

# Active Civic Participation of Immigrants in Poland

## Understanding the Conditions for Immigrant Participation

- legal immigrants
- stock of immigrants (permanent residents of Poland);
- stock of temporary immigrants (permanent residents of other countries than Poland);
- labour migrants in Poland;

# Active Civic Participation of Immigrants in Poland

- illegal migrants (according to Polish Ministry of Labour there are about 100,000-500,000 foreigners working illegally each year in Poland; there are about 30,000 Vietnamese in Poland);
- refugees/ asylum seekers (since the year 2005 till the end of September 2006 already 11,500 applied for a refugee status in Poland; they have the right to the state protection and they are entitled to accommodation, full board, healthcare, material help and assistance if they want to leave Poland.

# Active Civic Participation of Immigrants in Poland

Governmental program for refugees lasts one year. They are also registered in the Labour Offices. After a year the integration aid stops and refugees can use the support offered by social assistance centers.

Important factors:

- accommodation,
- insertion into society,
- employment;
- education.

# Active Civic Participation of Immigrants in Poland

Repatriates according to the Polish law- the repatriates are not foreigners; their status has been defined in the Repatriation Act of November 9, 2000.

Repatriates are people who know Poland, who have some sort of network in this country (local authorities, extended family, friends) and almost in all cases they had the support of the integration program at some stage of the repatriation process.

# Active Civic Participation of Immigrants in Poland

## Supporting

- repatriates are granted Polish citizenship almost automatically;
- one money transfer to the double average salary for each family member, as well as money for cover the expenses of establishment in a new household;
- allowance for education of minors;
- employment for the repatriates is a priority.

# Active Civic Participation of Immigrants in Poland

## Development of immigration policy in Poland

1, June 2004, the Act on Promotion of Employment and Institutions of the Labour Market; regulates among others the access of EU citizens and other foreigners , to the Polish labour market.

# Active Civic Participation of Immigrants in Poland

Regulation of the status of ethnic minorities in the Polish political and legal system after 1989 was a results of two trends:

1. The establishment of good, friendly relations with all neighbouring states and, as a consequence, the stabilization of its geopolitical position in Central Europe;
2. The establishment of an efficient system for protection of human and citizens' rights, including ethnic minorities.

# Active Civic Participation of Immigrants in Poland

Article 35 of the new Constitution (1997)

provides that:

- 1) The republic of Poland ensures Polish citizens belonging to national and ethnic minorities freedom of maintaining and developing their own language, their own customs and culture;
- 2) National and ethnic minorities have the right to establish educational and cultural institutions, institutions design to protect religious identity, as well as to participate in the resolutions on issues connected with their cultural identity.

# Active Civic Participation of Immigrants in Poland

Poland signed (in 1995) an Instrument of Central European Protection of Minority Rights within the framework of the Central European Initiatives

- 1) Protection of educational and cultural rights of ethnic minorities
- 2) Religion policy and the protection of religious rights (The Act of 17 May 1989)
- 3) Cultural activities of ethnic minorities
- 4) Participation of ethnic minorities in local and parliamentary elections

# Active Civic Participation of Immigrants in Poland

## Third Sector's Actors and International Organizations Dealing with Immigrants Issues

- The Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights; provides permanent assistance and advice on legal issues: several lawyers are at the disposal of asylum seekers and refugees
- Polish Humanitarian Action; provides help to victims of war and disaster in Poland and abroad as well as to refugees (Refugees' Assistance Center), since 1996 PHA has been running The Refugee's house where homeless asylum seekers can find a shelter, the promotion actions (e.g. Refugee's Day in cooperation with another NGO's) and educational activities are of great importance

# Active Civic Participation of Immigrants in Poland

- The Polish Red Cross; takes care of the refugees
- Other organizations involved in activities directed at helping refugees: Caritas, Polish YMCA and YVCA, the Woman Promotion Centre

# Active Civic Participation of Immigrants in Poland

## Migrants in Poland:

- Ukrainians
- Vietnamese
- Armenians
- Muslims

The background is a solid teal color. In the center, there is a faint, semi-transparent illustration of two hands shaking, symbolizing agreement or partnership. The text is centered over this illustration.

**Thank you for your kind attention !**