszko Institute by referring to his last year's speech in Krynica. 'I would like to thank you for the Krynica meeting happening again. I thank the Kosciuszko Institute, I thank the Małopolska Province authorities led by the Marshal, I thank everyone who contributed to making this event camera-ready, which is a fixture in the political and economic calendar of the Republic and which has always been all the rage also due to how charming its venue and the moment it takes place are. Krynica in autumn, just as it is today, seems exceptionally beautiful, full of charm, while also conducive to reflection and the freewheeling train of thought over what is always the basic question – what next,' President Andrzej Duda remarked there.



The president of Poland declared the Krynica Forum 2023, with the president of Lithuania and PM of Korea participating, to be the start of a permanent international format that will be continued and expanded in the years to come in co-operation with the Chancellery of the President of Poland.

In the subsequent part of the day, presidents of Poland and Lithuania listened together to experts' debate 'Poland and Lithuania – bulwark against the tyranny from the east. Heritage, collaboration, future'. The president of Poland also listened to the National Development Council debate on 'Local government – partner in actions for sustainable development'. The same day, President Duda in the presence of former President of Slovenia Borut Pahor opened the ambassadors' debate 'The future of NATO – mapping the challenges to overcome'. 'I'm treating today's meeting and this discussion as a continuation of what we managed to achieve in Davos this January,' the president of Poland said.

During Krynica Forum 2023, the president of Poland was accompanied by Deputy Head of his Chancellery Piotr Ćwik, Head of the International Policy Bureau Marcin Przydacz, and Head of the National Security Bureau Jacek Siewiera. The panels were attended by the president's advisors: Paweł Sałek, Zdzisław Sokal, Prof. Andrzej Janusz Zybortowicz, Marek Rymsza, PhD, DSc, and Marek Dietl. The members of National Development Council and Council on Entrepreneurship for the President of Poland also served as panellists: Izabela Albrycht (Security and Defence Council), Przemysław Żurawski vel Grajewski, PhD, DSc (Security and Defence Council chair), Jan Krzysztof Ardanowski (Council on Agriculture and Rural Areas), Prof. Piotr Czauderna, MD, PhD, DSc (Health Protection Council chair), Paweł Mzyk (Council on Environment, Energy, and Natural Resources), Wiktor Szmulewicz (Council on Agriculture and Rural Areas), Prof. Krystian Szczepański (Council on Environment, Energy, and Natural Resources). Six patron panels by the National Development Council and Council on Entrepreneurship for the President of Poland featured on the Forum agenda.

President Gitanas Nausėda on Krynica Forum 2023: friendship bears fruit

Invited by President Andrzej Duda, the President of Lithuania Gitanas Nausėda came to Krynica-Zdrój. 'Today's Polish-Lithuanian relationship could be an example to follow for other states, an example of how neighbours can work together. And today this friendship and good understanding is bearing fruit. We are pursuing very important infrastructural projects such as Via Carpatia, which are vital for the whole region,' President Nausėda said. Lithuania's leader devoted a large part of his address to the issue of military co-operation, including joint Polish-Lithuanian military exercise helping bolster the protection of the Suwałki corridor.

The following day President Nausėda together with President Duda opened the discussion panel 'Poland and Lithuania – bulwark against the tyranny from the east. Heritage, collaboration, future'. 'We can see how the co-operation of Poland and Lithuania builds us up and how much strength it gives us, starting from the economy and ending with the military security,' President Andrzej Duda stressed.

President Gitanas Nausėda emphasised the importance of Polish-Lithuanian collaboration, too. 'These are countries that understand the nature of the threat from the East and are prepared to take all necessary measures to eliminate this threat. Poland and Lithuania are considered experts when it comes to the threat from Russia.' He ended his speech with the motivating statement that everything is possible if we act together.

The two Presidents then listened to a debate between Polish and Lithuanian experts. Participating in the di-



scussion were: Urszula Doroszewska – Ambassador of Poland to Lithuania from 2017 to 2023, former advisor to the presidents of the Republic of Poland, the late Lech Kaczyński and Andrzej Duda; Marcin Przydacz – Secretary of State at the Chancellery of the President of Poland, Head of the International Policy Office; Kęstutis Budrys – Senior National Security Advisor to the President of Lithuania, Head of the National Security Group; and Audronė Markevičienė – Chargé d'Affaires a.i. of the Republic of Lithuania in the Republic of Poland. The debate was moderated by Kinga Dudzińska – analyst in the Central Europe Programme of the Polish Institute of International Affairs.

Ambassador Doroszewska recounted the extremely successful and important co-operation between Presidents Lech Kaczyński and Valdas Adamkus, which represented a completely new perspective on the importance and role of the Central European region. 'Today's Polish-Lithuanian relations are a continuation of that thought, a continuation of the attitude of courage towards Russia. President Adamkus immediately agreed to go to Tbilisi after the conflict started in 2008. The trip to Kiev on the eve of the war in 2022 took place in the same spirit.'

Kęstutis Budrys spoke about the unique role played by Poland and Lithuania over the past 20 years, echoes of which can be seen today. 'Both countries understand Russian imperialism well. We understand that it is a totalitarian regime, in fact Russia is unable to live in peace with its neighbours, because this is the nature of this regime.'

Minister Przydacz underlined the role of the two presidents' visit to Kiev on 23 February 2022 in the perception of Poland and Lithuania. 'It was a tangible element of courage, but also an opportunity to show with the future in mind what the reaction of Central and Eastern Europe will be: we will not turn a blind eye to what is happening.'



Summing up the panel, Audronė Markevičienė opined that the greatest value of the Polish-Lithuanian co-operation is the ability to mobilise so that together we create a safe neighbourhood. She emphasised that the common past of Poland and Lithuania is also important today, when we are once again facing tyranny from the East together. It is therefore very important that we have been able to take our co-operation to a higher level so as to achieve higher goals.

Ambassadors to NATO Headquarters on the future of the North Atlantic Alliance

Another important event on the second day of the Forum was a debate entitled 'The future of NATO – mapping the challenges'. It was attended by Tomasz Szatkowski – permanent representative of the Republic of Poland to the North Atlantic Council, Muriel Domenach – permanent representative of France to NATO, Peter Bátor – permanent representative of the Slovak Republic to NATO and Øystein Bø – ambassa-



dor agrée of Norway to the Republic of Poland, former permanent representative of Norway to NATO. The discussion was moderated by Sławomir Dębski, PhD, Director of the Polish Institute of International Affairs.

The President of Poland Andrzej Duda gave the introductory. 'For all of us who live here, in this part of Europe, the Russian aggression against Ukraine is a visible sign of the rebirth of Russian imperialism. And Russian imperialism means for us the highly likely prospect of at least attempts made to expand the Russian sphere of influence. We have, of course, been confronted with this over recent decades thro-

ugh Russia's various economic actions, attempts to purchase various Polish companies in strategic sectors, I mean for example the fuel or chemical sectors. Not only attempts, but also the construction of two Nord Stream gas pipelines – Nord Stream 1 and Nord Stream 2 – which was an obvious bypass of NATO's eastern flank, namely Central Europe, in partnership with Germany. Unfortunately, we were paid no heed, our voices, our objections to this investment, and our concerns were not heard.'

'We will maintain our military support for Ukraine. Russia will not wait us out,' said Ambassador Muriel Domenach. She also recalled that NATO's first two objectives formulated by its first Secretary General, Lord Ismay, remain valid ('to keep the Soviet Union out, the Americans in, and the Germans down'). 'NATO is doing a good job of "keeping the Russians out";' Domenach stressed, while emphasising the role of nuclear deterrence and eastern-flank strengthening. The participants discussed such issues as the provisions of NATO's Vilnius summit and Ukraine's presence in NATO, and shared their reflections on what would be the theme of NATO summit in Washington next year.

Borut Pahor, former president of Slovenia, in Krynica-Zdrój: Poland is gaining in importance

At the invitation of the President of Poland Andrzej Duda, Borut Pahor arrived in Krynica-Zdrój. 'Thank you very much for coming, President Borut Pahor, president of Slovenia until last year, but above all a member of all NATO summits for 10 years as well, up to and including 2022 So a great deal of experience and – dare I say it – the history of NATO's last dozen



years is personified in the president.'

On one of the Krynica Forum stages, President Pahor spoke to Jacek Pochłopiń of Dziennik Gazeta Prawna. 'It is in our interest to support Ukraine, but it is also our moral duty. The problem, however, is that Putin can freeze this conflict. The definition of success is different for Putin than for Ukraine or President Zelensky. We must do everything in our power to support the Ukrainians so that this conflict does not turn into a frozen, eternal war,' said President Pahor. 'Poland is the largest Central and Eastern European country in the European Union, but its role is not only due to geography. Poland is gaining importance in various aspects. Right now its position is special. Before the outbreak of war in Ukraine, Poland's voice weighed perhaps a little less, but when the war began, Polish thoughts on it, Polish assistance, not least the fact that you took in two million refugees from Ukraine – all this gives Poland a certain kind of authority on the international scene.'



The Sącz region – capital of Polish entrepreneurship – hosts Krynica Forum

The Krynica Forum 2023 agenda included many topics and guests related to the Sącz region (Sądecczyzna). Panellists in the heart of the Beskid Sądecki discussed the ethos of entrepreneurship and the potential of the region. Poland's 'Silicon Valley', the cradle of entrepreneurial spirit – such monikers of the Sącz region appear in media reports many a time. Businesspeople from the sub-region regularly appear in rankings of the richest Poles, and Sącz region unemployment figures are among the lowest in the country.

Roman Kluska, the founder of Optimus, one of the



richest Poles in the 1990s, an emblematic figure of the Sącz region and a symbol of the region's entrepreneurship, received an award on behalf of Polish business. The Krynica Forum 2023 award was given to Polish small and medium entrepreneurs, who are the driving force behind the Polish economy. Generating half of Poland's GDP, they provide work for almost 10 million Poles.

'As a citizen of Sącz, I am glad that the Forum takes place in Krynica. I believe that Sącz business will seize the opportunities offered by this event,' Roman Kluska remarked at the gala ceremony. 'This is an award for all SMEs. Without their effort, involvement, today's economy and today's business wouldn't be here. I will not keep this award for myself. After the election, I will try to hand it over to the Prime Minister to remind him how important Polish companies are for the future of Polish business. The small ones – without appropriate, favourable regulations – stand no chance. I will continue to strive for the right conditions for small entrepreneurs to develop,' the entrepreneur assured.

Among the representatives of Sącz business present at the Forum were Andrzej Wiśniowski, founder and owner of the WIŚNIEWSKI company, and Ryszard Florek, co-founder and president of the FAKRO company.



At the panel 'On the road to economic recovery', organised by the Dziennik Gazeta Prawna, Ryszard Florek raised, among others, the issue of economic patriotism. 'The consumer should be safe in the knowledge that by buying from a Polish producer they will get a superproduct and the satisfaction that their money will stay in the country. They should also have the satisfaction that a Polish producer will gain economies of scale on the Polish market, making its products cheaper and more competitive abroad,' he said. He also stressed that Poland has huge untapped reserves of social capital.



During the Krynica Forum, there were also behind-the-scenes discussions which translated into concrete business decisions. Krynica negotiations between Newag and Hyundai Rotem resulted a few days later in their signing a letter of intent for the purchase of high-speed trains for Poland.

The region and its unique features were debated by the participants of the panel 'Sądeckie – the host region of Krynica Forum 2023 and its genius loci. What is behind the phenomenon of the Polish cradle of entrepreneurship?'

Grzegorz Biedroń – a councillor from the Małopolska regional parliament, chairman of the Commission for the Development of the Region, Promotion and Co-operation with Foreign Countries, president of MOT, expressed his opinion on the condition of the tourism industry in the region. 'Things are going swimmingly this year; we have an invasion of foreign tourists. Good communication makes tourists go where they can get to from the main centres of the country. We were greatly helped by the European Games, the effect of which will be felt for several more years,' Grzegorz Biedroń said. Dariusz Woźniak, PhD, Professor and Rector of the Wyższa Szkoła Biznesu – National Louis University in Nowy Sącz, pointed to the role ex-

change of information and experience plays in the region, as it takes place within not only companies but also universities and public institutions. 'A key aspect is the capacity for dialogue, both in formal structures and in informal discussions. It is important that entrepreneurs are open to co-operation, even as they compete against one another,' the rector highlighted.

On his part, **Michał Mólka**, PhD, of the WSB-NLU pointed out the qualities that characterise the residents of the Sącz region: the spirit of freedom, solidarity, and entrepreneurship. In his opinion, one of the university's main strengths is educating students in creativity, innovation, and courage in decision-making.

Mayor of Krynica-Zdrój Piotr Ryba emphasised that the residents of the region know how to succeed despite the harsh conditions: severe climate and poor soil quality. 'What seemed to be a drawback later turned out to be an advantage. Good, snowy winters led to the tourist base developing. We have six ski stations; we are at the top when it comes to this business. In February, we will host the Snowboard World Cup,' the mayor explained. He stressed that investors are flocking to the region to build more hotels and recreational facilities, e.g. an aquapark.

Jacek Lelek, Mayor of Stary Sącz, drew attention to the residents' attachment to their region. 'People who went to Ireland came back and invested here. This paid off later. People want to come back not only to retire, but also in search of life stability. Nobody was twiddling their thumbs for someone to come and do something for them,' said the mayor. According to Marcin Krzemiński, the president of the Board of Directors for the Krynica-Żegiestów S.A. spa, a huge advantage of the region is the tourist season which lasts all year round. 'At the seaside, the season lasts four months, while here you can enjoy the spa waters and admire the beautiful scenery for twelve months a year,' the president explained. MP Patryk Wicher, who took part in the discussion, drew attention to the



character of the region's inhabitants. 'They are able to hold a tough dialogue. Their strength is that they do not give up and strive to see their plans through.'

