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**The Idea of Shaping the Attitudes  
of Children and Youth.  
A Study of the *Równać Szanse*  
(*Equal Opportunities*)  
Program from the Perspective  
of the Activities of the *Stocznia*  
(*Shipyard*) Foundation**

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**Abstract**

The aim of the article is to answer the following research question: Through what activities does the *Stocznia* Foundation ensure involvement of and support to children and youth? The analysis was performed on the basis of theoretical and empirical knowledge. Areas were indicated in which the support of the young generation by NGOs was most often noted as part of activities for local communities. In this aspect, types of assistance were listed, such as: shaping the attitudes of youth, learning soft skills in relations with other people in the decision-making process, social directions of development of children and youth, and assistance in gaining visibility of the realized projects. Apart from that, the positions of the authors of the *Equal Opportunities* project are based on 20 years of

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work. The Foundation focuses its activities on the provision of services in the areas that favor building a conscious and safe society through the active involvement of the young ones in efforts for the common good.

**Keywords**

societal security, third sector, Poland, society, education of youth, future generation

## Introduction

The involvement of the third sector in the creation and development of the social environment constitutes an important foundation of each community. The complexity of the idea of society is due not only to the cultural aspect, values based on history, language, or customs but also the co-participation of various social groups that coexist within a given entity. An important place in the majority of contemporary societies is occupied by children and youth, who are under the watchful eye of parents, teachers, or state authorities. One of the important reasons for such a state of things is the future of society, which over the forthcoming decades will rest in the hands of today's young people. Another reason is the realization that our children will be making complicated and difficult decisions, which gives rise to the need for shaping their minds in the area of social values, the place of culture and national heritage in everyday life, or assistance to those in need. The abovementioned assistance is not only an important reason for supporting children and youth by the rest of society but also a starting point for the formation of future generations. The idea of support is an element of a cycle, which is passed down from one generation to the next – adults provide help to their children and teach them how to support others being fully convinced that the children will in turn pass this knowledge to their progeny. Investing in the youngest part of society must not be treated superficially and in the short term, but as a long-term process, a strategy. The more specialist support is given to children, the better they will be prepared for adult life and for facing its challenges.

This article is the third a last work of the series devoted to analyzing the activities of the *Stocznia* Foundation for building societal security, including local security. The first article described the efforts of the Foundations aimed at counteracting social exclusion and helping the aged or the sick return to participation in social life. The second article in the series discussed the methods of par-

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participation of society (stakeholder groups), which encouraged the inhabitants to actively engage in making decisions for the sake of social innovations. The third article is an analysis of the *Stocznia* Foundation's document entitled: *I am, I act, I cooperate: How can an adult support young people in their development?*, which is an outcome of 20 years of working with children under the *Equal Opportunities* program. The activities that were carried out were aimed at developing necessary competencies in young people and skills that would prove useful in their adult life.

**G**uaranteeing balanced development of the youngest generation determines the future of society. The Publication *I am, I act, I cooperate: How can an adult support young people in their development?*<sup>1</sup> is the outcome of 20 years of work carried out by the Polish-American Freedom Foundation<sup>1</sup> under the *Equal Opportunities* program<sup>2</sup> implemented by the Polish Children and Youth Foundation.<sup>3</sup> The fundamental mission of the project was to even out the standard of living and education of the youngest in the localities of less than 20 thousand inhabitants, which was treated as an opportunity to guarantee them better prospects in adult life and conditions for development. The *Stocznia* Foundation carried out an appraisal of the *Equal Opportunities* program, the purpose of which was to check the general image of the activity and determine its significance for the participants – beneficiaries, coordinators, potential applicants, and youth forming the target group of the program.<sup>4</sup> This study is important as it concerns the issue of adequacy of similar initiatives by the third sector, and also allows to work out recommendations for future activities addressed to the Polish society.

