Bulletin

No. 89 Summer 2026

Netherlands Polish Chamber of Commerce

Hans Essaadi

Combining heritage with innovation Grupa Żywiec's response to shifting market realities

- Majaland: Building the family leisure market from the ground up in Poland
- Alux Profile: The secret behind the success story of a Dutch-Polish business drive

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Netherlands Polish Chamber of Commerce

Żaneta Gutowska-Rukszan, Managing Director of Majaland Polska
"It’s not about copying Western Europe. Poland has its own demand rhythms and price perceptions."

Trade Mission from the Netherlands
Dutch companies from the Food & Beverage sector met with leading Polish companies to establish new collaborations

Kaj and Arjen Bergman, Owners of PLBS
"Why deal with seven different co-packers when you can just call one?"

The Bulletin is a semi-annual publication of the Netherlands-Polish Chamber of Commerce.
It gives a voice to our members and informs about the activities the Chamber undertakes.
The views expressed in the columns are theirs alone.
The Editor-in-Chief is not responsible for the accuracy of the statements made by the columnists.

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NPCC
Director's note

Dear Members and Friends of the Chamber,

Anna Zadrożna
Managing Director of the Netherlands-Polish Chamber of Commerce

As we reach the midpoint of 2026, we would like to take a moment to reflect on the first half of the year, share some of the Chamber's key developments and achievements, and look ahead to the opportunities and priorities that will shape the months to come.

The beginning of 2026 has brought a cautiously optimistic business climate in Poland. Despite the ongoing geopolitical uncertainty and continued pressure on European markets, the Polish economy has shown resilience, supported by stable consumer demand, EU recovery funds, slowing inflation and growing investment activity. Many sectors have continued to adapt dynamically to the changing market conditions, while companies are increasingly focusing on innovation, sustainability and long-term competitiveness. Against this backdrop, strengthening international cooperation and creating valuable business connections remain more important than ever.

The importance of strong business relations between Poland and the Netherlands, as well as constructive dialogue between business and governmental institutions, continues to grow, especially in light of the trends that we are seeing all around Europe, and the increasing focus on 'local content' domestically. As a Chamber, our role is not only to facilitate direct business opportunities, but also to strengthen the voice, position and ecosystem of the entire Dutch-Polish business community. Together with our partners – Grupa Żywiec, ING, Raben, ED Invest and Randstad – and in collaboration with Polityka Insight, we have worked on a report highlighting the significance and contribution of Dutch companies to the Polish economy. The report will soon be published and will serve as an important starting point for further dialogue between the Polish administration and the business community. The Netherlands and Poland remain strong business partners, with the Netherlands ranking fourth in terms of foreign direct investment in Poland, reaching PLN 108.3 billion and supporting approximately 450,000 jobs across the country. This partnership represents a strong and increasingly influential voice – one that must continue to be heard clearly.

We will continue the discussion around the Dutch-Polish ecosystem during the upcoming Dutch Business Forum in the Netherlands in June, with the participation of Minister Domański, Minister Sjoerdsma and Minister Herberts, sending a strong message about the most pressing topics and challenges facing the Dutch-Polish business community.

This dialogue will be further strengthened through the Public Affairs groups we are launching for our community. Key topics relevant to Dutch-Polish businesses – including transport, sustainable production, energy transition, finance and taxation – will be represented within these groups, creating a platform for ongoing dialogue and cooperation with governmental institutions and public stakeholders. We warmly encourage our members to join these groups and actively contribute to shaping the business landscape in Poland together.

During the first half of 2026, we remained highly active, organising over 40 events across Poland and the Netherlands. We also supported Dutch companies entering the Polish market through tailored matchmaking and market entry services, ranging from study trips to B2B meetings with our network and external business partners. These activities covered key sectors such as food, agriculture, medical, offshore and construction.

The Chamber is also becoming increasingly active in the Netherlands. On 14 April, we organised a joint event with ING in Amsterdam, focusing on building business bridges between Poland and the Netherlands. This event marked an important step in strengthening our presence in the Dutch market and further positioning our community on a more international level. We are currently engaging with several regional business development agencies in the Netherlands to build broader and more resilient relationships with institutions and organisations. This effort aims to create an even stronger network for our members and support both Dutch companies entering the Polish market and Polish companies expanding into the Netherlands in a more proactive and effective way.

Our network also continued to grow, and we are delighted to welcome 25 new members from a wide range of sectors. Their arrival further strengthens the diversity and expertise within our community, and we look forward to supporting new collaborations and business opportunities in the months ahead.

At the NPCC, we have further expanded our involvement across the regions. We are pleased to welcome Tomasz Drozdowski as our new regional representative for the Gdańsk region, which will be high on our agenda in the months ahead, as well as Anna Zgajewska, who is joining our strong team of Wrocław representatives. We warmly welcome both Tomasz and Anna and look forward to many joint initiatives and activities. Soon, we expect to share more information regarding a delegation from the Netherlands visiting the Ukraine Recovery Conference in Gdańsk in June. The NPCC will once again join forces with its key partner, the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Poland, to create new business opportunities within the Polish-Dutch business landscape.

