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## OPINION

### on the report regarding the assistance provided by Polish non-governmental organizations to Ukraine

The report consists of 100 pages, divided into three chapters, and does not include an extensive scholarly bibliography. However, the absence of such a bibliography can be explained by the nature of the work, as well as the fact that it is not a scholarly monograph. However, numerous references to the relevant literature would undoubtedly enrich the given content. Of course, the report is not completely devoid of references to the appropriate literature; it includes references to other reports, studies, and even media reports, all in the context of the latest events, which should be positively evaluated. Furthermore, the report contains detailed statistical data with a clear indication of the sources. Undoubtedly, these data reflect a thorough approach to the discussed topic, taking into account that they are accompanied by analytical comments. The positive review is also supported by the fact that the data included in the analysis are as recent as 2022 and 2023, covering the latest developments in the broader Polish-Ukrainian context. It is worth considering the recommendation to relate the presented statistical data to numerical indicators predating February 24, 2022. The continuous increase in the number of Ukrainian citizens coming to Poland has been observed not only in the last two years.

The first chapter, marked as “*Introduction*”, is the shortest one, which attempts to succinctly define the history, primarily focusing on Polish-Ukrainian relations in the 20th and 21st centuries. In this chapter, incorporating references to relevant literature would seem most appropriate. The way the information is presented serves as an introduction to more in-depth conversations, explaining the absence of any references to pertinent literature.



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Noteworthy in this context are the presented latest statistical data. It is advisable to broaden the timeframe for compiling statistical data on Ukrainians in Poland beyond the last two years to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of the topic.

The second chapter entitled "*Support initiatives for Ukraine: a case study of non-governmental organizations*" presents a distinctive classification of organizations: psychological, legal, humanitarian, scouting, sports, and church-related organizations. This division appears entirely justified and in line with the nature of the presented material. The document, being in the form of a report, requires a clear enumeration of the analyzed content in line with a predefined method. This chapter is the broadest in terms of content, as well as the most analytical one. Thus it becomes the core of the entire reviewed material. The authors – which should be positively acknowledged – did not confine their discussions solely to reporting within the predetermined classification. However, detailed references to actions or omissions must also be noted and positively assessed. This chapter has been accompanied by often framed or bulleted conclusions or analyses. This indicates going beyond the reporting framework into the most challenging space: evaluating the analyzed actions, omissions, and events. This part of the report deserves the highest recognition. Nevertheless, it might be worth considering a summary of the entire second chapter, which is exceptionally wide-ranging, covering detailed facts, references to events, or actions taken in the context of individual legal bases. This summary perhaps should be complemented with collective considerations *de lege lata and de lege ferenda*.

The title of the third chapter, "*Cooperation of local governments with non-governmental organizations*", as stated in the table of contents, might be misleading - it is only on page 77 of the report that we learn about the cooperation involving a certain municipality, Wałbrzych, with non-governmental organizations from Lower Silesia, Germany, Ireland, and Ukraine, along with partnerships with entrepreneurs and religious associations. This does not negate the detailed description, analysis, or conclusions related to this specific geographic area. However, the broad assertion made in the title of the third chapter, implying a generalization of the activities of the Wałbrzych municipality to the extent of nationwide local government cooperation, may lack justification in several aspects.



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Moreover, assistance from Polish non-governmental organizations to Ukraine extended beyond the context of local government actions/inaction and encompassed various other public institutions. It is key to mention, for instance, voivodeship offices dealing with, among others, issuing decisions regarding foreigners, including work permits; county labor offices responsible, among other things, for the procedure of issuing statements on entrusting work to foreigners; the Border Guard, combating, inter alia, illegal immigration and violations of legal order related to the stay of foreigners in Poland; the State Labor Inspectorate, conducting, among others, inspections of the legality of the employment and other gainful work of foreigners; educational supervisory authorities, issuing opinions on foreign documents confirming education; and universities providing various functions, including Polish language courses and workshops on the basics of Polish law for foreigners. Finally, referring to local government units themselves, it is crucial to point out that their tasks include, among others, registration of economic activity, registration of residence, transcription of foreign civil status acts, solemnization of marriages, birth registration, issuance of death certificates, vehicle registration, issuance or exchange of driving licenses, provision of social care, payment of family benefits (500+), and provision of psychological assistance to families in need within family support centers. Therefore, specific prerogatives concerning assistance for Ukrainian citizens can't be underestimated or completely omitted – even if the report focuses on the implementation of these assistance activities solely by non-governmental organizations. The report should also not overlook activities financed under the European Union Asylum, Migration, and Integration Fund, which have been ongoing and are currently implemented across all voivodeships in Poland.

In conclusion, the report thoroughly analyzes the current issue of support for Ukrainian citizens by non-governmental organizations. The inclusion of non-governmental organizations in this matter seems entirely appropriate. The classification of these organizations, documentation of their activities, articulation of relevant legal grounds, formulation of conclusions, and analysis do not raise objections and deserve a fully positive assessment. However, it is essential to leave room for a wider picture, considering the issues in different contexts: timeframe – not primarily starting from February 24, 2022, to the present, but over the last 10 years; from the subjects' perspective – not only in relation to the



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local government units but also to other public institutions; from the geographical point of view – not mainly focused on the specific Wałbrzych Municipality area but rather the entire territory of Poland; object wise – not chiefly include the *ad hoc* actions but also a range of equally relevant statutory powers of public institutions, the implementation of which is paramount in the context of Polish-Ukrainian integration within the Republic of Poland.

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