**T**he main assumption of the analyzed project *I am, I act, I cooperate: How can an adult support young people in their development?* (hereinafter: *I am, I act, I cooperate*) was to provide assistance to the youngest in self-development (including children's passions), build a durable sense of community with the rest of the younger generation, as well as educate and seek creative solutions in order to implement the projected tasks. Taking into account the purpose of the discussed project and its structure – youth is the element that initiates and implements the program, whereby the only limitation is the imagination of the group, and in rare cases – the supervisor. The role of a group's supervisor is played by an adult who is adequately experienced and trained as regards team management. In the situation of any tensions arising among the participants, they act as mediators helping to resolve the problem.<sup>5</sup> Thus, participation in this type of undertaking is to teach young people responsibility as well as increase their awareness of potential consequences. Analyzing the efforts undertaken by individual teams involved in the project, it is noticeable that their implementation is aimed at activities

1. K. Braun, D. Daszkiewicz, I. Kirstein, *Jestem, działam, współpracuję: Jak dorosły może wspierać młodzież w rozwoju?*, Polska Fundacja Dzieci i Młodzieży 2021.

2. See: *Program Równać Szanse*, <https://rownacszanse.pl/>, (access 12.07.2021); Ł. Ostrowski, R. Rudnicki, M. Wiśnicka, *Przegląd strategiczny programu Równać Szanse*, <https://stocznia.org.pl/projekty/przegląd-strategiczny-programu-rownac-szanse/>, (access 12.07.2021).

3. *Polish Children and Youth Foundation* has been operating since 1992 and its main objective is to support children and youth in their all-round personal and social development. It offer broadly understood support to educational institutions, whose main goal is shaping responsible and creative minds in the youngest generation and adjusting local communities to proper development. See: *Polska Fundacja Dzieci i Młodzieży*, <https://pcyf.org.pl/>, (access 21.07.2021).

4. A. Pierścińska, Ł. Ostrowski, M. Adamowicz, et al., *Badanie wizerunku programu Równać Szanse*, <https://stocznia.org.pl/projekty/badanie-wizerunku-programu-rownac-szanse/>, (access 12.07.2021).

5. K. Braun, D. Daszkiewicz, I. Kirstein, *Jestem, działam, współpracuję...*, op. cit., p. 6.

of a developmental, socio-economic, and cultural nature (backed with efficient management, which makes them more effective). They help young people acquire key competencies,<sup>6</sup> soft (the sphere of target emotions) and professional skills, which in the future may help them find a job. In order to attain the planned objectives, the authors of the *Equal Opportunities* project adopted a methodology consisting of seeking an answer to the key question: “How can social competencies be successfully developed in young people?”<sup>7</sup> In the course of the project, four main elements to be attained were distinguished as regards pro-development activities for the youngest: “Defined development goals and their monitoring; a project implemented by youth; the role of an adult; and promotion within the local community.”<sup>8</sup> Active participation of children and youth in creating the future social environment – and this indirect security of a local community – is possible thanks to adequately defined and monitored development goals of the *Equal Opportunities* program. Early identification and realization of weaknesses by individual participants help them successfully transform them into strengths, as a result of which they will be capable of forming a strong and tight-linked group. Knowing one’s capabilities already at the initial stage makes it easier to make complicated decisions and prepare a desirable strategy, which would minimize the number of threats and thus the degree of risk.

**A**nother element of the assumptions for the document is to teach the rising generation a coherent decision-making cycle based on such management of human resources as a result of which attainment of the highest possible effectiveness will be possible. As it has been stated in this document, unification of the decision-making process ultimately brings about more tangible benefits. To make the participants fully engaged in the community and implementation of the project, the supervisor gives them roles to play together with their intrinsic activities, thanks to which young people go beyond their comfort zone. The more difficult the task given to the group, the greater the satisfaction with the success attained. Each completed task strengthens the sense of confidence of an individual and helps appreciate the effort put in by the group in the implementation of the task.