As we look ahead to the second half of 2026, we are excited to continue developing new projects, strengthening bilateral relations and creating further opportunities for our members. We already have an ambitious calendar planned for the coming months, a preview of which you can find on page 4, including the highly anticipated Orange Ball 2026 on 3 October. We warmly invite you to mark the date in your diaries and secure your seats for this flagship Dutch-Polish business charity initiative.

We look forward to seeing many of you during our upcoming events and initiatives. For now, we wish you a wonderful summer break filled with relaxation and an opportunity to recharge your personal and professional batteries.

Our mission remains as relevant as ever. Without the support and involvement of the Dutch-Polish community, however, neither our organisation nor our role would be possible. Together, we are contributing to a broader vision and remain committed to strengthening the voice and impact of the Dutch-Polish business community.

As always, if you have any ideas, suggestions or feedback, please do not hesitate to reach out. I would be delighted to discuss them with you personally over a cup of coffee or lunch.

Warm regards,

Anna Zadrożna
anna.zadrozna@npcc.pl
Managing Director
Netherlands-Polish Chamber of Commerce

Chamber's Agenda

Activities of the Netherlands-Polish Chamber of Commerce

24 June

Rebuild Ukraine Trade Mission | Gdańsk

An exclusive business networking reception with a high-level Dutch delegation, organized jointly by the NPCC, the Embassy of the Netherlands, and other governmental representatives, ahead of the Ukraine Recovery Conference 2026.

4 July

NPCC Summer Networking Event | Warsaw

A unique networking event for members, partners, friends, and family, offering a combination of business networking, a professional shooting experience, outdoor catering, and optional first aid and preparedness workshops.

11 September

International Oktoberfest 2026 | Wrocław

One of the largest international business networking events in the region, bringing together around 1,000 business representatives for an evening of networking, entertainment, and new business opportunities in the company of live music, great food, and of course – beer.

16 September

Expler Logistics Conference 2026 | Kraków

A logistics conference focused on innovative technologies, digital solutions, and best practices in supply chain, warehouse, and transport management, offering practical insights from industry experts and technology leaders.

21 – 24 September

Urban Mobility Trade Mission | Wrocław

A high-level trade mission on Urban Mobility will visit Wrocław centered around the New Mobility Congress in Katowice, where NPCC will provide tailored business matchmaking for Dutch & Polish companies.

October

Regional Business Lunch | Kraków

An intimate networking lunch exclusively for regional members and business representatives in the Kraków/Katowice region.

3 October

Orange Ball 2026 | Warsaw

Our most prestigious and largest event of the year – the Orange Ball charity gala. For tickets please check our website: https://npcc.pl/the-orange-ball-2026/

October

New Members Consult | Warsaw

A hybrid meeting organized specifically for the newest members of the NPCC. An opportunity to get to know the Chamber and network in a small gathering.

November

Doing Business in the Netherlands | Warsaw

A high-level conference and panel dedicated to doing business in the Netherlands, with companies of a range of sectors sharing their expertise and support in entering the Dutch market.

November

Speed Business Mixer | Warsaw

The International Speed Business Mixer is one of the most valuable events for the members of bilateral Chambers of Commerce in Poland. For this event, we join forces to create a perfect international business environment.

November

Networking Lunch | The Netherlands

An exclusive networking lunch held for our business community in the Netherlands. A perfect opportunity to mingle with our local Dutch business representatives, strengthening ties between NPCC members.

December

Historical Conference with IPN | Poznań

Conference on the intertwining histories of our two countries after the Second World War – from General Maczek and the liberation of the Netherlands in 1944 to extensive help provided by the Dutch to Poles in the 1980s, mainly through the initiative "Help de Polen de Winter Door".

December

Christmas Business Drink | Warsaw

The holiday season is filled with opportunities to come together. The Christmas Business Drink is one of those occasions. A networking and social event aimed at celebrating the end of the year and come together one last time as a business community.

December

Regional Business Lunch Sinterklaas Edition | Wrocław

Of course, there is no Dutch holiday celebration without the magic of Sinterklaas. A business lunch themed with Dutch holiday tradition and Sinterklaas traditions – for both our local Dutchies and Polish members who would like to strengthen Dutch-Polish business relations.

We are working on these events and many more. Some dates may be subject to change.
Keep up-to-date with us by checking our newsletters and website: https://npcc.pl/events

Interview

Grupa Żywiec

Hans Essaadi

Managing Director at Grupa Żywiec

“Combining heritage with innovation. What we really want to be known for, above all, is quality.”

In conversation with Hans Essaadi, Managing Director of Grupa Żywiec, we explore his perspective on the rapidly changing alcohol sector, his experience of various markets, and the increasing prominence of non-alcoholic beer.

We also speak about what the future holds for the industry and how Grupa Żywiec is preparing for it, Hans also shares how company’s approach to sustainability connects with understanding consumer’s expectations and meeting the needs of various generations.

Hans Essaadi, Managing Director of Grupa Żywiec

Can you tell us a little about yourself?

I'm a Heineken leader with a global track record across Europe, Africa, the Middle East and Asia. Before joining Grupa Żywiec as CEO in 2025, I led businesses in Nigeria, Egypt and Malaysia, focusing on sustainable growth, premiumisation and building high-performing teams.

You've worked across markets like Nigeria, Egypt and Dubai – what has surprised you most about the Polish market since joining Grupa Żywiec in August 2025?