Polish-Korean Forum: talks on strategic partnership

On the second day of the Krynica Forum 2023, on 14 September, the Poland-Korea Forum took place. The event was inaugurated by Polish President Andrzej Duda and Korean Prime Minister Han Duck-soo.

'Today, amid the representatives of politics and business, we meet in Krynica-Zdrój to continue the debate on issues important in Polish-Korean relations. I sincerely thank the event's organisers and I am glad that together we can bear witness to the strategic rapprochement between our countries,' President Andrzej Duda emphasised.

Prime Minister Han Duck-soo noted that the Krynica Forum 2023 is 'the only forum of its kind where political and business representatives from both our countries meet, discuss key bilateral co-operation projects and global challenges together'. The Korean prime minister also noted that 'Poland is the first country in Central Europe where Korean companies have entered' and that 'our bilateral trade is growing well, despite difficulties such as the COVID-19 pandemic and geopolitical instability'.

'We have built a strong partnership over the past thirty years. Now it is time for us to build on our mutual trust and look to the next three decades in partnership. In particular, we are focusing on green and local economies. Based on our experience, we will also be able to join in the efforts to rebuild Ukraine,' said Prime Minister Han Duck-soo.



Throughout the day, discussions, presentations and speeches took place on a specially arranged Korean stage with representatives of the two countries' governments, businesspeople, and academics. The first debate was on the strategic partnership linking the two countries. It was attended by: Wojciech Gerwel – undersecretary of state in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea in Poland Hoonmin Lim, Prof. Lee Yeonho (Yonsei University), Kim Heungchong, PhD (Korea University), Prof. Paik Wooyeal (École militaire – IRSEM, Paris), and Polish academics: Krzysztof Kozłowski, PhD, DSc, SGH Prof., pro-rector of the university, and Oskar Pietrewicz, PhD, analyst at the Polish Institute of International Affairs in the Asia-Pacific programme.

The Republic of Korea is one of the largest foreign investors in Poland, with companies such as LG Electronics, Samsung Electronics, Heesung Electronics, and Hyundai Motor among the significant employers. Korean companies have created around 30 000 jobs in Poland, including in industries related to electronics or batteries for electric cars. Thanks to the latter, Poland has become a top battery manufacturer and currently accounts for more than 30% of European production. Their exports accounted for 2.3% of all



Polish foreign sales in 2022.

The value of imports for goods and services from Korea reached PLN 41 bn in 2022, while the value of exports to Korea amounted to PLN 4 bn, according to data from the Central Statistical Office. The Republic of Korea is the eighth most important exporter for Poland, but only the 38th recipient of Polish goods. This disproportion in the trade balance was one of the Krynica forum topics, and both Poles and Koreans spoke about the need to bridge it. Kim Heungchong of Korea University pointed out that the trade surplus achieved with Poland was the largest on the list of the country's European partners. Korea in fact runs a trade deficit with most Western European countries.

Hoonmin Lim, the ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Poland, emphasised that the trade imbalance between our countries should decrease, Korea should import more from Poland, primarily food products.

'I am very pleased that there has been an opening of Korea to the pork market from Poland, steps are being taken to open the beef or poultry market. These are gestures which mean a lot and unite,' said Undersecretary of State at the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs Wojciech Gerwel.

Ambassador Hoonmin Lim recalled that Poland and Korea established diplomatic relations in 1989. 'Poland's accession to the EU has given new momentum to our co-operation, investment has accelerated. In 2013, the two countries signed a strategic partnership agreement. In 2022, we accelerated again – we started large-scale defence sector co-operation. Both countries are now strengthening collaboration in the areas of energy and infrastructure,' Lim said. 'Poland has urgently decided to enhance its military and energy security. Korea can meet these needs,' he added.

'We face a task for the future – in Poland and Korea



alike – the task of building political consensus regardless of internal political changes in our countries,' said Oskar Pietrewicz, PhD, analyst at the Polish Institute of International Affairs. 'I caution against going headlong into an all-encompassing partnership; we should define precisely what is the basis of our relations,' he stressed.

'Korea has a trade surplus. As for the CEE region, Poland is our main partner. Investment is growing. We see consistency between Polish and Korean policies and their consistent implementation by the two governments – this gives a sense of stability. Poland is also important when it comes to the regional supply chain,' explained Kim Heungchong.

Prof. Krzysztof Kozłowski, in turn, drew attention to the 300 per cent increase in interest among economics students in student exchanges with Korea. 'This is the result of the last seven years. We have seen a steady increase in student interest in the country. We are certainly at a turning point. We can say that Korea and Poland are close to each other – our geopolitical problems are Korea's problems, Korea's problems are Poland's problems. We cannot escape the fact that our societies are increasingly interested in each other. It is these people who will be the future of our economy and our politics,' he concluded.

'Let's build symbiotic relationships based on the exchange of knowledge, advanced technologies, where it's not just about selling a product or a short-term relationship, but something that uses Poland's particular strengths, such as its educated workforce and research institutions,' appealed Wojciech Gerwel.

Minister Jacek Sasin: Korean business sees Poland as a good place to invest in

One of the most important undertakings in Polish-Korean co-operation at the moment is the plan to build a nuclear power plant in Pątnów. This is a joint project between PGE, ZE PAK, and Korea Hydro & Nuclear Power Co. (KHNP). KHNP is currently the third largest operator of nuclear power plants in the world, having recently successfully completed one of the largest investments in the world – the Barakah nuclear power plant in the United Arab Emirates. The patronage session of PGE Polska Grupa Energetyczna S.A. during the Korean-Polish Forum devoted to co-operation in the field of nuclear power was attended by Rafał Włodarski – Vice President of the Management Board for Support and Development of PGE, Joo-ho Whang – President of KHNP (Korea Hydro & Nuclear Power Co.), Mikołaj Oettingen, PhD – nuclear power expert from AGH and Kim Moo-Hwan, former Rector of PO-



STECH.

Keynote speech to the panel was given by Minister of State Assets Jacek Sasin. 'Poland is a good, promising country to invest in, despite the war abroad. Korean business treats Poland as a good place to invest in. I hope that other countries will follow the example of our Korean partners and the number of investments in our country will increase. Our co-operation is gaining a strong dimension through nuclear energy issues. The Republic of Korea is currently one of Poland's most important economic and political partners in the Asia-Pacific region. Bilateral relations between Poland and the Republic of Korea are flourishing, especially in the economic and military spheres,' said Minister Sasin.

Rafał Włodarski, Vice President of the PGE Management Board, emphasised that the power plant would have a significant share in the Polish energy mix. 'If the power plant we plan to build were already in the energy system today, it would provide 2.8 GW of energy. This would represent 12% of Poland's national annual demand. It is clean, stable and cheap energy,' he stated.

According to the plans, electricity from the plants is expected to start flowing in 2035. Korea's participation in the development of nuclear power is to be a source of funding and know-how, which was repeatedly emphasised at the forum. Mikołaj Oettingen, PhD, from AGH University, a lecturer at Korea's KEPCO International Nuclear Graduate School, pointed out that the first nuclear power plants in Korea were built in the 1970s, and there are currently 25 reactors in operation in the country, which meet approximately 30% of domestic demand. Korea also has experience with foreign projects in this area.

Talks on Polish-Korean arms co-operation

The modernisation of the Polish army is taking place through the purchase of Korean military equipment as well. In 2022, the Armaments Agency representing the Polish State Treasury concluded large contracts with Korean entities for the purchase of tanks, howitzers, and aircraft for the Polish Army. Hyundai Rotem is responsible for the supply of K2 family tanks, Hanwha Defense for the supply of K9-type self-propelled howitzers, and Korean Aerospace Industries for the supply of FA-50-type aeroplanes.

Polish-Korean armaments co-operation was discussed in Krynica-Zdrój by: Mateusz Sarosiek – deputy director of the Department of Armaments Policy at the Ministry of Defence, Minister Eom Donghwan



– head of the Defense Acquisition Program Administration (DAPA), Col Krzysztof Malinowski – head of the Head of Research and Development at the Armaments Agency, Cho Jun Whan – director of DAPA, Lee Boo-hwan – executive vice president of Hanwha Aerospace and Lee Eui-Seong – senior vice president of Hyundai Rotem.

Eom Donghwan said that defence co-operation between Poland and Korea is progressing rapidly and there is hope to take it to an even higher level. He expressed his belief that Korean weapons could help defend Poland. He also expressed the willingness on Korea's part to sell not only weapons but also technology.

Cho Jun Whan talked about the Defense Innovation 4.0 project. 'It aims to enhance defence capabilities based on the latest science and technology, artificial intelligence, and robots, while responding to changing social and civilisation conditions,' the DAPA director said. He also expressed his conviction that Polish-Korean co-operation will help enhance Poland's security.

Col Krzysztof Malinowski talked about the course of Polish-Korean co-operation to date and described further plans. He listed tanks, self-propelled howitzers, rocket launchers, and light combat aircraft as arms items purchased by Poland to date. He also spoke of plans for further trade exchange. 'Supplies from Poland to Korea will increase as our industry's production capacity and competence in new technologies grows.'

'In view of the war in Ukraine, Korean technologies can help increase defence capabilities especially in Poland,' Lee Boo-hwan acknowledged. 'Poland is a good example of how to benefit from advanced Korean technologies, including through their Polonisation.'

Hyundai Vice President Rotem Lee Eui-Seong recalled that Poland and Korea have gone through a lot as a result of having the neighbours we are stuck with ..., but we are emerging as regional powers. He expressed his hope for long-term co-operation in the future and his belief that together we will become global industry leaders.

In turn, the deputy director of the Department of Armament Policy of the Ministry of Defence, Mateusz Sarosiek, emphasised the importance of Polonised Korean technologies in the war in Ukraine, where they are represented among the most effective artillery systems ..., helping the Ukrainian military repel Russian attacks and carry out the counter-offensive. He expressed his belief that such successful co-operation is possible due to the favourable attitude of the Korean government and Korean companies and the tremendous, unprecedented pace of contract execution.

Infrastructure development, transport, and reconstruction of Ukraine

Another promising co-operation domain between Poland and Korea is large infrastructure projects. The Polish side wants to draw on Korean experience in such areas as high-speed rail. The Korean and Polish authorities have also recently made co-operation arrangements concerning the reconstruction of Ukraine. Deputy Minister of Funds and Regional Policy and Government Plenipotentiary for Polish-Ukrainian Development Co-operation Jadwiga Emilewicz along with Korean Minister of Land, Infrastructure, and Transport Won Hee-ryong signed a five-year memorandum of co-operation in the reconstruction of Ukraine in July this year.





These plans have been the subject of another session at the Polish-Korean Forum as have other joint ventures in transport and infrastructure. Its participants were Minister Jadwiga Emilewicz and Minister of Infrastructure Andrzej Adamczyk, and from the Korean side – Kang Hee-up, head of the Metropolitan Transport Commission at the Ministry of Transport. As Minister Andrzej Adamczyk pointed out, a modern, sustainable, and durable transport infrastructure is crucial for the future of Poland and the Central European region. 'In recent years, Poland has become the largest infrastructure investment destination in Europe. It is the transport gateway to Central Europe and the Ukraine. Our dynamic activities to date will undoubtedly form the basis for intensified co-operation with international partners involved in the reconstruction of Ukraine,' the head of the Ministry of Infrastructure stated.

Minister Jadwiga Emilewicz also noted that the reconstruction of Ukraine will require infrastructure investments in Central and Eastern Europe. 'This includes the development of port infrastructure, transport routes. We face the task of programming and integrating these necessary investments into the funding stream of the EU and other institutions.'

Patrycja Brudnicka from the Ministry of Funds and Regional Policy, Won Byung-Chul – vice president of Korea Overseas Infrastructure & Urban Development Corporation (KIND) and Lim Jong Il – vice president of Korea Railroad Corporation (KORAIL) participated in the discussion slot at the session.

Representatives of the Republic of Korea emphasised their willingness to invest in Ukraine. Kang Hee-up from the Ministry of Transport indicated that they could thus share their experience of rebuilding the country after the 1950s war; meanwhile, as Won Byung-Chul put it, Polish and Korean resources are complementary. 'Poland has a lot of knowledge about Ukraine. We don't have that, but we have the tech-

nology and the finances. By joining our forces, we can jointly carry out investments related to the reconstruction of Ukraine,' he said.

Poland and the Republic of Korea are also co-operating on the Central Transport Hub Project (CPK). More than two months ago, a Korean consortium signed a contract with the CPK company to design a high-speed railway line between Katowice and the Polish-Czech border. The contract is worth PLN 134 m and will be carried out by Korea National Railway and Dohwa Engineering. Kang Hee-up emphasised that Korea will be an important partner for Poland, as it already is one of the leaders in high-speed rail.

Minister Marcin Przydacz: Prime Minister's participation in the Forum shows how much Korea is banking on our country

Korean-Polish co-operation in the area of trade, investment, and supply chains was another domain discussed during the Polish-Korean Forum. Speakers at the session on this topic included Paweł Kurtasz – president of the Management Board of the Polish Investment and Trade Agency, Jerzy Kwieciński – vice president of the Management Board of Bank Pekao S.A., Zenon Kosiniak-Kamysz – former Polish Amba-



sador to Singapore and Polish representative on the Board of Governors of the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) and representatives of the Korean side: Ahn Dukgeun – Minister of Trade of Korea, Kim Hyun Cheol – head of the Korean Trade and Investment Pro-

motion Agency in Europe (KOTRA Europe) and Shin Hyong Soo – managing director of LS Cable & System. 'In 2022, the value of trade between Poland and Korea was almost USD 9 bn,' Ahn Dukgeun pointed out. He added that trade accelerated notably after the signing of the Korea-EU Free Trade Agreement in 2010. Kim Hyun Cheol, on the other hand, noted that political developments also had an impact on Polish-Korean relations.