**O**ne of the major tasks for correct functioning is performed by the group’s supervisor, who supports his or her charges in striving at the intended goals (final stage). It is possible thanks to the role the supervisor assumes, namely that of a mentor, moderator, and mediator.<sup>9</sup> The function of a mediator is particularly useful in situations of crisis, such as moments of despondency and weakness leading to conflict. Therefore it involves the need to gain control and interfere in the relations between the participants of a given team. This procedure is intended by the authors of the project since it constitutes the means to guarantee security for youth and ensures continuity of working on

6. Key competence have been elaborated by the EU. The key competences are as follows: “communicating in a mother tongue; communicating in a foreign language; mathematical, scientific and technological competence; digital competence; learning to learn; social and civic competences; sense of initiative and entrepreneurship; cultural awareness and expression.” See: Council of the European Union, *Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning*, (2006/962/EC), Official Journal of the European Union 2006, p. 13.

7. K. Braun, D. Daszkiewicz, I. Kirstein, *Jestem, działam, współpracuję...*, op. cit., p. 20.

8. Ibidem.

9. Ibidem, p. 24.

the entrusted task. Such steps are possible thanks to the previous learning of the dynamics of the participants' creative processes as well as the internal mechanism and techniques of appropriate activity in the course of their evaluation.<sup>10</sup>

Promotion of concrete activities carried out for the local community serves showing the involvement of youths in social undertaking as well as their potential. An equally important factor is the visibility of activities since it contributes to winning over local partners.<sup>11</sup> Among the tasks associated with the popularization of the activities of the youngest (via a local radio station as well as social media such as Facebook, Instagram, or YouTube)<sup>12</sup> – under the *Equal Opportunities* program – there were also such initiatives as creating information campaign, municipal festivals as well as exhibitions with the participation of representatives of local governments and the neighboring municipalities.

Support gives one a certain sense of security, understanding, and realization that one is part of a larger whole (group). It is an important issue, especially for the youngest, rising generation, who gradually learn their potential, but also get to know themselves. The personal (subjective) point of view is a phenomenon that takes place at the time of an in-depth analysis of oneself and accepting one's weaknesses and strengths (good and bad points), which contribute to greater or lesser effectiveness of teamwork.<sup>13</sup> Only after such an analysis, one is able to face up to what one has real control of and what one considers impossible. Participation in the project was also aimed at turning the attention of the young ones to the surrounding environment, other people, and the values of the social place they live in. It allows for better adjustment and also offers a new vision of local institutions, municipal bodies, and the abilities that the people with exceptional passions have.<sup>14</sup> Young people, for whom the sense of belonging to the structure of a group or a social entity is an important aspect of social life, are taken care of this process in a special manner.<sup>15</sup> No less important is identification with the team participating in the activity, which requires full involvement and orderliness, and is a method for effective undertaking of joint efforts for the sake of local good.

According to the document, the process of getting to know oneself and members of one's team contributes to the growth of awareness of self, of another, and of their inimitability. The task of supervisors is to teach their charges that pass on the knowledge of how to utilize diversity. Equally important are their constant directions (feedback).<sup>16</sup> This feedback shows young people what skills they have mastered until then, what should they practice more, and also what challenges they have

10. Ibidem, p. 25.

11. Ibidem, p. 28.

12. Numerical data elaborated on the basis of Gemius Overnight surveys in 2019, published in: S. Chada, R. Chwałczuk, B. Drapała, et al., *Przewodnik po social media w Polsce*, IAB Polska 2019/2020, pp. 7, 19, 27–28, <https://www.iab.org.pl/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/IAB-Przewodnik-po-Social-Media-w-Polsce-2019-2020-1.pdf>, (access 22.07.2021).