I've worked in over 50 different beer markets during my career, and Poland is by far the most competitive and complex market I've experienced. Consumers here are very open to innovation, but at the same time very conscious of their choices and they are increasingly shifting away from alcohol towards 0.0%. There are very powerful retail chains competing with each other, often using beer. We also have all the international beer producers trying to gain market share here.

Polish consumers are very open to international brands and new experiences, yet they are equally proud of local products and authenticity. That's why, alongside the big players, there are also many small regional brewers active in the country. That balance of openness and strong local appreciation makes Poland a very dynamic place for category reinvention. At the same time, it is a market with an increasingly complex regulatory environment, both in terms of the tax system as well as alcohol and environmental regulations.

Just to give you one example, I don't think there is a more complex deposit return system (DRS) anywhere else in the world. Having said that, Poland remains a country of enormous opportunity, with the highest GDP per capita growth in Europe and one of the strongest growth rates across the G20. And there is still room for new pockets of growth and premiumisation.

Presumably, there are some interesting differences in consumer behaviour across all those markets. How does consumer behaviour in Poland and Europe compare with what you've seen in African and Middle Eastern markets?

In Europe, the trend is towards moderation and more mindful consumption: people pay closer attention to ingredients, calories and the occasion, and they are willing to trade up for better experiences. In many African and Middle Eastern markets, growth is driven more by demographics and urbanisation, with different purchase frequencies and price ladders. In Poland, the opportunity is to win through relevance – with stronger premium choices, such as Bira Moretti, and a portfolio that fits new, more intentional occasions.

We're seeing a clear shift, especially among younger consumers, towards lower or no alcohol consumption. What are your observations, and how is Grupa Żywiec adapting its portfolio and long-term strategy to respond to this trend?

The shift to low- and no-alcohol products is real and accelerating, particularly among younger adults, but also among people who simply want more balance in their week. Consumers are choosing beer more selectively and more consciously – so our role is to offer the right choice for every occasion, including moments where alcohol is not desired.

That's why we are continuing to expand our 0.0% portfolio across key brands, for example Heineken Ultimate 0.0%, Warka Classic 0.0% and Żywiec Białe 0.0%. Strategically, we are "redefining what beer is today and what it will be tomorrow" by combining heritage with innovation and by making moderation a normal part of the category. What we really want to be known for, above all, is quality.

Do you see the rise of 0.0% beers as a temporary adjustment or a fundamental transformation of the industry?

I see 0.0% not as a short-term adjustment, but as a structural transformation. It's becoming mainstream because it solves a genuine consumer need: people want the great beer taste as well as brand experiences with more flexibility and fewer compromises.

That is why we're continuing to invest in differentiated propositions such as Heineken Ultimate 0.0%, while also bringing the 0.0% proposition into broader occasions through brands like Desperados 0.0%. For the industry, this changes innovation priorities – from brewing technology and taste profiles to how we build new occasions.

What are currently the biggest challenges for the industry, and for Grupa Żywiec itself? We are seeing increasing restrictions on alcohol advertising in Europe, and even discussions around limiting 0.0% beer promotion – how do you continue to build brands and engage consumers?

The biggest challenges are the pressure on affordability and costs across the value chain, changing consumption patterns and a tightening regulatory environment, especially around advertising. In this context, brand building becomes less about "broadcast" and more about earning relevance through better innovation, stronger in-store execution, premium experiences, and partnerships that consumers actively choose.

Long term, one of the biggest challenges we need to face is the rapidly changing demographic situation, which impacts our consumer base in Poland. This makes the shift to premiumisation even more important and urgent.

Given all that, how do you see the future of the beer industry in Poland, and how does Grupa Żywiec plan to adapt to it? Are there any upcoming projects that you can share with us?

I'm optimistic about the future of beer in Poland, but the market will look different. Consumers will drink more selectively, premium will matter more and 0.0% will continue to expand. Our job is to stay ahead of these shifts by innovating responsibly and strengthening the relevance of our brands across different occasions – from social moments to everyday balance.

In practical terms, that means investing in premium brands and expanding alcohol-free choices, while also bringing new energy to classic lager through quality and premiumisation. You will see us continue to invest in these priorities while keeping our operations efficient and resilient so we can grow sustainably.

We know how important sustainability is nowadays; however, for a company with such extensive operations and production, it is neither easy nor low-cost. How do you balance profitability with environmental and social responsibility? Are there any measurable ESG goals that you are particularly proud of?

For us, profitability and responsibility are not trade-offs but they reinforce each other, especially when approached with discipline and clear priorities. Sustainability reduces risk, increases efficiency and builds trust with consumers, employees and communities. We focus on measurable progress, especially where it connects directly with operations: energy and water efficiency, responsible sourcing and safer, more inclusive workplaces.

Our ambition is to keep improving year after year, with transparency around targets and outcomes. We've already made impressive progress in Poland, reducing our CO2 emissions by 36% since the base year 2022. We have also achieved record-low water consumption across our breweries. This progress is thanks to the strong engagement and skills of our teams and external partners, and we intend to continue building on it.

Projects like Żywiec Męskie Granie have become cultural institutions in Poland. How important are these kinds of initiatives in building brand relevance today?

Initiatives like Żywiec Męskie Granie are extremely important because they keep brands culturally relevant, not just visible. They allow us to contribute to experiences people genuinely value, and to build an emotional connection over time.