'With the change in the geopolitical situation, our countries have decided to strengthen co-operation in supply chains,' he said. The head of KOTRA in Europe hopes that in the future, the co-operation between the two countries may lead to joint ventures into other foreign markets. Shin Hyon pointed out that LS Cable's presence in Poland gives them access to the European market. 'We are happy to co-operate with such a partner as Poland. We have two plants here, thanks to which our products reach almost the entire EU market. Our plants have educated employees,' he said.

Jerzy Kwieciński called attention to Poland and Korea alike having the country economy that is open and export-oriented. 'Poland's value of exports to GDP is around 60%, while in Korea it is 85%. These values are significantly above average. Both economies also had to rise from the ashes. After the war in the 1950s, the Korean economy grew from one of the poorest to one of the leading. Today, Korea counts among the most important exporters in the world and Poland aspires to increase its role in this respect,' Jerzy Kwieciński analysed. He also pointed out that the imbalance in the trade balance between Poland and Korea is due to such facts as Korean investments in Poland contributing to Polish exports, but destined for other countries, not Korea. 'Korea has chosen Poland as a doorway to Europe, and we are well prepared for this,' said the vice president of the Management Board of Bank Pekao S.A.

'As many as six in ten largest foreign investments in terms of the volume of capital invested between 2000 and 2022 came from Korea,' emphasised Paweł Kurtasz, adding that in a similar ranking taking into account the number of jobs created through investment, three out of ten companies were Korean. They are also increasingly involved in the construction of Poland's critical infrastructure, such as the Central Transport Hub, the nuclear power plant and Olefiny refineries. Paweł Kurtasz also said that although there is a large disproportion in trade between Korea and Poland, with Poland definitely importing more than it exports, Polish entrepreneurs increasingly have the opportunity to establish themselves in the



Korean market. 'Korea has to import 70 per cent of its food, and 75 per cent of milk produced using UHT technology in Korea comes from Poland,' he pointed out. As Kurtasz noted, more and more companies are interested in entering the Korean market. The PAIH office in Seoul clinched ten export contracts signed by various parties last year, and this year there are already nine. Currently, more than 200 entrepreneurs are interested in exporting to the Korean market.

Kim Hyun Cheol confirmed that Korea wants to import Polish food produce, and the co-operation agreements signed in July will make that easier. He added that well-educated human resources in big numbers are important advantages of investing in Poland. Zenon Kosiniak-Kamysz, in turn, pointed out that our advantage is the size of our economy and our location in the centre of Europe, also the attractiveness of Poland has increased in recent years. 'There has been a significant improvement in road infrastructure, and we have also extended a network of connections, so that we now have a direct air link to Seoul,' said Zenon Kosiniak-Kamysz.

According to Jerzy Kwieciński, tourism traffic between Poland and Korea should increase. This would contribute to an even greater intensification of co-operation, which is now entering a new era. 'Korea is no longer just the largest Asian investor in Poland, it is also becoming one of Poland's largest partners from around the world. Recently, this has involved not only economic aspects, but also political aspects related to the defence sector collaboration, he said, pointing out that funding is needed for this co-operation. He hopes that Bank Pekao S.A. will contribute to this. 'A few months ago, we signed a co-operation agreement with KB Kookmin Bank, Korea's largest bank. We would like to co-operate both with Korean companies in Poland and with Polish companies investing in Korea,' said Jerzy Kwieciński.

The Polish-Korean Forum provided an opportuni-

ty to strengthen ties between the two countries, as well as a platform for talks on major investment and development. Minister Marcin Przydacz pointed out that the Korean Prime Minister visited Poland only a few weeks after the country's President Yoon Suk-yeol had done so. 'The Prime Minister's participation in the Forum shows how interested South Korea is in Poland and how much it is betting on our country in this part of Europe,' said the head of the International Office at the President's Chancellery.

Poland, Ukraine, Europe – meaningful discussions with representatives of business and administration

Topics related to support and reconstruction of Ukraine were an important part of the agenda of the Krynica Forum 2023. Debates on these topics were held on the Ukrainian stage, with the inaugural discussion entitled 'Ukraine – Poland – European Union: Response to Russian aggression and further co-operation – an attempt to take stock'. The debate was attended by: Vasyl Zvarych – the ambassador of Ukraine to Poland, Maciej Popowski – Director General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO), Łukasz Kmita – Governor of Małopolska, and Paweł Borys – President of the Management Board of the Polish Development Fund, Chairman of the Supervisory Board of Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego. The discussion was moderated by Tomasz Jędruchów, a journalist who has been a TVP correspondent in Ukraine since the beginning of the Russian full-scale invasion and was awarded the Order of Merit of the Third Class by President Volodymyr Zelensky. 'From the first days of this attack, the people of Mało-



polska joined in to help, giving an unequivocal signal of their solidarity with the Ukrainians,' Province Governor Łukasz Kmita stressed. 'Invaluable contributions to this relay of aid were made by local governments and services: State Fire Service, soldiers from the 11th Małopolska Brigade of Territorial Defence, Police, scouts. Thanks to joint work and good organisation, in line with the principle "together we are stronger", refugees from Ukraine efficiently received the support they needed. Thank you to all those who participated in these activities.'

'The ongoing war is a fight for Ukraine, but it is also a fight for the whole free world,' Vasyl Zvarych stressed. After the debate, the ambassador posted on social media: 'Thank you for the interesting discussion at the Krynica Forum on Ukraine-Poland-EU co-operation in the face of Russian aggression. Important and edifying statements by @MPopowskiEU, @Lukasz_Kmita, @PawelBorys. Excellent moderation by @tdjedruchow.'

Minister Jadwiga Emilewicz on supporting Polish business in Ukraine

On the Ukrainian stage, the participation of Polish entrepreneurs in the work of rebuilding Ukraine and the support they need to become an important partner were debated. 'With support for the Polish business taking part in the reconstruction of Ukraine, we are not waiting for the day "after" the end of the war,' said Minister Jadwiga Emilewicz. 'Polish entrepreneurs are still present in Ukraine and are increasingly interested in new reconstruction projects. Our task is to provide them with support instruments that will help them to operate more safely on the Ukrainian market. The first such solution is the KUKI export insurance guaranteed by the State Treasury.'



Rafał Brzoska, co-founder and CEO of Integer Capital Group, spoke about what can improve Ukraine's investment image. 'Business in Ukraine means specific investments, but also risks, especially political risks, which should be spread, among others, by global institutions, e.g. through setting up special funds within the public-private partnership. A guarantee for the protection of capital is crucial, which should be provided by the government, the European Union, and, among others, the World Bank. Capital will be found, but we need to reduce risk in areas we do not control. Ukraine is a minefield. The role of the Ukrainian president and government is to encourage investors.'

Jacek Piechota, president of the Polish-Ukrainian Chamber of Commerce, pointed out that there was great interest across Polish investors in being present in Ukraine. 'Today we have about 500 Polish and Ukrainian companies in the Chamber. There's an economic revival occurring in Ukraine.'

Jarosław Fuchs, vice president of Bank Pekao S.A., assessed that it would be beneficial if Polish business received a 10% share in the Ukraine rebuilding process. 'Our role, the role of the financial market, will be to foster Polish business and Ukrainian business,' he said.

Szymon Waszczyński, chair of the Board of the International Association of Polish Entrepreneurs in Ukraine, drew attention to problems related to the operation of the Ukrainian tax administration, non-transparent laws, high levels of corruption, and the lack of transparent tender conditions. Staff shortages related to the fact that a large number of people have been called up to the army may prove to be an additional difficulty.



Support for Ukraine – culture and sport

The Krynica Forum 2023 was also full of accents and events tied to Polish-Ukrainian relations in the fields of culture and sport. During the concert 'The Heart of Europe', Natalia Kukulska sang 'Dream of Victoria', performing on stage together with a Ukrainian girl who recited a poem about her homeland. Even before the concert, a debate took place entitled 'The marathon of solidarity: How is the Polish sports world helping Ukraine?' with the participation of such personages as Robert Korzeniowski, a four-time Olympic champion involved in helping Ukrainian athletes. On the discussion panel moderated by editor Marek Sołdecki of Radio Kraków also sat Vasyl Turchyn, director of communications and marketing of the Galychanka Lviv sports club, and representatives of the Folkowisko Foundation.

'I believe that everyone who climbed to the top in sports has a moral obligation to do something more than just collecting medals and cups or setting records. When stepping up to the podium, we receive a special social mandate. We can and should leverage it to voice and spread important values. Nowadays, one of such values is to communicate our dissent against the atrocious aggression and against whataboutism as to this heinous war,' said Robert Korzeniowski in an interview with the Krynica Forum 2023 organisers.



Strategic security: debates with Polish Army commanders

'Poland facing the war in Ukraine: Challenges, predictions, and a new security strategy' was the title of the debate attended by Lieutenant General Wiesław Kukuła – Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Armed Forces, Grzegorz Ocieczek, PhD – assistant professor at the Department of Criminal Procedure (Faculty of Law and Administration, UKSW), Michał Marek, PhD – president of the Management Board of the Centre for Contemporary Security Studies, and Kamil Pachecki – specialist in Strategic Security and International Policy. The debate, moderated by editor Michał Karnowski, touched on such themes as those related to army make-up and size, the problem of disinformation and punishment for espionage, as well as the issue of public awareness of threats and national security.

'Great havoc was wrought in our mentality, in our consciousness, by the times of apparent security, of a dormant society. We fought against this paradigm for a very long time, and then came the war in Ukraine, which verified in a flash what modern warfare looks like, what the armed forces should be like. I ask that we forget this false paradigm as soon as possible. It is completely wrong. It instils in us the thinking that if we have a large army, it will not be adequate quality-wise. Quantity does not exclude quality,' General Kukuła stressed.

Gen. Błazeusz on the presence of the US army in Poland

The debate titled 'Poland's strategic security and Polish-American co-operation' was attended by: Lt Gen Piotr A. Błazeusz, PhD – First Deputy Chief of the General Staff of the Polish Army, Marcin Przydacz – secretary of state at the Chancellery of the President of the Republic of Poland, the head of the International Policy Office, Małgorzata Zachara-Szymańska, PhD, Professor at the Jagiellonian University – expert in the field of US leadership and foreign policy, and Michał Baranowski – director of the Warsaw office of the German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMF), managing director of GMF East.



Minister Marcin Przydacz noted that US military engagement in Poland has been increasing since Barack Obama's presidency. He assessed that Polish-American relations are developing very well regardless of whether a Democrat or a Republican holds the presidential office.

'Poland as a state is a robust reference point for the United States at the moment – in Europe and in the region alike. The US found a natural interest in Poland due to Russia's aggression on Ukraine,' said Małgorzata Zachara-Szymańska, PhD, in an interview before the Forum.

When asked about the possibility of a permanent US military presence in Poland, Gen Błazeusz replied that 'this is already happening'. There are 10 000 Americans stationed in Poland, Camp Kosciuszko is home to the advanced command of V Land Forces Corps, and Polish commanders have been integrated into the command system. He added that the issue of 'nuclear sharing' must not be a taboo subject

President's Council for Security and Defence Affairs on the transformation of Poland's security environment

Members of the National Development Council to the President of the Polish Republic took part in a debate entitled 'The war in Ukraine as a catalyst for shifts in Poland's security environment'. Discussion participants comprised Maj Gen (Res.) Roman Polko, PhD – commando soldier, two-time commander of GROM, doctor of management, Prof. Andrzej Janusz Zybertowicz – social advisor to the President of Poland, representative of the President of Poland in the Special Services College, Izabela Albrycht – director of the Cybersecurity Centre at AGH University of Science and Technology, and Przemysław Żurawski vel Grajewski, PhD – chairman of the Security and Defence Council, professor at the University of Lodz in the Department of Foreign and Security Policy Theory.



'The fact remains that you cannot win a war on your own,' General Roman Polko noted. 'We must be looking for coalition partners. Hence, from the viewpoint of Polish interests, economic relations are important, but so is the strategic partnership with the United States. You can count on them in moments of crisis, as they immediately redeploy their forces. It is important to strengthen NATO and to encourage our partners who are tardy in helping Ukraine to also take responsibility for their own security.'

Prof. Przemysław Żurawski vel Grajewski, in turn, drew attention to the importance of changes in social awareness. 'One of the most important transformations that has taken place in our country is that Poles know that the threat is real. They know that Russian occupation will mean what it has always meant, namely the extermination of the elite and the general destruction of the country. The only way to shield themselves from this threat is through military force.'

NSB patron debate on the draft law on action in the event of an external threat to state security

The National Security Bureau took patronage of the debate entitled 'Poland's response to conventional and hybrid threats: Conclusions from the draft of the presidential bill'. It was attended by Lt Gen Krzysztof Król – chief of staff at the Allied Command of the Combined Forces in Brunssum (the Netherlands), Piotr Zuzankiewicz, PhD – director of the Department of Defence Strategy and Planning at the Ministry of Defence, Maj Gen (Res.) Andrzej Reudowicz – advisor to the chief of the National Security Bureau, Lieutenant General Dariusz Łukowski – deputy chief of the National Security Bureau, and Przemysław Paździor, PhD, from the Academy of Military Art. The debate was heard by the head of the National Security Bureau, Minister Jacek Siewiera.

Participants emphasised the need to adapt national legislation to NATO doctrine, which has been changing for some time, particularly with regard to the deterrence function. Guests highlighted the issue of the relationship between political intentions and the army's actions as regards strategic planning. One of the goals of the law is to create new tools to respond to hybrid threats.

Gen. Dariusz Łukowski justified the necessity of the new law: 'With the duality of power, it is necessary to make very detailed legal regulations that will clearly indicate the scope of competence, the division and the consequences of certain actions taken by both sides,' he explained. 'The law allows for a more effective use of armed force in situations of danger, especially in undefined situations.'