13. K. Braun, D. Daszkiewicz, I. Kirstein, *Jestem, działam, współpracuję...*, op. cit., p. 33.

14. Ibidem.

15. See: J. Suchodolska, *Młodzi dorośli wobec kryzysu indywidualnego – potrzeba wsparcia społecznego w rozwoju psychicznej niezależności (i dojrzałej tożsamości)*, "Kultura-Spółczesność-Edukacja", 2016, Vol. 10, No. 2, pp. 231–248, DOI: [10.14746/kse.2016.10.18](https://doi.org/10.14746/kse.2016.10.18); J. Juszczak-Rygallo, *Socjalizacja dziecka jako proces kształtowania tożsamości*, "Edukacja Elementarna w Teorii i Praktyce", 2016, Vol. 11, No. 4 (42), pp. 13–25, DOI: [10.14632/eetp.2016.11.42.13](https://doi.org/10.14632/eetp.2016.11.42.13).

16. See: *Sztuka nauczania. Czynności nauczyciela*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, ed. K. Kruszeński, PWN 1994.

## Theoretical Aspects of Support to the Youngest in the Report *I am, I act, I cooperate*

encountered in the area of key competencies.<sup>17</sup> The benefit of working in a group is the opportunity to communicate with others and present to other participants one's comments, thoughts, or ideas concerning the team's development. Useful are also discussions in the form of a brainstorm,<sup>18</sup> which not only enables the participants to acquire logical habits<sup>19</sup> but also stimulates their creative thinking in the face of problems they encounter.

The fact that a lot of attention has been drawn in the study to the issue of cooperation and winning over allies by program groups points to the profound understanding of the needs of a group, which makes up a single body orientated at the implementation of tasks.<sup>20</sup> The existence of a close-knit group focused on a common project brings one closer to attaining the main goal, that is increasing the sense of confidence and responsibility for self as well as for group mates. The key stage for establishing and continuing cooperation by the participants is the determination of a set of principles or rules, thanks to which it will be possible to instill mutual respect and determine the time to be spent on program activities. An example quoted in the publication *I am, I act, I cooperate* is following principles: "We speak up one after another, we are entitled to make mistakes, we learn from one another, we listen to one another, we do not judge, we respect the fact that we can have diverse opinions on a given subject, we are kind to one another, we are discreet."<sup>21</sup> By following the adopted rules the participants are able to communicate efficiently.

The areas of importance for the efficient functioning of every organization or group have been described by Patrick Lencioni, who distinguished 5 features of teamwork: trust, open communication, commitment, accountability, and attention to results.<sup>22</sup> Trust is an important value in a team since the teammates can own up to their mistakes being sure that they will be heard and understood. As a response, they do not receive unkind remarks but constructive criticism, support, and help in a situation that is hard to overcome by a given person.<sup>23</sup> Characteristics of open communication is an active willingness to participate in discussion panels, during which innovative plans and ideas are debated. As a result of the exchange of views and opinions about them, the conclusions attained may be used for correcting and eliminating the problems.<sup>24</sup> According to Daniel Goleman, having soft skills (so-called emotional intelligence) affects the quality of conversations and other interpersonal relationships and makes it possible to work out a common solution.<sup>25</sup> Commitment of a group provides insight into the understanding of activities offered by individual team members, as well as the determination of priorities in a given situation. Continuous exchange of information<sup>26</sup> arouses willingness to acquire new knowledge, support it with acquired skills, and raise the level of one's compe-

17. See: K. Braun, D. Daszkiewicz, I. Kirstein, *Jestem, działam, współpracuję...*, op. cit., p. 6.

18. See: C. Kupisiewicz, *Dydaktyka ogólna*, Oficyna Wydawnicza Graf-Punkt 2002, p. 155.

19. Ibidem, p. 110.

20. K. Braun, D. Daszkiewicz, I. Kirstein, *Jestem, działam, współpracuję...*, op. cit., pp. 58–60.

21. Ibidem, p. 58.

22. In his book, the author presented 5 dysfunctions which frequently occur during implementation of projects in large teams. The causes and consequences of each dysfunction were analysed in a separate chapter. See: P. Lencioni, *Przewyciężanie pięciu dysfunkcji pracy zespołowej: praktyczny przewodnik liderów, menedżerów, moderatorów*, transl. K. Pawłowski, MT Biznes 2016, pp. 20, 41, 54, 63, 71.