In a world of fragmented attention, meaningful partnerships are one of the most effective ways to earn consumer preference – especially when they are done authentically and responsibly.

Grupa Żywiec has been an active member of the Netherlands-Polish Chamber of Commerce for many years now. What role do such partnerships play in shaping the company's position and business relationships?

Partnerships like the Netherlands-Polish Chamber of Commerce strengthen the ecosystem around our business. They create a platform for dialogue, knowledge exchange and practical cooperation, which is especially valuable for a company that combines strong local roots with international ownership.

For us, it is also a way to support responsible business standards and build long-term relationships across sectors.

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Chamber
News and Events

Holiday Drink | Warsaw

With the summer holidays approaching and our event calendar briefly slowing down ahead of the Orange Ball on 3 October, this is a good moment to look back at our Holiday Drink in 2025. Back in December, the NPCC co-hosted this annual highlight with His Excellency Mr Jennes de Mol, Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Poland and Belarus, at the Ambassador's Residence in Warsaw.

Bringing together members of the Dutch-Polish business community, government representatives and partner organisations in a relaxed and festive setting, the evening was a chance to celebrate the past year, reconnect and exchange ideas. Special thanks go to our partners Signify and Bolsius Polska, whose beautiful lighting and symbolic gifts added a warm and welcoming touch. The event was a truly memorable occasion that once again highlighted the strength of the ties within the Dutch-Polish business network.

New Year's Reception | Wrocław

We began 2026 in style in Wrocław with our annual New Year's Reception in January. Co-hosted by our member company Thaumatec at their offices in the city's business district, the event brought together chamber members and representatives of the Dutch-Polish business community for an informal start to the year focused on reconnecting and looking ahead.

The welcoming setting provided by Thaumatec enabled guests to catch up after the holidays, share updates and explore new opportunities. The evening served as both a celebration of the year ahead and a reminder of how valuable in-person meetings remain for building strong business relationships.

New Year's Reception | Poznań

On 27 January, we teamed up with the Scandinavian-Polish Chamber of Commerce and Raben Group to host a New Year's Reception in Poznań. The event took place at the Molski Gallery, where pieces of contemporary art created an inspiring backdrop for conversations between members of both chambers.

After a brief welcome, guests spent the evening networking, reconnecting and meeting new business partners. With over 60 participants from the region in attendance, the reception successfully combined a festive atmosphere with fresh ideas and renewed connections for the year ahead.

New Year's Networking Lunch | Kraków

We kicked off the year in Kraków with a New Year's Regional Networking Lunch on 29 January at Plac Nowy 1 restaurant, with the informal setting in the heart of the city providing the perfect environment for participants to connect and exchange ideas.

The lunch brought together members of the local business community for open discussions about plans for the year ahead. Without a formal agenda, the event felt more like a gathering of colleagues than a traditional business meeting, highlighting the value of personal connections in the region.

Dutch Business Breakfast | Warsaw

Early March was a time for the Dutch community within our network, with our flagship Dutch Business Breakfast taking place in Warsaw on 3 March. This year, the theme of the discussions focused on the rapidly changing geopolitical landscape and its impact on Europe, particularly on the Netherlands and Poland. The meeting took place at the Embassy of the Netherlands.

Over a morning coffee, members of the Dutch-speaking business community discussed current international tensions, shifting alliances and security challenges, and what these mean in practice for business and policymaking. Our guest of honour was Hans Leijtens, Executive Director at Frontex, who shared valuable insights into migration and border management. Ambassador Jennes de Mol also joined the discussion, adding his own perspective. The session offered an open and engaging exchange on today's geopolitical realities.

Business Mixer | Łódź

On 5 March, we joined the annual ŁSSE Business Mixer at the Grohman Factory in the Łódź Special Economic Zone. The event brought together over 400 participants from more than 250 companies, transforming the industrial space into a lively networking hub.

The programme combined structured B2B meetings with informal networking opportunities. Participants took part in short roundtable sessions to present their businesses, followed by a relaxed cocktail reception and dinner, where conversations could continue more freely. The "Tech Corner" added an extra element to the evening by showcasing Spark 3.0 solutions. Once again, the mixer confirmed its position as one of the region's key events for building and strengthening business relationships.

Women in Business | Warsaw

International Women's Day provided the perfect occasion for another edition of our much-anticipated Women in Business Conference, organised together with Grupa Żywiec and hosted at the company's headquarters in Warsaw.

This year's discussion aimed to shift the focus away from the very real obstacles that women continue to face in the workforce towards a more illuminating female perspective on how to develop your career, start your own business and truly take ownership over your professional path.

The conference started with opening remarks by Ambassador Jennes de Mol and Magdalena Brzeziska from Grupa Żywiec. Dagmara Rybicka then delivered a keynote speech about her own professional journey, in which she shared a number of valuable lessons for women working in SMEs. This was followed by a lively panel discussion moderated by Dr Agnieszka Sznyk, with contributions from Associate Professor Beata Gessel-Kalinowska vel Kalisz, Agnieszka Szumielewicz and Liliana Poszumska. The speakers shared their perspectives on entrepreneurship, alternative career paths and the structural changes needed to support women-led businesses, before the evening concluded with informal networking in a relaxed atmosphere.