Piotr Zuzankiewicz, PhD, referred to contemporary threats and non-military aspects of war, recognising that developments in technology make issues related to conflict below the threshold of war, to hybrid threats, extremely important.

Przemysław Paździorek, PhD, added how significant risk assessment in responding to threats was. Gen Krzysztof Król, drawing on his experience of working in NATO structures, stated that deterrence in peacetime has also become one of NATO's missions. He also stressed the importance of a comprehensive covera-



ge of state security in the law.

Experts on whether modern technology will replace traditional tools of warfare

'Technology at war: Are systems and software more important than tanks and missiles in the new race?' – such was the title of an exciting expert debate on the importance of modern technology in modern warfare. The point of reference was, of course, the situation in Ukraine, where a modern battlefield management system is being used on a large scale.



Participants in the discussion included Brig Gen Marcin Górka – the director of the Innovation Department at the Ministry of Defence; Prof. Andrzej Janusz Zybertowicz – social advisor to the president of Poland, representative of the president of Poland in the Special Services College; Bolesław Piasecki, PhD – employee of Palantir Technologies, researcher in security and special services; Col Krzysztof Malinowski – the head of the Research and Development Headquarters at the Armament Agency; and Brig Gen (Res.) Janusz Sobolewski – the office Director at the Department of Armament Projects at PGZ S.A.

'The use of modern technologies on the battlefield helps achieve two sorts of results. First, on the basis of the data which we already have and which is gathered by the existing sensors, detectors, and various devices tasked with analysing the world around us – e.g. photos shared on social media, drone footage, satellite images – software makes it possible to tease out correlations that a human can't catch, and from this it can proactively suggest certain solutions. The second type of software-induced advantage is process automation,' said Dr Bolesław Piasecki in an interview with the Krynica Forum 2023 organisers.

As he added, the dichotomy formulated in the topic



of debate between software and hardware is a false dichotomy. 'Absent the proper support from the software, artificial intelligence, and integrated systems, even the best hardware is unable to work with full efficiency. And of course software itself without equipment isn't able to carry out its mission to ensure state security, either. Actually, these are two sides of the same coin.'

Experts on cyber-resilience

The impact of technology on security was also discussed by the contributors to the debate 'From a troll to a spy: Combatting cybercriminals and cyberespionage as a task for institutions and citizens'. The guests of the panel were Col Łukasz Jędrzejczak – the deputy commander of the Cyberdefence Forces Component, Błażej Szczeciński – vice president of the Management Board of Bank Pekao S.A., Dr Marcin Wielec, PhD, UKSW Prof. – director of the Institute of Justice in Warsaw, and Marta Gromada – a disinformation-counteracting expert at NASK PIB.

With speakers representing different sectors, it was possible to talk about the comprehensiveness of the system to combat cyberthreats, which must be based on the co-operation across administration, the military, business, and financial institutions.

'It is only through this collaboration that we have a chance in this race. We can not only take part in it, but also win it,' Błażej Szczeciński argued. 'However, it is important to remember that this is an ultramarathon in which we have to analyse a lot of data on an on-going basis and react quickly,' President Szczeciński said. 'There are certain activities that should enter permanently into early childhood education. It is not about complex technical knowledge, more about a certain



attitude. Raising awareness of risks and being vigilant is key. The reality is, unfortunately, ahead of the legislation being introduced to protect users. The law tries to anticipate reality, but this is an extremely difficult – perhaps downright impossible – task.'

'We are at a very interesting moment because we are all celebrating the development of artificial intelligence. We are all very happy about it, it helps us in our daily work, but we at NASK are not happy because it makes the disinformers' job easier,' Marta Gromada noted. 'We are seeing the deepfake technology being used, the transformation of the voice and face of well-known people to present them in a different version, one in which they are believable, telling lies, and we as the audience will believe what we see,' the expert warned.

'Artificial intelligence seems like a wonderful thing, but it also brings new threats. We expect attacks generated by artificial intelligence, new ones that we haven't encountered before. New methods will emerge that our analysts will have yet to learn,' said Col Łukasz Jędrzejczak. 'The war in Ukraine has changed a lot. The whole banking sector, the whole infrastructure is put in a very high cybersecurity regime. In my opinion, we can say that as a country we have proved ourselves,' the colonel assessed.

Debate on the intensifying interest in geopolitics

Witold Repetowicz, PhD – assistant professor at the War Studies University (as moderator), Paweł Musiałek – president of the Jagiellonian Club and Krzysztof Wojczal – geopolitical analyst, author of the krzysztofwojczal.pl blog took part in the panel 'The phenomenon of interest in geopolitics after 24 February 2022: How to anticipate developments and create effective strategies?'

'Following social media, watching some circles, I get the impression that nowadays many people believe that geopolitics, strategy-making, can be dealt with by almost anyone,' Witold Repetowicz said in the discussion. 'It has been known for years that 37 million Poles are experts on football, after 24 February this expertise has also spread to geopolitics,' Krzysztof Wojczal assessed. 'Many people speak on geopolitical issues, spreading soundbites, without having any knowledge or competence. And to utter a single sentence, you have to read at least 10 sentences beforehand. But you can see a change, many people are

exploring knowledge and getting it from competent people. So there's a note of optimism, the public is starting to be competent in matters of what is in our national interest, how to perceive the state, its goals.' The president of the Jagiellonian Club assessed that geopoliticians play an important role alongside think tanks, academia, and others. 'There are often people at universities who have very limited or outdated knowledge,' Paweł Musiałek underscored.

During the debate, experts raised issues such as nuclear weapons, the war in Ukraine, and the strategy and prospects with regard to Russia. 'Russia may collapse, and we must be ready for it, it is our national interest. Poland must boost its potential to be safe – because such a scenario could be a threat to the entire region,' said Krzysztof Wojczal.

President's Council for Agriculture and Rural Areas on food security

'By feeding, they defend: Farmers and food producers in Poland's security' was the motto discussed by members of the National Development Council in a debate held under the Strategic Security programme stream. The discussion was attended by: Jan Krzysztof Ardanowski – a former Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Chairman of the Council for Agriculture and Rural Areas to the President of the Republic of Poland, Prof. Sylwester Tabor – the rector of the Agricultural University of Kraków, Prof. Marek Wigier of the Institute of Agricultural and Food Economics – National Research Institute and Wiktor Szmulewicz – the president of the National Council of Agricultural Chambers.

'An agriculture that produces food efficiently is not gi-

ven once and for all, Poland food security is not taken for granted. Therefore, the most important thing is to secure access to food for Poles on a permanent basis. We must take care of our own modern and efficient agriculture. Huge corporations are starting to invest in artificial meat, milk. When agriculture is no longer needed, someone else will take over the reins. We need to think about how to introduce civilisation changes in order not to destroy agriculture,' Minister Ardanowski argued.

Panellists addressed many issues, encompassing the competitive advantages of Polish agriculture, which are the produce quality and price as well as the farmers' innovation and expertise. They discussed issues of emerging drought problems and land management. The experts highlighted that efficiency and success in agriculture depend not solely on the size of the farm, but above all on its proper profiling.

National Development Council as a forum for debate

The panel entitled 'The National Development Council as a forum for debate of a consultative and advisory nature to the President of Poland' was devoted to the role of the NRC, its objectives, completed tasks and plans for the future. The panellists were: Prof. Piotr Czauderna – chairman of the Healthcare Council, Jan Krzysztof Ardanowski – chairman of the Agriculture Council, Prof. Marek Rymsza – chairman of the Social Affairs Council, and Jarosław Stawiarski – chairman of the Local Government Council. The discussion was moderated by Piotr Ćwik, deputy head of the Chancellery of the President of Poland.

Jan Krzysztof Ardanowski, referring to the main areas



of activity for the Agriculture Council, said that one of the most important issues is the lasting stability of food supply, that is, food security. He also touched upon the subject of introducing civilisation changes in Polish agriculture, admitting that one of its foundations is education, as education will largely determine whether farmers will be able to cope in the changing, increasingly complicated world.... The education system, at the level of both agricultural schools and agricultural and adjacent faculties at universities, is the future of Polish agriculture, if this agriculture is to fend off the global competition, is to take advantage of innovative solutions. He also stressed that it is extremely important for the future of agriculture to build national consensus on the future of the countryside and agriculture, to make society aware of the crucial role rural areas play for all of society.

Prof. Czauderna mentioned the National Oncology Strategy Act and the Medical Fund Act as successes of the Healthcare Council. He focused in particular on the Over-75s Health Centre Act, which deals with specific forms of geriatric care that responds to the problem of an ageing population and provides a comprehensive system to keep the elderly as independent as possible for as long as possible. He cited the preparation of a study on Poland's drug safety and the preparation of a law enabling the improvement of special medical care for children as key topics for future Council activities.

Prof. Rymsza touched on the topic of the Social Services Centre as a flagship project of the Social Affairs Council, claiming that an important aspect of its activities is the change of tack on its image, which allows people who previously did not benefit from social assistance for image or worldview reasons to use the Centres' support, even though they needed such assistance. Referring to other Council activities, he also reminded the listeners that an important project is the concept of personal assistance for people with disabilities as a systemic solution, which is one

of the key dimensions for improving the quality of life of people who have certain limitations. Like Prof. Czauderna, Prof. Rymsza also emphasised the need to minimise the social exclusion of elderly, disabled, or lonely people.

Marshal Stawiarski emphasised that the Local Government Council is a body that reacts briskly and addresses issues shaped by situations as they come. He cited examples of waste management, which he described as one big collective responsibility on the shoulders of local authorities. He also mentioned the Municipal Roads Act, which was a major success for the Council. 'It regulates the problem of a local authority taking over a municipal road of undetermined ownership,' he explained.

Local government: freedom is not given to us once and for all. You have to be ready to defend it

An interesting conclusion was provided by a panel discussion entitled 'Local government in the face of new security challenges' with the involvement from three rural-municipality heads: Bogusław Antos (Brzeźnica municipality), Mariusz Krystian (Spytkowice) and Grzegorz Gałgan (Polanka Wielka), and Prof. Konrad Meus from the Pedagogical University in Kraków.

'After Russia's attack on Ukraine, the vast majority of us realised that war is at the gates, very close to our homes and families. The bloody conflict is no longer just media news, a picture from faraway Africa or South America. It has become a reality, very real and extremely brutal. One that can also affect us,' Mariusz Krystian said. 'I realised that after more than 30 years of free Poland, the great changes in the economic and



political spheres, but also in the organisation of the state and the army, including the abolition of compulsory military service, we are completely unprepared for certain types of threats, especially at the local government level.'

The municipality leader talked about his initiative to hold theoretical and practical classes in civil defence for local community members. The classes in Spytkowice included information on Territorial Defence Forces operations, alerting, and chemical contamination; shooting classes were also held.

Parliamentarians on strategic security

For the panel entitled 'Poland's Strategic Security: Debate with the participation of representatives of parliamentary clubs', speakers included Stanisław Bisztyga – senator of the Republic of Poland from the Civic Platform from 2007 to 2011, Patryk Wicher – member of the Polish parliament (Law and Justice), Ireneusz Raś – Member member of the Polish Parliament parliament (Centre for Poland). The discussion was moderated by Jacek Bańka, the head of the Publicity Editorial Office of Radio Kraków. The discussion tackled security issues in the context of the pandemic, the war in Ukraine, and the development of the arms industry.

Senator Stanisław Bisztyga expressed concern about the long-term financial burden of arms expenditure. 'Poland spends too little on scientific research; if we do not want to be a backwater in all areas, we should



spend more of this money.'

A different view was expressed by Patryk Wicher, who pointed out that defence equipment has not been developed over the years, has not been modernised,

hence it needs more investment.

MP Ireneusz Raś admitted that the whole world was not prepared for the pandemic. He also said that the situation across our eastern border was a lesson for us to learn together, across divisions and without quarrels. 'How we responded to Ukraine's misfortune, how we responded as a society, was phenomenal. Polish foreign policy was able to build relationships on this.'

Experts on energy de-Russification in the European Union

The next Krynica Forum 2023 programme stream of covered the topic of energy security. The first panel served to answer the question 'De-Russification of the European energy sector – a realistic goal or pipe dream?'. The debate was attended by Agnieszka Kaźmierczak – Director General of the Euratom (European Atomic Energy Community) Supply Agency, Paweł Strączyński – vice president of the Management Board of Bank Pekao S.A., Tomasz Młynarski, PhD, DSc, Professor at the Jagiellonian University – expert in energy co-operation in the European Union, and Magdalena Maj – head of the Climate and Energy Team at the Polish Economic Institute.

'All of Europe wants to punish the criminal policy of the Russian Federation. The question is how to do this,' noted Prof. Tomasz Młynarski. According to him, this can be achieved through diversification of energy sources, reduction of consumption, and energy transition. He cited the example of France, which has taken the decision to reduce (and ultimately stop altogether) oil and gas consumption and is investing heavily in the transformation, currently building 50 offshore wind farms and developing a network of biogas plants. No internal combustion cars will be allowed in France from 2040, so there are currently subsidies for electric cars and 100 000 chargers for them in the country. Tomasz Młynarski believes that hydrogen will also play an important role and should not be feared. 'We need to be careful that Poland does not become an open-air museum for internal combustion cars, while the whole of Europe will be driving electrics,' he noted.

Paweł Strączyński, Bank Pekao S.A. vice president, noted that as the energy crisis related to the war in Ukraine began, there was a shortage of coal in Europe. This was because the European Union's policy is anti-coal, so mining and energy companies with mi-



nes had been limiting output for years. It was therefore impossible to suddenly prepare new pits, as this is an investment process that takes up to two years. 'In my opinion, coal will continue to form the basis of the country's energy security for years to come, unless highly efficient energy storage facilities are developed. However, there would have to be a technological breakthrough, which would enable the effective storage of energy from wind farms and photovoltaics,' said Paweł Strączyński. 'Hydrogen is a project of the future, and we are here and now. Today, the efficiency of a diesel engine is 50%, a petrol engine 40% and a hydrogen engine 25%,' he added. Paweł Strączyński explained that we should aim to reduce the use of natural gas and invest in renewable energy sources, including nuclear power plants. Yet prior to that, it will be necessary to use coal.