23. Ibidem, pp. 20–40.

24. Ibidem, pp. 41–53. The author also presents conflict management as a key element in overcoming the difficulties encountered by participants belonging to a common interest entity.

25. D. Goleman, *Inteligencja emocjonalna*, transl. A. Jankowski, Media Rodzina 2012, pp. 446–457. Emotional intelligence is part of self-awareness,

tencies in order to consolidate the position of the team – each system or group of people may turn out to be as weak as its weakest link. The area of accountability is one of the most desirable features in the social and public structure since it is associated with attaining notable results. The persons who are more conscious of the decisions they make perform their functions much more confidently, at the same time motivating others to fulfill their duties.<sup>27</sup>

**C**hildren and youth involved under the *Equal Opportunities* program in the spirit of responsible participation in social life focus their attention on the identification and resolution of a problem they encounter without concentrating on finding who is to blame for the situation that has occurred. The principle of cooperation offers a means for the young to communicate the effects accomplished by the groups, without distinguishing individual persons for their work.<sup>28</sup> The effectiveness of a group is an effect of being concentrated on the tasks, teammates' skills, developed program assumptions, and relationships worked out in the course of the undertaking.

**T**he idea of support and security have a common denominator refers to caring about someone who is vulnerable or is still learning a given area of life. For both the older segment of society (adults) and the younger one (children and youth), it is hard to find their place in the constantly changing and frequently confusing reality. Looking at man from the perspective of his ancestors (*homo sapiens* species), the protracted extraordinary capability to adjust to the surrounding environment may be noticed.<sup>29</sup> The current generation of young people will constitute the main driving force of social, cultural, and political development in the forthcoming decades. Like every development, this process consists of guaranteeing secure living, social benefits, and assistance to people from various walks of society. An important aspect of those efforts – not only as regards the stakeholders of a given group – is the protection of those susceptible to (social and technological) exclusion or marginalization, as well as counteracting those phenomena. For this reason, of key importance is to teach children, at the earliest possible moment in their lives, how to resolve problems creatively and find solutions that are adequate to the encountered situations. The willingness to understand issues that are important for the younger generation sometimes leads to retrospection and reflection on one's own actions in youthful years.

**T**he report *I am, I act, I cooperate* reveals exceptional readiness of youth to gain invaluable experience and ability to cooperate with others, but also eagerness to form a social elite and by the same

independent of a level of intellect. Simply put, it is the ability to show empathy (to feel) and the ability to behave in society. Also see: D. Goleman, *Social Intelligence: The New Science of Human Relationships*, Bantam Books 2006, pp. 172–188.

26. P. Lencioni, *Przewyciężanie pięciu dysfunkcji...*, op. cit., pp. 54–62.

27. Ibidem, pp. 63–70.

28. Ibidem, pp. 71–82.

29. M. Biedroń, *Kultura pedagogiczna jako wartość deklarowana i realizowana. Wrocławscy rodzice wobec podnoszenia swych kompetencji pedagogicznych*, in: *Dzieci i młodzież w XXI w. – ujęcie społeczne*, eds. M. Maciąg, K. Maciąg, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Tygiel 2017, pp. 7–19.

token assume responsibility for a local community in the forthcoming decades. That is why it's so important for children and youth is learn and associate practicing, thanks to which they can resolve the arising troubles and face up to the situations that require cooperation. Involving the youngest in their closest social environment encourages them to take part in civil initiatives, playing the role of incubators of ideas and actions for improvement of the living standards of inhabitants. The more conscious the rising generation is of the existing possibilities to expand the educational and cultural infrastructure, the more concerned they are about the well-being at their places of residence, improving their skills or the sense of unity with others, the more will they perceive the opportunities for potential changes for their families and themselves. The more social initiatives there are in the environment in which they grow up, the more willingly will they share whatever they have with the localities in the vicinity.