International Speed Business Mixer | Katowice

On 12 March, we co-organised the International Speed Business Mixer in Katowice, together with partner chambers and Globalworth. Held at the Ace of Space offices, the event attracted nearly 200 professionals from a wide range of sectors. Participants took part in a structured speed networking session, presenting their companies in short, timed rounds, followed by informal cocktails. This format allowed for both efficient introductions as well as deeper follow-up conversations. As the first event of its kind in Katowice, the buzz created revealed the strong interest in this kind of dynamic networking format.

Rebuild Ukraine Roundtable | Warsaw

In mid-March, we hosted the "Rebuild Ukraine" Roundtable at the Embassy of the Netherlands in Warsaw, bringing together Dutch, Polish and Ukrainian stakeholders. The discussion focused on how businesses can contribute to Ukraine's reconstruction and what support mechanisms are currently available.

The event opened with introductory remarks from Ambassador Jennes de Mol, Ambassador Vasyl Bodnar and NPCC Chairman Adrian Heymans. Speakers from the Dutch Embassy in Kyiv, PFR, Team Poland and KUKE then outlined the current conditions and financial instruments available. The roundtable discussion itself allowed participants to share their experiences and identify key challenges, before the meeting concluded with a networking lunch.

Growth Strategies 2026 Conference | Poznań

In April, we headed to Poznań for the Growth Strategies 2026 Conference, hosted at the Marshal's Office of the Wielkopolska Region. The event focused on the key question of how businesses can pursue growth in an increasingly uncertain environment.

Organised together with AHK and co-hosted with regional partners, the conference explored topics such as AI, the space sector, dual-use technologies, the energy transition, and security. Discussions centred on turning innovation into practical applications.

International Speed Business Mixer | Gdańsk

On 14 April, we hosted the International Speed Business Mixer in Gdańsk at the Arche Hotel Lotnisko. The event brought together professionals from multiple bilateral chambers for an evening of structured networking.

Participants took part in a series of timed meetings, followed by a more relaxed networking session with refreshments. The format once again proved highly effective in helping businesses make a number of new contacts in a short space of time. Supported by KLM Royal Dutch Airlines and organised in collaboration with the Scandinavian-Polish Chamber of Commerce, the event also highlighted Gdańsk's growing role as a hub for international business.

Academic Job Mixer | Wrocław

In May we invited students and business representatives at the University of Wrocław for the Academic Job Mixer, organised together with the Belgian Business Chamber (BBC).

The event hosted international students from the Faculty of Modern Languages and representatives from PPG, Puratos and AXA XL for presentations, workshops and networking focused on career development and the value of language skills in business. The interactive discussions created a productive atmosphere and offered students valuable insights into international career opportunities across different sectors. The strong engagement from both students and companies proved how important it is for current employers and emerging talent to exchange views early on.

Indonesian Rijsttafel | Wrocław

Business professionals gathered at Fine Spot restaurant in Wrocław for an evening centred around the Indonesian Rijsttafel tradition, combining authentic cuisine with relaxed networking in an informal atmosphere.

Guests enjoyed a specially prepared selection of Indonesian dishes, including satay, rendang and nasi goreng, creating a unique setting for conversations and connections within the local NPCC community.

The event was organized by our dedicated representative Łukasz Chodkowski, and the dinner was prepared by Robert C. Regenhardt, whose passion for Indonesian cuisine and cultural heritage made the evening particularly memorable.

Panattoni Café – Future Proof Factories | Warsaw

We started the morning of May 19th with an engaging panel discussion at Panattoni Café in Warsaw, focused on sustainable industrial strategies and how to future-proof factories in a rapidly changing economic and regulatory environment.

Organised together with Panattoni BTS, the meeting brought together representatives from the industrial, energy and legal sectors for an open exchange of perspectives on sustainability, energy transition and the practical challenges facing manufacturers today.

The discussion featured contributions from Bartłomiej Adamczyk (Panattoni BTS), Jörn-Erik Mantz (E.ON Polska), Magdalena Brzezińska (Grupa Żywiec), and Dr Michał Drozdowicz (JDP), with the conversation moderated by Aleksandra Stępniak (VELUX). The panel explored topics such as energy efficiency, regulatory developments, ESG implementation and long-term investment strategies, while also highlighting the importance of cross-sector cooperation in building resilient industrial operations.

The meeting created valuable space for participants to exchange experiences and discuss how businesses can respond to growing sustainability expectations while remaining competitive. The discussion also underlined that future-proofing industry goes hand in hand with the broader transformation of the energy sector.

New regional representative in Wrocław

Anna Zgajewska

Anna is a seasoned recruitment and career development professional with over 15 years of experience in international organisations across the Dutch and Polish markets. She is the founder and owner of TAS Talent Assets Services, a boutique recruitment agency specialising in sourcing highly skilled professionals, with a particular focus on Dutch-speaking talent and international language profiles.

Her expertise spans people management, organisational psychology and career development, enabling her to effectively support both clients and candidates in achieving sustainable career success.

Having lived and worked in both the Netherlands and Poland, Anna has developed a strong international mindset and a deep understanding of both markets. This allows her to effectively connect Dutch and Polish business environments, supporting cross-border recruitment and enabling smooth talent mobility.