Agnieszka Kaźmierczak, Director General of the Euratom Supply Agency, spoke about other countries' approaches to transition and energy independence, noting that in addition to oil and gas, nuclear fuel was often imported from Russia. 'After Russia's aggression, the first decisive response was seen from Sweden and Finland, which momentarily broke their contracts to supply nuclear fuel to Russia, and Finland also the contract to build a new nuclear power plant. This year, a coalition of pro-nuclear states was formed under the leadership of France. Yet, I do not expect the whole of Europe to speak with one voice, as there will always be anti-nuclear countries such as Austria and Luxembourg.'

Magdalena Maj, head of the Climate and Energy Team at the Polish Economic Institute, noted that there had already been ideas in the past for the joint purchase of energy resources – natural gas. After the outbreak of the war, the topic returned and a platform for the joint purchase of gas was launched this year. However, it was not very popular. 'De-Russification has not yet occurred fully and totally. There are still countries that import liquefied gas from Russia, such as Hunga-

ry, Spain, and Austria. The full gas embargo is not yet in place. Poland is in a comfortable situation because it was building the Baltic Pipe gas pipeline at an ideal time,' said Magdalena Maj. She also pointed out that a great value is the possibility to exchange electricity within the European Union and the expansion of cross-border connections. 'Each country in the Union perceives its path to decarbonisation differently and sees its security differently. The Polish government is betting on its own sources and the expansion of inter-connectors,' she said.

Paweł Strączyński emphasised that ultimately it is necessary for Poland to achieve energy independence, which can be achieved by developing its own energy sources and by importing from countries other than Russia. 'The investment processes that are happening in the world – the construction of gas tankers and the expansion of logistical capacities for LNG transport by Australia or the United States – indicate that there will be no return to Russian gas. The Russian topic is closed,' he stated.

Minister Jacek Sasin: Nuclear power in Poland is already a tank engine hurtling down the tracks

The debate entitled 'Polish atom: What does the turn to nuclear power mean for us?' enabled the presentation of the most important Polish nuclear power projects. Taking part in the discussion were: Jakub Rybicki – the president of PGE PAK Energia Jądrowa S.A., Dawid Jackiewicz – vice president of the Management Board of Orlen Synthos Green Energy, and Piotr Podgórski – Chief Transformation Officer at KGHM Polska Miedź S.A. The foreword to the debate was given by Jacek Sasin, Minister of State Assets.

'Poland has been a pioneer when it comes to introducing SMRs into the functioning power industry. It is Poland's state-owned companies that have started to implement these projects. This is a viable prospect for complementing our energy mix. Orlen is investing in SMRs, followed by other Polish companies such as KGHM and Enea and the energy-intensive, industrial Grupa Azoty. This is an opportunity to produce cheaper energy,' Minister Sasin emphasised. 'Nuclear power in Poland is already a tank engine hurtling down the tracks that will change the Polish energy mix in less than a dozen years. In 12 years' time, the electri-



city may start flowing from a nuclear power plant and this date is as real as possible. One of our fundamental activities is to ensure the security of Poland and the Polish people. Apart from the military one, it is energy security that decides whether the country will retain its sovereignty, independence, and the possibility of unbridled development,' the minister said.

'Nuclear power, both large-scale and small-scale, is the only answer to the great challenges of the modern world and economy. If we want to meet the high standards dictated by the European Union, if we want our economy to be competitive and Polish households to benefit from cheap electricity and cheap heat, then nuclear energy is the only answer to these problems,' Dawid Jackiewicz explained. 'There is no other way that would get us to the point where we are safe, competitive, and heading towards exorbitant climate standards,' added the vice president of the Orlen Synthos Green Energy board.

As Jakub Rybicki, president of PGE PAK Energia Jądrowa S.A., pointed out, the energy system in Poland requires a mix that will seamlessly replace coal. 'The emergence of another segment – nuclear power – has the potential to support the Polish energy sector with further gigawatts of energy. In 2035, electricity

will already be flowing from our power plant in Kozłów. During the first year, we have taken very concrete steps: A company has been created, which is a merger of PGE and ZE PAK. We have the first preliminary location report,' he said. 'It was a great success to apply to the Minister of Climate for a fundamental decision, guaranteeing us that the government approves further steps. There is no other way and we do not understand partners, e.g. the Germans, who say that you can replace the atom with unstable sources. They contradict themselves by importing energy from France. In 10–15 years they will be importing from us,' he stressed.

The president of PGE PAK reminded everyone that next month will mark one year since the meeting in Seoul at which the memorandum of co-operation was signed. 'Since then we've moved with "atomic force". We are at the moment that a year later we have an application filed for the fundamental decision, a Polish company has been set up – 50/50 share division between PGE and ZE PAK, we have approvals from the Office of Competition and Consumer Protection, we have assurances that Korean money will flow, also Polish entities can count on support. Korean experts have prepared a preliminary location report that has ruled out defects, we're now proceeding with further studies,' he enumerated. 'We have made a commitment that the first electricity will flow in 2035. I am optimistic – I believe that the EU's attitude towards nuclear energy will change. I am happy with the way we are perceived in Poland. I've had a number of conversations – there is a huge acceptance. Trade unionists are also keen, they ask at what level of involvement Polish workers will be included,' said Jakub Rybicki.

Experts: nuclear, wind, and solar power are the future of the Polish energy sector

'Is decarbonisation of the Polish energy sector possible without the atom?' – the answer to this question was sought by speakers at a debate hosted by Michał Niewiadomski, journalist and the Energy Club founder. The discussion was attended by: Paweł Gajda, PhD – an expert in nuclear energy (AGH), Anna Bałamut, PhD – assistant professor at the Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski Krakow University, Zuzanna Nowak – director of analyses at The Opportunity Institute for Foreign



Affairs, and Tadeusz Widuch – project director at TAURON Nowe Technologie.

Zuzanna Nowak pointed out that on the road to decarbonisation, nuclear energy is the most optimal solution, although Germany is phasing out nuclear for ideological and political reasons. 'In terms of geography, we are in a similar starting position to Germany, where the world's largest source of low-carbon electricity, hydropower, is and will continue to be marginal. We are left with three technologies: wind, be it onshore or offshore, photovoltaics, and nuclear,' remarked Paweł Gajda, PhD.

'As one of the largest suppliers of heat energy in the south of Poland ... at the moment we are conducting with great intensity a lot of investments that are tied to gasification, with storing heat energy generated from renewable sources, which we are building at our combined heat and power plants or heating plants. Of course, looking at SMR technologies, together with our partner KGHM, we are trying to adapt these installations for the purposes of district heating,' said Tadeusz Widuch of TAURON Nowe Technologie.

Anna Bałamut, PhD, emphasised the role of education, which can help dispel stereotypes about nuclear energy.

Poland can spearhead the energy transition in the region

In the debate entitled 'Efficiency, security, resilience to crises: New investments in the energy sector', under the patronage of TAURON, the following attended: Paweł Szczeszek – the president of the Management Board of TAURON Polska Energia, Paweł Borys – the president of the Management Board of the Polish De-



velopment Fund, chairman of the Supervisory Board of Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego, Przemysław Kołodziejak – vice president of the Management Board for Operations of PGE, and Jakub Kowaleczko – vice president of the Management Board for Commercial Affairs of Enea Group.

'Knowledge of the electricity market is extremely important in order to win public acceptance of what is happening in it. Take the electricity invoice, for example. Few users are able to tell what the sundry items listed on it are about. The same is true of the technologies the companies use in the sector,' Przemysław Kołodziejak said at the Forum.

Whether Poland can be an emerging regional leader in energy transition was meanwhile discussed by Prof. Jerzy Lis, DSc Eng – rector of the AGH University, Piotr Sabat – member of the Management Board for Development, ORLEN S.A., Artur Warzocha – vice president of the Management Board for Corporate Affairs, TAURON Polska Energia, and Mariusz Błasiak – head of Development Projects and Corporate Governance, State Forests.

'The transition process is difficult and long, unless you want to make a radical cut, causing huge social pro-



blems, but then people will be the victims. And we will create such a market distortion that we will have the phenomenon of energy poverty,' said Artur Warzocha. According to Piotr Sabat, the transformation must be based on three pillars – and it is on these that Orlen S.A. is building its operations. 'This is, firstly, a plan. Ours is included in the strategy until 2030. In it, we assume that by the decade's end we will be producing as much as 9 GW of power from renewable sources. Secondly, you have to have financing – which we do. We plan to invest PLN 120 bn by 2030. Thirdly, we have the best people to work with and we are constantly looking for qualified staff, especially in the industries of the future. Hence, for example, our Hydrogen Academy pilot programme.'

The hydrogen revolution through the eyes of experts and representatives of key energy companies

'At the dawn of the 21st century, Polish engineers made a huge contribution to the advances in hydrogen acquisition and use technologies, but usually working for Western, global corporations. Now it is time for us to recognise their knowledge and talent in Poland,' said Prof. Magdalena Dudek of AGH University, a participant in the hydrogen-focused debates. Hydrogen economy panels at Krynica Forum 2023 attracted a lot of interest because, according to experts, it is hydrogen that most effectively helps achieve ambitious climate goals.

'Our conglomerate is successfully developing tools to



extract hydrogen from the waste treatment process, while promoting the idea of a circular economy. Each production method for this valuable raw material ultimately leads to achieving the main task of reducing emissions,' said Dominika Niewierska, Head of New Business Stream Development at PKN Orlen. 'Poland is the third producer of hydrogen in Europe, and Małopolska is one of the first regions in Poland to produce hydrogen,' stressed Andrzej Czulak, PhD, president of the Polish Composite Technology Cluster, president of MCH2.

In turn, Patryk Demski, vice president of the board for strategy and development at the Tauron Group, highlighted the need to invest in the hydrogen industry to support its advances. 'Two large hydrogen projects cost 800 million, to say nothing of the money for rousing the hydrogen sector in all 27 EU countries. Real European solidarity on hydrogen is needed to seriously lead up to a low- and zero-carbon economy,' he said.

Climate security: discussions on the challenges of a just transition, climate neutrality, and sovereignty

As part of the climate stream, two debates were held by the National Development Council to the President of Poland. The discussion entitled 'Between sovereignty and centralisation: Can Poland shape her own policy in the environmental sector (climate, nature, forests, just transition)?' was attended by Prof. Krystian Szczepański – the director of the Institute of



Environmental Protection – National Research Institute, member of the Council on Environment, Energy, and Natural Resources to the President of Poland, Edward Siarka – Deputy Minister of Climate and Environment, and Marek Marecki – director of the Regional Directorate of State Forests in Krosno. 'Forest policy must be shaped domestically. It is our national interest. Poland has all the instruments needed to properly implement forest policy. We follow the Forest Act and the Nature Conservation Act. The two create the framework and standards for sustainable management,' Deputy Minister Edward Siarka stressed. 'There is no one-size-fits-all approach to forest management. Thanks to the knowledge and many years of experience of Polish foresters, we can be proud of good health of forests, species richness, constant expansion of forest areas and proper level of protection,' said the deputy minister.

In turn, the discussion entitled 'Global warming – how will the approach to climate change affect the competitive advantages of the EU and Member States?' was attended by: Paweł Sałek – advisor to the President of the Republic of Poland, Paweł Mzyk – deputy director for emissions management at the Institute of Environmental Protection, and Jan Tabor – deputy director general for forest management of the State Forests.

Jan Tabor, deputy director general for forest management of the State Forests, spoke about the key importance of education for the energy transition. He called attention to the State Forests pursuing many educational projects to make Polish people aware of the huge benefits that sustainable forest management and nature conservation offer.

Director Tabor also spoke about wood production. 'Wood has come to be an exclusive product, a certain marker of social status and is perceived as an ecological product. Our stable situation, a stable supply of raw timber – provided that we manage to stop the

EU's ideas for a significant reduction in the supply of this timber – will also be an opportunity for the country and Europe for economic development and a certain increase in competitiveness,' he explained. Assessing the EU's climate policy as a whole, he acknowledged that the European Union wants to be a leader for the whole world and show how climate change should be tackled, but expressed concern about the future, saying that as Europe we are left alone with this. 'If other countries fail to commit to similar action, we are competitively at a loss.'

Director Paweł Mzyk also commented on the EU's climate policy, describing it as being forced a bit ... even in the issue of forcing the energy mix. He also stated that some regulations introduced do more harm than good. However, he expressed the view that a sensibly conducted climate policy is important in the long term. 'This may give us a competitive advantage as Europe, but we need to be careful not to throw the baby out with the bathwater, so that the renewable energy sources do not make us dependent on other raw materials.'

Two panels were also prepared under the auspices of Jastrzębska Spółka Węglowa. They dealt with climate neutrality and energy transition, taking into account the role of coking coal as a resource necessary to achieve these goals and an important capital as the country's own strategic raw material. The first discussion was attended by: Marek Wesoły – secretary of state at the Ministry of State Assets, government plenipotentiary for the transformation of energy companies and coal mining, Tomasz Cudny – the president of the Management Board of Jastrzębska Spółka Węglowa S.A., Artur Badylak – director of the Methane Removal and Management Office at Jastrzębska Spółka Węglowa, Prof. Stanisław Prusek – Director of the Central Mining Institute – National Research Institute and Prof. Marek Borowski from the AGH University in Kraków.

'I believe that this debate will contribute to a robust discussion on the shape of our energy future. Each time, I emphasise the importance of coking coal as a key factor for achieving climate neutrality goals, ensuring the security of the steel industry. Another important element in our company is the economic use of methane,' said JSW CEO Tomasz Cudny.

