

# CONTRIBUTION OF UKRAINIAN DIASPORA IN POLAND AND THE UK IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF UKRAINE

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Over the past decades, the engagement of Diasporas in issues conventionally seen as relating to development, poverty reduction, economic growth, trade, post-crisis recovery or post-conflict reconstruction has generated an increasing interest among academics (e.g. Cohen 1997, VanHear et al. 2004) and stakeholders (UNDP, CoE, DFID, IOM etc). Notably the development potential of Diasporas is now largely acknowledged by a wide range of scholars. This potential derives first, from the financial and non-financial resources that Diasporas have accumulated abroad and which can be mobilized and second, from the willingness of Diaspora members to invest these resources. Such resources are not limited to financial assets, but also encompass skills and knowledge that can be shared to mutual developmental benefit.

Through a critical examination of Diaspora engagement in Poland and the UK, three findings are identified. First, Ukrainian Diasporas in the past seemed to have had little influence on developments in Ukraine, for instance, on reforming the country after the end of communism (Prizel 1997). Second, the events in Ukraine have mobilized activists, volunteers, associations, various NGOs and foundations and triggered a powerful wave of diasporic activities in Poland and the UK. Ukrainian Diaspora groups and migrant communities collect money, medical supplies, and other goods to support soldiers and the displaced. It is contributing in important way in economic, political and social development of Ukraine. Euromaidan and the war in East Ukraine transformed Ukrainian Diasporas from more inward looking to more outward looking communities now more engaging with Ukrainian affairs. Third, Ukrainian authorities hardly engage with its Diaspora and have been almost absent from these processes. Indeed, unlike other countries that have large Diasporas abroad and/or are major migrant sending countries like India, the Philippines or Turkey Ukraine has not yet developed any active Diaspora policy. As a consequence, there is hardly any discussion or any policy provisions that would facilitate the usage and contribution of international migrant communities or Diasporas to the reform and development of the country. Therefore, the major policy challenge is to link and reintegrate Ukrainian Diasporas to the future development of the country.

1. Cohen, R. (1997). *Global Diasporas: An Introduction*. Seattle: University of Washington Press. pp. 228.
2. Prizel, I. (1997), *Ukraine between proto-democracy and 'soft' authoritarianism*, edited by Karen Dawisha, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
3. Van Hear, N. (2004). *The contribution of UK-based Diasporas to development and poverty reduction*, Oxford [Available at [http://www.ssap.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/NVH1\\_DFID-Diaspora-report.pdf](http://www.ssap.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/NVH1_DFID-Diaspora-report.pdf)]