New regional representative in Gdańsk

Tomasz Drozdowski

Joining the NPCC as the regional representative for Gdańsk, Tomasz began his international journey years ago in the United States, but it was the Netherlands that truly shaped his professional career. After moving there to study at Eindhoven University of Technology, he initially took on engineering roles at Altran (now Capgemini) and DAF, before continuing his studies with a master's degree at Delft University of Technology. Today, he works with ARS Traffic & Transport Technology – a Dutch company specialising in intelligent transport systems – in a role that enables him to stay closely connected to Dutch business while building partnerships and creating market opportunities.

Tomasz recently returned to Poland, settling back in Gdańsk – a city he left many years ago. A place with huge meaning for him on a personal level, Gdańsk historically has a long relationship with the Netherlands, and continues to play an important role in trade, logistics and innovation. As the regional representative for the city, Tomasz looks forward to being a valuable point of contact, helping ideas and opportunities grow between the Dutch and Polish business communities.

In his free time, he enjoys playing the guitar, learning chess, scuba diving and reading widely, especially books on modern history and geopolitical affairs.

New regional representative in Netherlands

Bauke van Daalen

Bauke van Daalen recently joined the NPCC as the regional representative for the Northern Netherlands. His connection to Poland dates back almost 40 years, when he first visited the country as a student for a summer holiday. That was a time of huge political change, so Poland caught his attention straightaway. Within a few years, he had learned the language and become the co-owner of a disco, together with a Polish partner.

In 1994, Bauke decided to move from the Netherlands to Poland to work for KPMG, helping to build their fast-growing IT consultancy team. After a few years in Slovakia as well, he moved back to the Netherlands in 2000 to focus on his career in business consulting with two international consultancies, serving predominantly large enterprises in the utilities and manufacturing sectors.

Bauke's connection to Poland has always remained strong, and he still visits the country frequently to meet friends or business contacts. In his free time, he is an avid long-distance runner and motorcycle enthusiast. He is greatly looking forward to applying his knowledge of the Polish and Dutch markets for the benefit of NPCC members.

Article

"Building Bridges: Doing Business with Poland"

On April 14th, the NPCC together with ING Poland and ING Nederland, welcomed more than 70 entrepreneurs, business leaders, and Dutch–Polish business stakeholders to ING's headquarters in Amsterdam for the "Building Bridges – Doing Business with Poland" forum. The event was designed to offer practical insights and real-business experiences to companies interested in entering or expanding within the Polish market, while strengthening the economic ties between the Netherlands and Poland.

The forum marked the culmination of months of collaboration between the NPCC and ING, driven by a shared objective: helping Dutch businesses better understand the opportunities available in one of Europe's most dynamic economies. Participants were welcomed by Ewa Łuniewska (Advisor to the Board at ING Poland), Reinoud van Helbergen (Director Guided & Relationship Banking at ING Business Banking NL), and Anna Zadrożna (Board Member and Managing Director of NPCC), who emphasized the importance of continued Dutch–Polish cooperation in a rapidly changing European business environment.

A key highlight of the afternoon was an economic deep dive presented by Rafał Benecki, (Chief Economist at ING Poland). His analysis painted a compelling picture of Poland's economic resilience and long-term growth potential. Despite global uncertainties, Poland continues to demonstrate strong fundamentals, supported by a large domestic market, increasing productivity, strategic investments, and a highly skilled workforce. These factors continue to reinforce Poland's position as an attractive destination for foreign investment and business development.

The perspective was complemented by a business case presentation from Flora Food Group. Sebastian Tolwiński (Corporate Affairs & Communications Director, Central and Southeastern Europe at Flora Food Group) shared the company's experiences operating in Poland, providing participants with valuable insights into the realities of doing business in the market.

From access to highly qualified talent and a supportive investment ecosystem to the successful operation of one of Europe's most efficient production facilities in Katowice, the presentation demonstrated how international companies can successfully build and scale their presence in Poland. One of the most anticipated parts of the programme was the panel discussion, moderated by Julia Tappermann (ING Nederland) and Anna Zadrożna (NPCC). Bringing together representatives from Nijhof-Wassink, TMF Group, Bolsius, and Viscon Group, the discussion moved beyond macroeconomic indicators and focused on practical business experiences.

Panelists reflected on why Poland has become a strategic market for their organisations and discussed topics ranging from talent acquisition and local partnerships to cultural differences and relationship-building. Their experiences highlighted that while Poland offers significant opportunities for growth, success often depends on understanding local business practices, investing in long-term relationships, and working closely with trusted partners on the ground.

The discussion also explored broader trends shaping investment decisions across Europe. Participants considered the impact of geopolitical developments, changing supply chains, and the growing importance of regional resilience. In this context, Poland was repeatedly identified not only as an attractive market in its own right but also as an increasingly important hub within European business operations.

Perhaps most valuable were the practical lessons shared by the panelists. Their candid reflections on challenges, successes, and lessons learned provided attendees with a realistic picture of market entry and expansion. For companies considering their first steps in Poland, these insights offered a roadmap of both opportunities and potential pitfalls.

Beyond the formal programme, the event created valuable opportunities for networking and exchange between Dutch and Polish business communities. Conversations continued

long after the final panel discussion, demonstrating the strong interest among Dutch companies in exploring Poland's business landscape and establishing new partnerships.