The idea of supporting children and youth in shaping their worldviews, teaching them soft skills and critical thinking, teamwork, or joint elaboration of solutions to the problems that arise, should constitute an important issue not only for the third sector but also for society at large. The analysis contained herein, concerning the conclusion of the *Stocznia* Foundation as regards the discussed report, proves that the activities of the youngest at the level of local communities generate visible effects. As every system consists of smaller elements, also society is made up of many local communities. With a view to the above, it would be a mistake not to utilize or not to transfer the practice and experience acquired over twenty years onto a wider scale. An investment in children and youth at the local level, the report *I am, I act, I cooperate* refers to in detail, is at the same time a manifestation of hope society places in the youngest, who are its future. A relationship with another person, social group, or national community constitutes one of the fundamental issues of security since it creates a network of interdependencies (bonds) between participants in social life. In a longer perspective, it translates into a growth of trust, since as it has been rightly noted by Janusz Sztumski “[...] the society made up of individuals who are aware of their rights and duties arising from the values they cherish and their aspiration, is a society in which the dignity of a human person and the practical possibilities for implementation of their plans and expectations are cared for.”<sup>30</sup> A community that arises on the basis of the abovementioned elements that young people acquire thanks to the projects implemented under the *Equal Opportunities* program makes the participants (children and youth) aware of how to care for one's own uniqueness, and more broadly also the security of a local community. Janusz Świniarski believes that the key factors of this security are “[...] the number of quality (level of education) of inhabitants [...] as well as the scope of both freedom and responsibility (their culture and

30. J. Sztumski, *Problemy teoretyczne związane z przyspieszeniem zmian społeczno-gospodarczych w Polsce*, in: *Spółczesność polskie w procesie demokratycznych przeobrażeń*, ed. J. Sztumski, Uniwersytet Śląski 1993, p. 17.



## Final Conclusions from the Series

morality, i.e. what makes up the local culture,<sup>31</sup> which directly fit into the activity described by *I am, I act, I cooperate: How can an adult support young people in their development?*

**M**aking an aggregate analysis of the articles making up the series it should be stressed that the activities of the *Stocznia* Foundation for the discussed ideas and social groups constitute an important element in building societal security. Both the implementation of the projects involving support for people threatened with exclusion or being on the verge of it, activating the local population to participate and consciously create a secure environment, as well as supporting children and youth described in this article - constitute an inseparable element of social life. It is worth emphasizing the fact that people at risk of exclusion and the youngest members of society are of key importance in Polish society because they are sensitive to sudden changes taking place in their surroundings, and because of their numbers in the social structure.<sup>32</sup> On the other hand, the sphere regarding active participation of the population in decision-making processes leads to bearing responsibility by decision-makers on behalf of society, and thus to carrying out a prudent analysis of possible consequences.

**I**ssues related to ensuring societal security, i.e. personal security, as well as security of local social groups, are in the sphere of activity of non-governmental organizations, which is emphasized in numerous scientific papers.<sup>33</sup> The activities of the *Stocznia* Foundation are focused, among others, on presenting and promoting the importance of the idea of giving support to people in need, who should be considered as a vulnerable part of society. A well-functioning society – also in the local dimension – allows for continuous development and involvement of stakeholders, and thus the development of small communities, who care about their immediate environment by working to improve its condition. As a result of the analysis carried out in this series of articles, the following conclusions can be made:

1. Social science researchers define the concept of societal security in different ways because of the multitude of elements that can be included in it. The discrepancy occurs between the criteria shaping society, i.e. the sociological factor, allowing an individual to be identified with a given community, in terms of professed values, rights and freedoms, and sometimes also social status. Security is one of the key values in human life,<sup>34</sup> which makes it the foundation of every, even the smallest social group. Thus, this term, understood from the viewpoint of society, can be enriched with a sense

31. J. Świniarski, *Bezpieczeństwo lokalne w ujęciu aksjologicznym*, in: *Bezpieczeństwo w środowisku lokalnym*, ed. W. Fehler, Wydawnictwo Arte 2009, p. 89.