Foresters and scientists on the Polish forest management model

Will climate change lead to the extinction of Polish forests? Can the adverse phenomena be stopped? Will the EU's 'Fit for 55' strategy help? The debate to find answers to these questions was attended by scientists from the University of Agriculture in Krakow: Prof. Jarosław Socha and Luiza Tymińska-Czabańska, PhD, as well as Józef Kubica, Director General of the State Forests

'Forest management offers many possibilities. On the one hand, nature and forests can be protected, and on the other, the raw material needs of the Polish economy can be met,' Dr Tymińska-Czabańska stressed. A similar opinion was voiced by Prof. Jarosław Socha, who pointed out that leaving forests to their own devices could bring about the spread of diseases, die-off, and fires.

'A very big challenge is to reduce the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. We know that forests bind this harmful gas, but they only do so up to a certain age. Old trees not only no longer absorb it, but actually emit it. Meanwhile, the proposed EU solutions aim to protect old trees, which to some extent limits the appearance of new plantings on a larger scale – so, paradoxically, clinging to the "Fit for 55" package will not achieve this goal,' Professor Socha noted. Director Józef Kubica recalled that the State Forests manage 77% of the forest areas in Poland. 'Our 100-year tradition shows how forests should be protected. We have our "Polish Green Deal", which we implement through sustainable stand management. It takes into account the natural, social, and economic functions of forests.'



Business and economy: debates with the participation of representatives from leading actors of Polish economic life

At Krynica Forum 2023, the 'Business and Economy' stream also featured debates on economic patriotism and on city support for entrepreneurs, as well as panels on new trends in banking and the impact of modern technology on customer communication and business development. Board members of key companies, respected analysts, and academics spoke at the discussions.

'The sharing economy, the reuse of things, the ESG-focused economy are new trends in young people's consumption. For now, however, we don't know how widespread this phenomenon is – we are researching it,' said Wojciech Werochowski, Bank Pekao S.A. vice president, during the debate 'The new consumer in new times? Moods and consumer activity on the threshold of the next quarter century'.

'Poland started out as a typical technological networking hub where some of the global work takes place. Today, it has become a place for forging a "sea change" in key areas such as cybersecurity. This is because it turned out that we have competences which cannot be found anywhere else in the world,' argued Jacek Przybylski, Customer Experience Director, leader of the Kraków branch of Cisco. 'The technological revolution is taking place on many levels and in many areas – from energy and climate to health in the broader sense to cybersecurity – and we must not lose sight of any of them.'



President of Bank Pekao S.A.: The zloty is the guarantor of Polish financial security

What determines the economic security of states and citizens? What are the threats and what are the opportunities in a world that has changed dramatically in the last few decades as a result of pandemics and war? Which areas of the economy will gain in importance? Which sectors are at risk of stagnation and which will grow dynamically? In the discussion entitled 'Financial security in the new geopolitical reality – determinants, opportunities, challenges' under the auspices of Bank Pekao S.A. was attended by Henryk Kowalczyk – chair of the Economic Committee of the Council of Ministers, Leszek Skiba – president of Bank Pekao S.A., Marek Dietl – president of the Warsaw Stock Exchange, Maciej Brzozowski – vice president of PKO BP, and Prof. Stanisław Mazur – rector of the Cracow University of Economics.

According to Minister Henryk Kowalczyk, Poles are given a sense of stability by the state's good macroeconomic situation, healthy public finances, high ratings from rating companies, and the lowest unemployment in Europe. 'Poles have invested PLN 57 bn in State Treasury bonds, which protect citizens' money against inflation. This is the best proof of Poles' trust in their own state,' he said.

The president of Bank Pekao S.A. highlighted the importance of the State Treasury's large share in the financial sector for the security of the system and of the economy as a whole. 'The zloty is a guarantor of our financial security, because it allows the NBP and indirectly the government the freedom to shape fiscal policy,' Leszek Skiba argued. In turn, Prof. Stanisław Mazur presented the advantages of the common European currency in terms of trade, debt service, and inflation levels. 'The advantages of the eurozone are obvious, but it'd deprive the NBP of its sovereignty over economic policy. If we met the conditions for convergence, we should start preparing for the euro-area entry.'

WSE CEO Marek Dietl spoke about the development of the capital markets and the growing role of the stock exchange, which holds the top position in the region. 'Our new trading system is going to reinforce this, as it stands out for its efficiency and transparen-



cy, which inspires confidence among investors.' President Dietl also spoke about Poland's role in the CEE region. 'We are the region's financial centre in terms of the capital market. There is a need to go beyond technology suppliers (Germany, US). We have spent a total of 8 per cent of GDP on aid to Ukraine and armaments, moving into war economy mode. At the same time, in order not to lose the momentum of economic growth, we need to bet on industrial development, increase spending on innovation, and popularise forms of defence such as the creation of citizen armies.'

Maciej Brzozowski, vice president of the PKO Bank Polski Management Board, also spoke about financial security in the context of technology. 'The financial system is a set of interconnected elements. Financial security is enhanced by technological progress based on our input, solutions, and knowledge. PKO intensively participates and supports solutions from public administrations. We were the first to deploy the mObywatel app.'

On entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship in the new economic reality

The Entrepreneurship Council to the President of Poland organised the debate 'Entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship in times of war: What impact does Russian aggression against Ukraine have on Poland's economic position?'. Its contributors were Zdzisław Sokal – advisor to the President of the Republic of Poland, Ireneusz Derek – chairman of the Board of Plastics UA, advisor to the Board of PGNiG S.A. for Ukraine, Member of the National Investment Council to the President of Ukraine, Ary Naïm – regional manager for Central and South-East Europe at Inter-



national Finance Corporation, and Marek Matraszek – president of CEC Group.

'Ukraine will win this war, but the central thing is what state it will then be in. What will be left of its potential? How quickly will Ukraine be able to rebuild itself? And here there is certainly a whole forest of solutions and opportunities for Poland, for the Polish people and for Polish business,' said Ireneusz Derek.

Ary Naim expressed the opinion that although it is unknown how long the war lasts, Ukraine will be a completely different country afterwards, one much more integrated with the EU. In his opinion, Poland will play an important role in this transformation.

Marek Matraszek referred to Poland's economic situation and stated that the war had caused a colossal change in terms of arms purchases in Poland. He cited the example of contracts with Korea: 'The Koreans look at Poland as a certain springboard to other markets in Central and Eastern Europe.'

The phenomenon of Polish entrepreneurship and the elimination of barriers to the SME development was the conversation topic for Maciej Zdziarski – programme director of the Krynica Forum – and Roman Kluska, the founder of Optimus, who in Krynica-Zdrój received the Krynica Forum 2023 award on behalf of Polish business. At the meeting, the entrepreneur touched, among other things, on the difficulties of



running smaller businesses and presented the postulated solutions. He also talked about he found inspiration in Roland Baader, a German economist, entrepreneur, writer, and publicist.

'Over the years, each successive regulation has been a log at the entrepreneur's feet. To grow a company, the most important thing was not the employee, but the office,' said Roman Kluska. 'Employees and work efficiency, innovation were relegated to the second, third, fourth plan; the officials with their regulations became more important,' he explained and added that big players have an advantage over small entrepreneurs. 'Big companies have access to decision-makers, chances for lobbying, and thus they are the ones who shape the realities of economic life. The more regulation there is, the fewer opportunities a small entrepreneur has. Poland is one of the few countries in the world where, in a given industry, all entities are bound by the same regulation.'

In turn, taxes and how to reconcile the growing budget needs with the upcoming challenges were discussed by: Artur Soboń – secretary of state at the Ministry of Finance, Jarosław Sachajko – member of parliament of the Republic of Poland, member of the Committee on Public Finance, Kazimierz Kleina – senator of the Republic of Poland, member of the Committee on Budget and Public Finance, Łukasz Kozłowski – chief economist of the Federation of Polish Entrepreneurs, vice president of the Management Board of the Centre for Legislative Analyses and Economic Policy (CALPE), and Wojciech Bronicki – tax advisor, former director of the Excise Tax Department at the Ministry of Finance.

The deputy minister of finance spoke, among other things, about the Polish Deal. 'It was a revolution that taught us that when it comes to taxation, a gradual and well-thought-out evolution is a better course of action. While duly noting the rightful accusations levelled against the Polish Deal, it is worth pointing out that in the end it brought the largest ever income tax reduction and left around PLN 37 bn in taxpayers' pockets,' said Artur Soboń.

'What is key is not the level of taxes, but their predictability, which we have unfortunately had a problem with recently,' said Łukasz Kozłowski, chief economist at the Federation of Polish Entrepreneurs. MP Jarosław Sachajko was of a similar opinion. 'Taxes should be predictable, as the investment process starts with a decision whether it is worthwhile to get financially involved in a given industry at all. Knowing how it will develop in the years to come, the investor makes an informed decision.'

Bankers on new developments in the housing and mortgage market

'Between need and risk: Mortgages, the real estate market, and consumers in the new times' – the discussion on this topic was attended by Paweł Musiałek – president of the Jagiellonian Club, Marcin Gadomski – vice president of the Management Board of Bank Pekao S.A., Rafał Litwińczuk – vice president of the Management Board of Alior Bank, and Bartłomiej Marona, PhD, professor at UEK, director of the 'Real estate estimation' postgraduate programme at the UEK Krakow Business School.

'Following the launch of the 2% loan, demand has exceeded expectations and supply is low. The property development market is destabilised. The 2% loan is fundamentally a very good programme and the instability of demand and supply will be contained,' predicted Marcin Gadomski.

'In the case of the "Safe 2% Loan" programme, the main problem at the moment is not so much the number of applications but the number of banks that joined the programme at first,' Rafał Litwińczuk, vice president of Alior Bank Management Board, pointed out on his part. He explained that at the outset three banks participated in the programme. Now there are



eleven.

According to Rafał Litwińczuk, customers perceive the programme as beneficial. However, problems with rising property prices accompany the high interest in the loan. In the vice president's view, the price increase is not necessarily due to the 'Safe 2% Loan' programme uptake. 'The reason is certainly the smaller supply of flats. And the supply of flats is lower because in the last quarter of 2022, developers simply applied for fewer permits and started fewer building projects due to high interest rates,' he argued. Another factor influencing the increase in housing prices could be the influx of people from Ukraine, which provided a stimulus not only for the rental market, but for the entire property market, also in the area of purchases. Another factor, in Rafał Litwińczuk's view, is the activity of housing funds from Scandinavia, which last year bought several thousand flats on the Polish market.

UEK Professor Bartłomiej Marona, PhD, pointed out the additional objectives pursued by the programme, namely to support the construction sector and the property development industry. He also drew attention to the additional effects of the programme. 'Buying a flat also means buying furniture, a fridge, a washing machine, etc.' he noted. 'Despite it being a typical demand-side programme ..., I think it is – at the moment it was rolled out – an appropriate programme, especially in the context of our economic development, the construction sector, and the real estate market as a whole,' the professor said.

Looking to the future – important discussions on the brink of a new quarter century

'A good climate for innovation – how to build it?' – the answer to this question was sought by the participants in the debate under the 'Looking forward' thematic stream. The following took part in the debate: Prof. Jan Tadeusz Duda – chair of the Małopolska Regional Assembly, Jarosław Bułka, PhD – plenipotentiary of the mayor of Kraków for digital transformation, Maciej Mróz – vice president of the management board for the operator TAURON Dystrybucja, Kazimierz Murzyn – president of the LifeScience Cluster Kraków foundation and managing director of the LifeScience Cluster Kraków Initiative, member of the SCANBALT strategic group, and Krzysztof Waśniewski, PhD – lecturer at the Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski Krakow University.



At the panel on artificial intelligence and quantum computers, it was forecast how they would affect the economy and business. 'I have been following the development of quantum computers for about five years. Initially, when I spoke to universities and startups around the world, no one could say what such a computer could be used for. Today, we already have the first business applications, which opens up completely new perspectives in areas such as business process modelling, materials analysis, logistics or efficient decision-making. We are looking at quantum computers as tools to achieve previously unachievable goals, also in the context of cybersecurity,' said Piotr Ciepiela, partner at EY, a global leader in architecture security and modern technology.

In turn, Paweł Skruch, DSc Eng, AGH Prof. from the Faculty of Electrical Engineering, Automation, Computer Science and Biomedical Engineering, manager and chief AI/ML engineer at the Aptiv Technical Centre, took part in a debate entitled 'The economy of the future: What will the development of artificial intelligence change?'. Also participating in the debate were Prof. Adrian Horzyk from AGH, Łukasz Grala – the TIDK president, and Ewelina Jurczak, PhD, from the Business School – National Louis University. 'We are now seeing AI through the prism of such



solutions as ChatGPT and skipping over other fields where AI operates smoothly and is present in our everyday lives even if we have no idea. There is plenty of artificial intelligence in any given smartphone and in applications that we use. There is more and more of it in cars we travel in. If we use such devices as coffee machines, fridges, or vacuum cleaners, the AI is present there as well, and somehow we are not afraid about that. Let me stress once again that fear is the product of no awareness.... Hence, we need to change the whole way of thinking and teaching the young generation in this regard,' Prof. Skruch said in an interview with the Krynica Forum 2023 organisers. The debate 'A Union of pencil pushers or a Union of nations? The future of the European Union' was attended by Prof. Tomasz Grzegorz Grosse, PhD, political scientist, sociologist, expert at the Sobieski Institute, the Warsaw Institute and the Jagiellonian Club's Centre for Analysis, and Przemysław Żurawski vel Grajewski, PhD, chairman of the Security and Defence Council, professor at the University of Lodz in the Department of Foreign and Security Policy Theory. 'We are in a situation of fundamental geopolitical changes, a crisis concerning the eastern border of the European Union. There are many indications that the conflict in Ukraine is not the most important of the challenges currently facing the Union,' says Prof. Tomasz Grzegorz Grosse. He mentioned the concept of multipolarity, which was advocated by Western Europe. 'The idea was that two poles should emerge – in Paris and Berlin. And that they should be strong enough to govern Europe independently, but also to be reckoned with by Washington, Moscow, and Beijing. However, this vision is collapsing,' explained Prof. Grosse. He pointed to economic issues as a second challenge. 'We have at least two projects that weaken the Union's potential. The first is the eurozone, which is problematic in a situation of market bumps and has been in a state of chronic bailout for several years. We go from crisis to crisis and bail out the eurozone all the time. This mechanism is dysfunctional. The second mechanism is climate policy, which weakens Eu-

rope's geopolitical potential and elevates China and the US, while it divides and weakens Europe,' the political scientist and sociologist said. 'Another challenge is the migration crisis, which is ruining European integration. The flagship project, the Schengen Area, is creaking at the seams and encouraging Euroscepticism. There is another crisis, triggered by Western Europe – the issue of the European rule of law. It is a toxic crisis, devastating in its consequences for unity, and tearing the Union apart from the inside.'