The NPCC would like to thank its long-standing partner ING, and in particular Ewa Łuniewska, Reinoud van Helbergen, Rob van den Biggelaar, and Julia Tappermann, for their commitment and cooperation in making this event possible. Their continued support contributes significantly to strengthening economic relations between the Netherlands and Poland.

As interest in the Polish market continues to grow, the NPCC remains committed to supporting businesses on both sides of the North Sea. Through trusted networks, market expertise, and connections to reliable partners, we continue to help companies build bridges, unlock opportunities, and turn cross-border ambitions into long-term success.

Żaneta Gutowska-Rukszan

Managing Director & Board Member of Majaland Polska

“ Poland’s family leisure market is still wide open and Majaland is setting the standard for what ‘quality’ means ”

In conversation with Żaneta Gutowska-Rukszan, Managing Director and Board Member of Majaland Polska, we explore the rapidly evolving family leisure market in Poland and the growing demand for high-quality, year-round entertainment destinations. We discuss how Majaland combines Dutch operational expertise with a deep understanding of the Polish market, balancing scalable growth with local expectations around value, safety and guest experience. We also speak about the company’s ambitious expansion plans and the role of long-term partnerships in shaping the future of family entertainment in Central and Eastern Europe.

Żaneta Gutowska-Rukszan

Could you briefly introduce Majaland?

Majaland is Momentum Leisure’s family theme park platform in Poland, built around safe, all weather entertainment. We operate three parks (Kownaty, Warsaw, Gdańsk) and are developing a fourth in Gliwice. Our mission is to spark joy and discovery for children and families through distinctive attractions and IP driven storytelling.

How would you define your positioning in Poland’s family entertainment market?

We position Majaland as a mid sized, family safe theme park destination with strong indoor capacity – reliable in all seasons and ideal for day trips. Poland is still underpenetrated in terms of modern family leisure, so our edge lies in offering trusted, repeatable quality: cleanliness, safety, friendly service and predictable fun for children aged 3 to 12 and their parents.

We strengthen brand recognition through a unique IP mix and translate it into experiences, meet and greets, events, retail and F&B. Our growth comes from clear communication of our values, smart calendar management and scalable multi park marketing, allowing us to build the category while remaining affordable and operationally strong.

What role does the NPCC play for Majaland?

As a new member of the NPCC, we see the network as a bridge to stronger partnerships in Poland. It helps us connect with businesses for brand activations, local sourcing, tourism

cooperation and talent. It also provides a platform for sharing best practices and staying close to market developments.

Majaland is backed by Momentum Leisure. How does this Dutch perspective influence your approach in Poland?

Our Dutch roots bring a 'platform mindset': building parks that are scalable and consistently high quality across locations. We use disciplined planning – phased capex and KPI tracking – so growth never compromises safety or the guest experience. It's not about copying Western Europe, however.

Poland has its own demand rhythms and price perceptions, so we tailor calendars, bundles and communication locally. We invest in IP-led storytelling, but the overall experience matters more than the characters alone. We empower the local management, while the group provides governance and shared learning.

Majaland operates across three locations in Poland. How do you manage them?

We manage Majaland as one platform with three distinct park roles. Kownaty is our most mature park, focused on loyalty and repeat visits. Warsaw is more sensitive to our calendar strategy and competition, so per-capita value is the main lever there. Gdańsk provides regional reach and strong tourism potential, with a focus on seasonality and B2B channels.

Our operational efficiency comes from standardising safety, maintenance, training and guest service, with differentiation coming through local programming, marketing and park-specific investments.

Poland's theme park sector is still developing compared to Western Europe. What differences have you observed between Poland and more mature markets such as the Netherlands?

Poland is developing quickly as a theme park market, but spending patterns are still different from more mature markets like the Netherlands, Belgium or Germany. We see greater sensitivity to 'value for money' – especially around add ons such as parking or food and beverages – so transparency, family bundles and clear communication matter more. At the same time, trust is built through the fundamentals: cleanliness, hospitality, and safe, predictable experiences. When those basics are strong, repeat visitation grows fast.

In more mature markets, guests often expect premium upsells and are used to higher per cap spending. In Poland, growth is more gradual – you earn it through quality, better food perception, sharper product packaging and seasonal novelties that keep the experience fresh. Consumer research also shows that expanding your appeal to older children requires modern communication, stronger emotional pulls such as adventure and excitement, and a broader experience universe.

How would you describe the Polish approach to family leisure time, and how has that influenced the Majaland parks?

Polish families often treat leisure as a shared, multigenerational experience. This influences our approach in two ways. Firstly, we emphasise 'safe adventure'. This means immersive theming and characters, but also predictability, cleanliness and friendly staff that parents trust. Secondly, we design for comfort and flexibility – with strong indoor capacity for all weather visits, clear wayfinding and offers that work for different age groups within a single trip. As our IP expands, we are also developing content that naturally extends our appeal towards older children.

Have you been "building the market" or responding to existing demand?

When we entered Poland, parks of this type were still relatively new so part of our role was to build the market through awareness, trust and standards. We secured strategic land early and introduced a year round format with strong indoor capacity, helping people experience the category differently. As the market matured, the demand signals became clearer: seasonal peaks, school and group visits, regional tourism and corporate outings.