32. See: Główny Urząd Statystyczny, *Rocznik Demograficzny 2022*, GUS 2022, <https://stat.gov.pl/obszary-tematyczne/roczniki-statystyczne/roczniki-statystyczne/rocznik-demograficzny-2022,3,16.html>, (access 4.07.2023); Główny Urząd Statystyczny, Departament Opracowań Statystycznych, *Polska w liczbach 2022*, GUS 2022, [https://stat.gov.pl/files/gfx/portalinformacyjny/pl/defaultaktualnosci/5501/14/15/1/polska\\_w\\_liczbach\\_2022\\_pl\\_int\\_15.06.pdf](https://stat.gov.pl/files/gfx/portalinformacyjny/pl/defaultaktualnosci/5501/14/15/1/polska_w_liczbach_2022_pl_int_15.06.pdf), (access 4.07.2023).

33. B. Charycka, J. Bednarek, M. Gumkowska, *Ufamy, ale... Polski i Polacy o organizacjach pozarządowych. Raport z badań 2023*, Stowarzyszenie Klon/Jawor 2023, pp. 7–8; A. Andrzejczak, *Organizacje pozarządowe w rozwiązywaniu lokalnych problemów społecznych*, "Przegląd Organizacji", 2020, No. 2 (961), pp. 20–27; J. Hausner, *Zarządzanie publiczne*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar 2008, pp. 82–89.

34. See: A. Maslov, *Motywacja i osobowość*, transl. J. Radzicki, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN 2018.

of cultural belonging (set of values) – constituting a strong binder in a state – as well as democracy, traditions, and social pluralism. There is a discourse among intellectuals about the role of societal security and the security of smaller communities functioning within a state, which are important elements of public life. This discussion consists of assigning greater or lesser importance to social groups depending on their numbers, material status, or level of education, and above all the possibilities of exerting influence on the existing situation.<sup>35</sup>

2. Non-governmental organizations working for public benefit and the described *Stocznia* Foundation are involved in work related to supporting and raising the standard of living in strategic areas of social life. The areas described in the above series include: protection and activation of people at risk of social exclusion, the promotion of the idea of social participation and involvement of social groups to actively participate in social work, and support for the development of children and young people within local communities.
3. Entities working for social development, analyzing dilemmas in the field of reversing the phenomenon of social exclusion of dependent persons, took into account the multitude of elements constituting the causes of separateness.<sup>36</sup> In terms of the shape of social policy, attention has been paid to processes related to the integration of groups interested in active participation in public life. Some institutions point out the multitude of differences arising from the globalization and computerization process, which is an insurmountable barrier for older people. According to many, providing proper training and support in the area of new technologies would allow for starting a number of changes as regards the cooperation of dependent persons with other social groups.
4. The research and projects carried out as part of a cooperation between social groups (stakeholders), the exchange of knowledge and experience as regards utilizing the potential of the younger generation is an important factor in building a conscious society. Early participation in public issues of local communities makes it possible to learn soft competencies through which these individuals will be prepared to act as leaders in their adult life, including taking responsibility for the decisions made, as well as creating the surrounding environment in relation to the needs of the general public.
5. The proposals presented in this work, arising from theoretical reflections, find their practical application in the course of social changes. The correlation between social security and national se-

35. See: B. Hołyst, *Zagrożenia ładu społecznego*, Vol. II, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN 2014, pp. 257–281; W. Fehler, *Lokalny wymiar wewnętrznego bezpieczeństwa państwa*, in: *Bezpieczeństwo w środowisku lokalnym*, ed. W. Fehler, Wydawnictwo Arte 2009, pp. 19–30.