Przemysław Żurawski vel Grajewski, PhD, said that the basic challenge was the need to answer the question of how the community should continue to function in the absence of a European demos, i.e. a nation politic. 'It is about the lack of citizens who feel a sense of belonging to this community and are ready to make sacrifices for it. The Union does not have this resource. It consists solely of democratic states. Therefore, problems that require the consumption of strategic resources cannot be solved strategically. We are only reaching for surface solutions,' said the chair of the Security and Defence Council. He cited the example of Lampedusa and the migrant crisis. 'What did France do? It closed its borders and showed no solidarity with Italy. Another example was the pandemic-era two-week breakdown of the single market in medical supplies. For it turned out that France was confiscating materials transported through its territory for Italy. The Germans did the same to Austria. Another example – when the Georgian-Russian war broke out, an extraordinary EU summit was not called until September, because everyone loves the Union, but not so much that they would interrupt their holidays. That is one of the challenges – the ability to mobilise in a crisis, to put resources to use, not just issue declarations. The lack of demos, the lack of willingness to make sacrifices are causing the institutional inefficiency of the Union, alongside a high level of ambition that is unattainable.'

Prof. Grosse mentioned the two main objectives that underpinned the Union – peace and economic gro-



wth. 'Then, to these two goals, which are ambitious in themselves, other aims were added, and they began to destabilise Europe. They were supposed to complete the internal market and transform it, but the naked eye can see that they are reducing Europe's development potential. Cohesion policy was supposed to ease development and allow the new EU Member States to catch up with the "old" Europe. Meanwhile, the costs of green transition are wiping out everything the EU has given us so far. Poles are having to fork out huge sums for this purpose. What was good, we are now destroying ourselves. Let us stop calling it climate policy – it is a policy of pauperising the Europeans. It will lead to the gigantic impoverishment of Europe. We are turning economic development upside down. And that shows where this noble project is.'

According to Professor Żurawski vel Grajewski, one of the most important objectives of the European Union today should be to restore the balance between states. 'It should be admitted that we do not all have the same interests, but we resolve our differences at the negotiating table. Let us return to the motto: unity in diversity. Unions do not fall apart due to a lack of centralisation, but due to over-centralisation, which has the opposite effect.'

The European Union – this time in the context of EU-Poland relations – was also debated by representatives of parliamentary clubs. The panellists were: Piotr Sak – member of the Polish parliament (Sovereign Poland), Urszula Nowogórska – member of the Polish parliament (PSL), Bogusław Sonik – member of the Polish parliament (non-attached, formerly PO). Jacek Bańka, the head of the Publicity Editorial Office of Radio Kraków, moderated the discussion. Issues raised in the debate included sovereignty and the rule of law, as well as the Ukrainian grain embargo and migration policy.

Urszula Nowogórska referred to the topic of the Ukrainian grain embargo, saying that Polish farmers must come first. She added that, according to the 'State of





Polish political thought for new times

The 'Looking forward' thematic stream also included the debate 'Sense or sensibility? Polish political thought for new era', with the participation of Mirosław Styczeń – former representative of Poland in the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, president of the Management Board of the Pro Bono Musicae Association, Rafał Ziemkiewicz – writer, journalist, political and social commentator, and Bartosz Brzyski – spokesman of the Jagiellonian Club, member of the editorial board of the Pressje ideas magazine. Paweł Lisicki – journalist, publicist, essayist, and literary translator – acted as moderator. Explaining the topic of the panel, he stated that by romanticism we mean being guided by an idea and not thinking about the consequences.

Rafał Ziemkiewicz, recalling the Polish government's decisions in the last years before the outbreak of WW2 (e.g. the reaction to the partition of Czechoslovakia), stated that the problem was often failing to plan what to do next. 'The fault of Polish politics is not that it succumbs to romanticism, the fault of Polish politics is that it succumbs to wishful thinking. We imagine the desired development of events and cannot imagine that it could be otherwise,' he said. Analysing contemporary politics, he claimed that its flaw is that it is always tribal politics, and tribalism consists in the argument 'we are better than you'. In this situation, everything else is just the fallout.

'We can talk at length about politics, but let us not forget that politics is happening before our eyes. Today I spoke to colleagues in the Republic of Korea who are seriously concerned about North Korea's deepening alliance with Russia. Politics is an ongoing process. And every political decision has its consequences,' Mirosław Styczeń said.

Bartosz Brzyski referred to the title of the panel and stated that in the context of the juxtaposition it con-



the EU' report, the Union is planning to change its approach to agriculture, which offers an opportunity for things to turn out better for farmers. However, she said that despite the changes and difficulties taking place, it is easier and safer to be part of a community than to drift alone through various threats. 'Being part of the European Union, while maintaining its distinctiveness in various areas, offers more security and more development opportunities.'

Piotr Sak, MP, expressed his concern that the subject of the embargo would be another rift with the European Union. 'In spite of us having shown solidarity with Ukraine repeatedly, there are some places where we need to look after the interests of our farmers. We see once again that the European Union does not want to help the Polish government and Polish society,' the MP said. He stressed that Polish interests must be defended without fail. 'We entered a completely different EU, but it is transforming and unfortunately it is moving away from its heritage, from its roots, and this is causing perturbations, he stressed. He also expressed the view that when it comes to the migrant crisis, the Union has chosen to finance the problem rather than solve it.'

Bogusław Sonik, MP, shared the opinion of previous speakers on the reluctance of the European institutions towards the Polish government. He also stated that the Ukrainian grain issue was influenced by the huge interests of multinationals and perhaps this also influenced the position of the European institutions. With regard to the action of the EU, he also added that these days the question arises about the effectiveness of such an institution in the international arena. As an example of ineffectiveness, he mentioned immigration policy, for which, in his opinion, there is helplessness and different outlooks, no European institution is able to create any effective policy because it is torn apart by different kinds of ideologies. He identified as the main threat to the EU future the encroachment into the ideological sphere, which was reserved for the Member States.

tains, he disagrees with the position that one dominates the other. 'The problem is that one does not serve the other, i.e. if we have a romantic vision of Poland, we often do not have a vision of how the state apparatus should serve this concept. The basis of Polish identity is romanticism,' he acknowledged. 'We as Poles feel that a betrayal of romanticism would be a betrayal of Polishness. The question is how to synthesise sensibility and sense to make Poland realistically romantic.'

Poland as a huge construction site – on urban, transport, and infrastructure development

The debate entitled '21st-century urban transport in view of the energy transition' served to diagnose new directions for city transport development taking into account climate change and the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. What strategies and technological innovations can contribute to the transformation of urban transport towards more sustainable and greener solutions? What types of vehicles and propulsion technologies can play a key role in reducing emissions and improving the efficiency of urban transport? Answers to these questions were sought by Prof. Andrzej Szarata, DSc – rector of the Cracow University of Technology, together with Łukasz Franek, director of the Public Transport Authority of Kraków and Rafał Bajczuk from the Foundation for the Promotion of Electric Vehicles.

The rector of the Cracow University of Technology also took part in a Ministry of Infrastructure partner debate 'How to succeed in the infrastructure construction market in Poland?'. Jan Styliński – the president of the Management Board of the Polish Construction Em-



ployers' Association and Tomasz Żuchowski – acting general director of National Roads and Motorways also attended the debate.

'We started almost from scratch. Now we have new roads, built to the latest standards. They are made of very good quality materials. Their quality is therefore superior to that of German or French, with roads built 20, 30, 40, and even 50 years ago,' Prof. Szarata said. Meanwhile, Director Tomasz Żuchowski stated that Poland is 'the largest construction site in Europe' in terms of roads. 'We are ambitiously executing the goals set by the government. Everyone can see the roads being built. A lot of people, no matter their political preferences, admit that driving in Poland is much better,' he stressed.

Increasing the accessibility of public transport in cities and regions was discussed by Łukasz Smółka – deputy marshal of the Małopolska Voivodeship, Arnold Bresch – member of the Management Board and director for investment implementation at PKP Polskie Linie Kolejowe S.A., Dawid Kmiecik – expert in electromobility and modern energy (Ecomotional), and Piotr Mikiel – director of the Transport Department at the Association of International Road Carriers in Poland.

Experts on new social challenges

There was no shortage of social topics at Krynica Forum 2023. The reconciliation of social, political, and family roles was discussed by the participants in the debate 'Małopolska is a woman': Urszula Nowogórska – member of parliament of the Republic of Poland, Józefa Szczurek-Żelazko – member of parliament of the Republic of Poland, former deputy minister of health,



and Elżbieta Achinger – councillor of the Małopolska Region.

In turn, the National Development Council to the President of Poland held a discussion on the president's social and health initiatives: social service centres and health centres for over-75s. The debate was attended by Professor Piotr Czauderna, MD, DHRes – chair of the Health Care Council, Marek Rymsza, MD, PhD – chair of the National Development Council's Social Affairs Council, Paweł Janik – director of the Office of Dialogue, Local Government and Development at the Chancellery of the President of the Republic of Poland, and Małgorzata Aleksandrowicz – director of the Social Services Centre in Myślenice.

'Social service centres are a civilisational leap. Throughout Europe, we can see that our well-being is determined by access to social services. Investment in such services is also a path to faster economic development in Poland,' said Marek Rymsza, PhD.

Prof. Piotr Czauderna explained the role of the centres in the context of social change. 'The number of seniors is increasing and will grow exponentially in the future. The family model is also changing, and it is becoming increasingly difficult to run a care system for the elderly on one's own. Therefore, we want to build a system that will result in keeping these people independent as long as possible, away from hospitals,' explained the chairman of the Social Affairs Council of the National Development Council.

Krynica Forum: Here beats the 'Heart of Europe'!

The cultural event that inaugurated the Krynica Forum 2023 was the concert 'Heart of Europe', featuring Natalia Kukulska, Janusz Radek, Jacek Wójcicki, Olga Szomańska, and Barbara Stępnik-Wilk, among others. The concert was listened to by the President



of the Republic of Poland, the President of Lithuania and the Prime Minister of Korea, as well as guests representing the Polish government, local bodies and business.

The evening's programme featured Ukrainian, Korean, Lithuanian, and Slovak motifs. The artists alluded to the Krynica legends (Jan Kiepura, portrayed by Jacek Wójcicki, performed) and evoked the Korean song 'Bird, bird, blue bird' from the time of a peasant uprising in Korea, which became an inspiration for Krzysztof Penderecki when creating his Symphony No. 5, so-called Korean, commissioned by Korea's authorities in 1992. The concert also featured a song from a Korean musical about Maria Skłodowska-Curie, a dance arrangement performed by the Luz Group 'Children at War' to music by Ukrainian composer Myroslav Skoryk, and 'Prayer at Sunrise' from Jacek Kaczmarski's repertoire. The entire event closed with the song 'Heart of Europe', written and composed especially for the Krynica Forum 2023 opening.

The artistic programme was a coherent, emotionally charged story, directly related to all the key themes of the Krynica Forum and to the cultures of the key countries represented at a high level. The montage of songs moved the audience despite the significant diversity of guests in terms of cultural and linguistic profile. Attention was drawn to the clear symbolism relating to values such as solidarity, co-operation



and opposing evil. The entire event was directed by Marcin Kołaczkowski, author of many television and outdoor productions, including the concert inaugurating the celebrations of the 260th anniversary of the January Uprising and the projects 'Decalogue AD 2021' and 'Niepodległość.com.pl'. The script for 'Heart of Europe' was prepared by Maciej Zdziarski, the Krynica Forum programme director and Marcin Kołaczkowski, while the final song to words by Michał Zabłocki and Maciej Zdziarski was composed by Jacek Subociało.

The thoughtful, original concept ensured an excellent artistic experience. The high musical level was combined with an interesting narrative about Krynica-Zdrój, Małopolska, as well as the historical and contemporary contexts around which the events of Krynica Forum 2023 revolved.

The scenario included motifs related to the history of Central and Eastern Europe, with references to the war in Ukraine and the great outpouring of solidarity to help those fighting, spearheaded by Poland. The eclectic nature of the programme served to cater to the tastes of guests representing different cultures and allowed for a special recognition of their participation in Krynica Forum 2023.

Films with an important message – documentary cinema at Krynica Forum

During the Krynica Forum, there were film screenings whose themes were directly related to the conference's thematic agenda. The State Forests screened the film 'Loret – forester with character' about the first General Director of the State Forests, Adam Loret, who laid the foundations of Polish forestry. In turn, the screening of the film 'In the intention of peace' was an excellent complement to the Polish-Korean

Forum. The post-screening discussion was attended by: Jerzy Szkamruk – the director of the film and author of the script, Jarosław Ostaszewicz – the director of the film and co-author of the script, and Father Zbigniew Wasiński – the co-founder of the Korean Pallottine Community.