36. M. Ruchlicki, *Podstawy bezpieczeństwa społecznego państwa*, in: *Podstawy bezpieczeństwa współczesnego państwa (podmiotu): implikacje*, ed. J. Pawłowski, AON 2015, pp. 306–349; W. Pokruszyński, *Współczesne problemy wykluczenia społecznego w Polsce*, "Journal of Modern Science", 2013, Vol. 17, No. 2, pp. 207–217; R. Szarfenberg, *Ubóstwo, marginalność i wykluczenie społeczne*, in: *Polityka społeczna*, eds. G. Firlit-Fesnak, M. Szyłko-Skoczny, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN 2007, pp. 317–332.

curity described by Waldemar Kitler gradually begins to become obscure, which makes it difficult to set clear boundaries for both concepts.<sup>37</sup> This observation is in line with the view of Krzysztof Loranty, who claims that the political organization of a state and the structures of power it creates are obliged to implement the activities aimed at creating conditions that favor free development in social, cultural, and political terms. When this obligation is fulfilled, civil society is able to strengthen and cultivate social bonds for the common good.<sup>38</sup>

**B**ased on the theoretical analysis of the described activities of the *Stocznia* Foundation, it was possible to confirm the accuracy of the research theses formulated in this series (*Through what activities does the Stocznia Foundation ensure the activation and safety of people at risk of exclusion?*<sup>39</sup>; *Through what activities does the Stocznia Foundation ensure the idea of social participation?*<sup>40</sup>; *Through what activities does the Stocznia Foundation ensure involvement of and support to children and youth?*) Those theses have been positively documented and verified because the presented results of the analysis and implemented projects proved that the *Stocznia* Foundation contributes to building the security of local communities by activating stakeholder groups. It is they who become involved in shaping the immediate environment in which they live. As indicated in the conclusions, the Foundation's activities are focused on three areas. First, it mobilizes society for civic participation, providing it with support and assistance during the implementation of projects aimed at facilitating the functioning of society and the initiatives that are implemented. Secondly, it confirms the need to act to help the elderly and dependent people and to counteract social exclusion. The third area shows a key factor in building an ambitious and independent younger generation, which in the future will be the basis of Polish society, as well as the creator of a safe environment for local cities. However, the third area excludes the independent functioning of children and youth, because the world of adults must help them develop a specific framework for acceptable social behaviors and moral principles, as a result of which the younger generation is not left alone. However, in difficult situations, they can always ask for tips necessary to understand and create the desired reality.

#### Explanatory footnotes

I. The Polish-American Freedom Foundation (PAFF) was set by the Polish-American Enterprise Fund under the Act on supporting East European democracies (SEED ACT), adopted in 1989 by the US Congress. The PAFF operates in three programme areas: equalling opportunities in education, supporting development of local communities, and sharing the Polish experience with other countries of the region.

37. See: W. Kitler, *Bezpieczeństwo narodowe RP: podstawowe kategorie, uwarunkowania, system*, AON 2011, pp. 103–104.

38. See: K. Loranty, *Idea bezpieczeństwa społecznego państwa*, in: *Współczesne bezpieczeństwo. Perspektywa teoretyczno-metodologiczna*, eds. S. Jacyński, M. Kubiak, M. Minkina, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Przyrodniczo-Humanistycznego w Siedlcach 2011, pp. 173–181.

39. K. Kądziański, *The Idea of Protecting People at Risk of Exclusion. A Study of the Activities of the Stocznia Foundation under the CAMI and Lokator Programs*, "Polish Journal of Political Science", 2022, Vol. 8, Issue 3, pp. 51–60, DOI: [10.58183/pjps.03052022](https://doi.org/10.58183/pjps.03052022).

40. K. Kądziański, *The Idea of Social Participation. A Study of the Activities of the Stocznia Foundation under the Od Diagnozy do Strategii Program*, "Polish Journal of Political Science", 2022, Vol. 8, Issue 4, pp. 14–24, DOI: [10.58183/pjps.04042022](https://doi.org/10.58183/pjps.04042022).

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