The Polsat Group organised the presentation of the film 'Good Energy' (directed by Sindre Sandemo), produced in 2023 by Inbornmedia on behalf of Polsat Television. As the organisers emphasised, the documentary shows 'how to live cheaper, healthier, and safer'. The film-makers answer the question about the role of energy in today's world. They explain its importance in the context of freedom of states, energy independence, the war in Ukraine and challenges of climate security. The film shows the role of RES – solar, wind, and nuclear energy – on a global and micro scale. It suggests how to completely overhaul the Polish energy sector in a short period without harming the environment.

Chess at Krynica Forum 2023 – game, development, business

One of the side events of the Forum was simultaneous chess. At 14 stations, participants faced chess grandmaster Dana Reizniece-Ozola – 2014–2016 Minister of Economy of Latvia and 2016–2019 Minister of Finance, currently serving as Managing Director of the International Chess Federation – and chess grandmaster and European chess champion Ketī Tsatsalashvili.

Some of the simul contestants had earlier taken part in a panel discussion entitled 'Business Mat: How does strategy translate into business success?'. In addition to Dana Reizniece-Ozola mentioned before, the debate was attended by Dr Adam Mokrysz – the



president of the Mokate Group, successor and leader of the Mokate Group family business, Jacek Miketa – a member of the management board of Alior Leasing, and Łukasz Turlej – the secretary general of the International Chess Federation FIDE. In an interview with ISBnews.TV, Adam Mokrysz said that chess and business intertwine. ‘We believe that chess is one of the best games to develop young people and connect generations.’

A similar opinion was expressed by Jacek Miketa, who posited that a chess player and a business leader alike have to make decisions that, in the long run, affect the achievement of the desired goal. ‘Chess is stron-



gly associated with business. We want to show participants how the game of chess is linked to business, that they have many things in common.’

Marshal of the Małopolska Region: all of Europe is watching Krynica Forum 2023

Marshal of the Małopolska Region Witold Kozłowski, took part in a panel of the National Development Council to the President of the Republic of Poland entitled ‘Local government – a partner in actions for sustainable development’. The discussion was attended by the marshals of Podkarpackie and Lubelskie Provinces – Władysław Ortyl and Jarosław Stawiarski. The debate was moderated by the Deputy Head of the Chancellery of the President of Poland Piotr Cwik and opened with an introductory word by President Andrzej Duda. ‘I would like to thank everyone very much for their participation in the entire forum and in this meeting. For me personally, this is also a major initia-

tive, not only because it takes place in my region of origin, Małopolska, in the Sącz region, to which I have family ties. Also because the topics we are discussing at the moment – through the visit of President Gitanas Nausėda or the Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea together with his delegation – are of great developmental significance for us now,’ emphasised the President.

Marshal Witold Kozłowski pointed out that 2023 is the year of great events in Małopolska, including the 3rd European Games, the Krynica Forum, the European Congress of Sport and Tourism in Zakopane, and the Festival of Beauty. ‘If we want to bring our regions into Europe’s salons, ... it cannot be done with T-shirts, hats, mugs, and pens. We need to use strong promotional instruments,’ the marshal emphasised. ‘What we have in Krynica this year is a big international event, which all of Europe is looking at. Especially in the context of relations between Poland and Korea, i.e. the Polish-Korean Forum, which is taking place thanks to the fact that we received really great support from President Andrzej Duda. The same was also true of the European Games. We are very, very grateful to him for that.’

Jarosław Stawiarski, Marshal of the Lubelskie Province, spoke about the relationship between local government and business. ‘The local government wants to live off taxes first and foremost. So where there is more business, there is better development. That is why we strive to improve procedures to make life easier for entrepreneurs. We streamline the work so that they do not have to wait too long for a decision.’ Podkarpackie Province Marshal Władysław Ortyl emphasised that, in relation to the sustainable development strategy, the word sustainable does not mean even, as measures must be adapted to the conditions in each case, not uniform. He also emphasised the role of pilots, which allow needs to be researched and resources to be invested wisely.

Jarosław Stawiarski noted that the contemporary style of local government activity is a classic example of a governance philosophy changing. He listed nume-



rous examples of local-government investments in the Lubelskie Province, which he described as a civilisational leap forward, and reminded everyone that these were investments made with money from the state budget. Referring to the problem of party affiliation of local government officials, he said that one should be a local government official and reject political colours, as a local official is not a politician, but a flesh-and-blood person who wants to act for the benefit of the local community.

Małopolska – European Entrepreneurial Region 2024 hosts the Krynica Forum

Empowering the Region – the slogan of this year’s Krynica Forum – referred both to the Central and Eastern European region and to the region understood at the most basic level: as a place where citizens live, work and develop. Hence, the first day of the Krynica Forum 2023 – 13 September – was devoted to the regions and their future.

Three umbrella debates of the Małopolska Region were held. In the discussion entitled ‘European Entrepreneurial Regions – local business strategies as a key to international success’ was attended by: Prof. Jerzy Lis, DSc Eng – the rector of the AGH University, Józef Gawron – Deputy Marshal of the Małopolska Region, Gino Cormons – senior policy officer of the Autonomous Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia, EU specialist, and Victor Vaugoin – director in the Liaison Office, representative of the Lower Austrian National Government to the European Union.

Every year for more than a decade, the EU Committee of the Regions has staged the European Entrepreneurial Region competition together with, among others, the European Commission and the European



Parliament. Prizes are awarded to EU regions and cities which stand out for their ambitious and innovative entrepreneurial strategy. This year’s special award went to Małopolska Region.

‘Małopolska was distinguished, among other things, due to implementing actions on collaboration with Ukrainian business environment institutions and entrepreneurs, and actions aimed to strengthen the region’s business and innovation potential,’ said Deputy Marshal Józef Gawron. ‘It is worth noting that declarations of support for Małopolska’s application to the EER competition were signed by more than 20 institutions that work on a daily basis to develop entrepreneurship and innovation in the region, including universities (AGH as well), business environment institutions, deploying valuable projects and initiatives.’

Patronage debates of the Małopolska Region: the power of partnerships for development

The Małopolska Voivodeship also took patronage of a panel entitled ‘Economic partnership between Poland and Ukraine: co-operation of administration, business, and science in transition towards sustainable growth’. Besides Deputy Marshal Józef Gawron, it was attended by: Oleksandr Yurchak – president of the Ukrainian Cluster Alliance, coordinator of the Industry 4.0 platform in Ukraine, Ivan Kulchytskyy – president of the NGO European Innovation Agency and observer from Ukraine in the Horizon Programme of the Digital Industry and Space Committee, and Maciej Malik – the president of the Board of the Future Industry Platform Foundation.

The third umbrella panel, entitled ‘Partnership of economic and territorial local government in supporting economic development’, featured Józef Gawron – deputy marshal of the Małopolska Region, Paweł Kukla – the president of the Sącz Chamber of Commerce, Sebastian Chwedeczko – president of the Cracow Chamber of Industry and Commerce, and Małgorzata Małuch – the head of the Sękowa Municipality, president of the Forum of Municipality Heads, Mayors, and City Presidents.

‘The example of the Joint Committee of Territorial and Economic Local Governments of Małopolska is an excellent confirmation that co-operation between local government and representatives of enterprises

brings tangible effects and benefits for both sides – regional or local authorities can consult and obtain opinions on planned or implemented activities, while representatives of entrepreneurs can not only have a real impact on the shape of these activities, but also obtain valuable information on current topics related to the economic situation or, for example, undertakings supporting the innovativeness of companies,' said Deputy Marshal Józef Gawron.

The voice of Małopolska



Region the representatives of the Małopolska Region in discussions on key issues

Representatives of the province took part in a number of debates. Łukasz Smółka – deputy marshal of the Małopolska Region – took the floor in two panels on transport issues. 'Małopolska has managed to create a good, efficient team, which works together in one direction: towards improving road safety. We have passionate people and at the same time excellent specialists. We also have a clear goal of achieving "vision zero", i.e. reaching zero fatalities by 2050. Małopolska is well on the way to achieving its goals. What is needed is further consistency, determination, further collaboration between many institutions. An great role is also played by, among others, appropriate educational activities aimed at children, young people, and the elderly. Let's remember that road safety is above all our shared responsibility,' stressed Deputy Speaker Smółka.

Józef Gawron, deputy marshal of the Małopolska Region, participated in the discussion 'Hydrogen – the alternative fuel? The future of hydrogen technology through the eyes of experts, scientists, and local government officials'. The discussion was chaired by Je-

rzy Kopeć, director of the Department of Corporate Governance and Management at the Marshal's Office of the Małopolska Region, who talked about the Vanguard Initiative – a partnership between regions in EU countries, which supports technology companies in finding business partners abroad and implementing innovations. 'Hydrogen, or rather sustainable energy, is a kind of keystone for other specialisations and industries. Around sustainable energy, also taking into account the circular economy, we are building our main activities and development plans. And within the Initiative, we can confront in an international environment our ideas and existing perceptions with what is currently being worked on in Western European countries,' noted Deputy Marshal Gawron.

Marta Malec-Lech, a member of the Małopolska Province Board, was a guest at the panel 'Science and education in the service of energy transition. How to educate green transformation cadres?'. 'We have to respond to the needs that entrepreneurs report to us. We now have in the pipeline a project called HUMINE that we see as absolutely key. We started from the assumption that since the world is changing, since all these fields are rushing forward so fast, and the experts themselves say that by 2025 almost 70 per cent of the workforce will in fact have to retrain or upskill, so this already shows that we are lifelong learners. That's why we want to give such a parcel to young people, so that they know how to find their way no matter how the situation develops.'

Prof. Jan Tadeusz Duda, chairman of the Małopolska Regional Assembly, sat on a panel entitled 'A good climate for innovation – how to build it?'. Marta Mordarska – councillor of the Małopolska Region, a distinguished social activist – took the floor in a discussion entitled 'The art of helping: How we support Ukrainians and what the last months have taught us about volunteering and fundraising'. Grzegorz Biedroń – councillor of the Małopolska Region, chair of the Commission for Regional Development, Promotion, and Foreign Co-operation, presi-



dent of the MOT – took part in a discussion titled 'The Sącz region – the Krynica Forum 2023 host and its genius loci: What is behind the Polish cradle of entrepreneurship?'

Metropolises of the future, support for entrepreneurs, the art of helping – patron panels of the City of Kraków



The City of Kraków took patronage of the thematic stream titled 'Looking forward' and three panels from the agenda of Krynica Forum 2023. In the first of them, entitled 'Future cities: What can local authorities do to improve the quality of life in cities?', was attended by Bogusław Kośmider – deputy mayor of the City of Kraków, Wojciech Blecharczyk – doctor of earth sciences, academic lecturer at the University of Economics and Computer Science in Kraków and the AGH University, as well as Artur Paszko – the president of the Board of Directors of Kraków Nowa Huta Przyszłości S.A.

During the panel titled 'The art of helping: How we support Ukrainians and what the last months taught us about volunteering and fundraising', Marta Mordarska – politician and local government member, active and distinguished social activist, councillor of the Małopolska Region – talked about the province's activities in the first months after the outbreak of war. 'The local parliament and the Board of the Małopolska Region parliament and board both met repeatedly with refugees and NGO non-governmental organisations to learn about the real needs of refugees. Thanks to such activities, assistance was orga-

nised within the framework of the Małopolska Humanitarian Shield,' said Marta Mordarska recounted. 'Support was provided on many levels: local-government organisations received financial assistance aid dedicated to people with disabilities, mothers with children, orphans, older people, while provincial medical facilities provided health services to wounded soldiers and civilians. Małopolska ran sanitary transports, medical supplies, etc.' added the councillor. Prof. Piotr Sułkowski, director of the Kraków Opera, and Magdalena Balawajder, coordinator of international humanitarian aid at the Kraków City Hall, also took part in the panel.

The director of the Kraków Opera emphasised the importance of refugees' cultural integration for refugees. The assistance provided by cultural institutions was very concrete: cyclical regular bilingual classes were set up so as to get the youngest accustomed to their new setting environment, and instruments were collected for music school pupils who had interrupted their education interrupted because of the warfare effort. 'By sharing music and culture, inviting refugees to co-create art, we healed their traumas,' said Prof. Piotr Sułkowski said.

'We create the best conditions for investment in Małopolska. Together with our partners, we are co-creating the Business in Małopolska Centre, implementing pursuing ambitious projects, co-working together with local governments and attracting new investments to the region. Using Kraków's potential also means strengthening the role of all the cities and communes in Małopolska. Together we create the development of the region,' Krystyna Sadowska, – the director of the Investor Services Department of Kraków Technology Park, – said at the panel entitled 'How should cities support entrepreneurs?'. Also taking part in the discussion were: Przemysław Roth – general director of the Dyson Centre in Kraków and Dr Arkadiusz Mroczek – metropolisation specialist. NumerousA number of speakers representing the



city and its entities took part in the panels, including Dr. Jarosław Bułka, PhD Eng – plenipotentiary of the mayor of Kraków for digital transformation and Kazimierz Murzyn – the president of the LifeScience Cluster Krakow foundation and managing director of the LifeScience Cluster Krakow Initiative, member of the SCANBALT strategic group (panel entitled ‘Good climate for innovation – how to build it?’), Jakub Szymański – vice president of the Management Board of Kraków Nowa Huta Przyszłości S.A. (panel entitled ‘Local government – challenges for the new times’), Piotr Ziętara – the president of the Management Board of Waterworks of the City of Kraków (panel entitled ‘On guarding the environment: What are the most serious challenges for local governments when it comes to protecting environmental resources?’). Jakub Bator, vice president of the Confederation of European Waste-to-Energy Plants (CEWEP) and member of the board of directors of Krakowski Holding Komunalny S.A., emphasised underscored the importance of zero-emission and energy transition in Poland in a discussion on climate challenges. ‘We are very creative in Poland We are doing better than Germany in many innovative sectors of the economy. The energy transition can be a unique opportunity for economic development.’



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