Today, it is a balance. We are continuing to 'build the category' by raising standards and through storytelling, while also adapting more precisely to demand through pricing, calendars and data-driven improvements.

How important are long-term partnerships like the one with CFE for your expansion?

Long term partnerships like the one with CFE are a strategic advantage because our growth plan is phased and repeatable across multiple parks. A stable construction partner helps us standardise our methods, shorten learning curves and reduce execution risk, especially when we run parallel workstreams while the parks remain operational.

Just as importantly, continuity allows us to build institutional memory around what works in our specific context: indoor/outdoor integration, winter operations, a family friendly design and the practical requirements of IP led theming. Over time, that translates into faster delivery, fewer surprises and higher asset reliability – benefits that directly protect guest satisfaction and the company's financial performance.

As we expand beyond Poland, these partnerships become even more valuable since they also build institutional knowledge and support faster delivery, with fewer surprises and higher asset reliability. As we expand, they help us localise where needed while keeping our core standards consistent.

What are your priorities for expansion?

Within Poland, our next step is to add a new build pillar in the south – Theme Park Gliwice, which is being developed next to the Europa Centralna retail park. It has been designed as a next

generation concept that builds on our experience from the three parks currently in operation, with a broader age appeal and a strong IP universe. At the same time, we are preparing for our cross border growth into Romania (Bucharest) as a platform entry into a wider Central and Eastern European market.

Our expansion priorities follow a simple logic: firstly, protect and improve what is already performing through quality uplift, guest experience improvements and a future proof brand identity; secondly, add scale through new builds in metropolitan catchment areas; and thirdly, keep the pipeline financeable, with execution tightly controlled through phased development. We assess markets based on demographics, accessibility, permitting and operational feasibility, while carefully sequencing expansion in order to manage risk.

We know Majaland has a close-knit, highly collaborative core team, while also hiring hundreds of seasonal employees for the maintenance and operation of your parks during the working season. How do you maintain this culture while scaling operations?

We protect our 'family like' culture by treating our values and leadership as systematically as the operations themselves. Our core team works closely across the different functions, and we onboard seasonal colleagues with clear training, standards and recognition so they feel part of the mission from day one. We keep leadership visible in the parks, especially during peak season, and we invest in systems that strengthen collaboration between the various locations.

As we grow, we codify what works – our values, communication and routines – while also empowering local managers so that decisions stay close to our guests and the teams feel genuine ownership. And yes, traditions matter. Shared moments like kick offs and the company bike trip create real connections, which are essential when you operate multiple parks and hire hundreds of seasonal colleagues each year.

Małgorzata Boroń–Šinković and Paweł Drewniak

co-CEO's of CFE Polska

"We don't just build structures – we build long-term partnerships with our clients."

In conversation with Małgorzata Boroń–Šinković and Paweł Drewniak co-CEO's of CFE Polska, we discuss CFE Polska's growth from a small local team into a trusted construction partner delivering projects across multiple sectors in Poland. We also explore how the company combines Benelux operational standards with local market expertise, while maintaining a strong focus on sustainability, long-term partnerships and community engagement.

Małgorzata Boroń–Šinković and Paweł Drewniak

Interview

Could you briefly introduce CFE Polska to our readers and share the company's mission, core activities and presence in the Polish market?

CFE Polska is one of the leading general contractors in the country and has been present in the Polish market since 1996. We started as a small team, and over the years we've grown into one of the leading general contractors in the country, delivering projects nationwide. Our development has always been rooted in combining the international expertise of the CFE Group with strong local capabilities and close, long-term partnerships with our clients.

Our mission is to build with the future in mind. We take a long-term perspective on every project, which is why sustainability, innovation and responsible construction practices are at the core of how we operate. These values are fully aligned with the broader CFE Group philosophy and guide the way we design, plan and execute our work.

We operate across all key market sectors: industrial and logistics, residential, commercial and educational, as well as military infrastructure. We work to global standards, but we haven't lost the local touch and flexibility.

As part of a group with deep roots in Belgium and extensive operations across the Benelux region, how do your ties to the Netherlands influence your standards, partnerships or way of doing business?

With our roots in Belgium, Luxembourg and Poland, we really bring that 'Benelux DNA' to the table. For us, that translates into a culture of transparency, reliability and very structured management. We've successfully embedded these standards into our Polish projects, but we've made sure to stay agile and responsive enough to handle the local market.

We also gain a lot from our long-term partnerships with Benelux organisations, like our work with Momentum Leisure and Plopsa on projects such as Majaland. These collaborations have sharpened our ability to manage international stakeholders and complex, cross-border supply chains. It's given us a level of discipline in planning and coordination that is hard to match.

At the end of the day, everything we do comes down to partnership. We believe in making fast, practical decisions on-site while keeping communication clear and honest. It's about more than just a single project; it's about building long-term trust by staying perfectly aligned with our partners' goals. A great example of this partnership is The Warmest Ride (Rajd Gorących Serc) – an initiative that brings together our employees, business partners and cycling enthusiasts around a shared social purpose. Since 2023, it has combined a passion for cycling with real support for organisations helping people with disabilities through sport, demonstrating how collaboration can create meaningful impact.

From CFE Polska's perspective, how would you assess the current investment climate in Poland? Do you see a growing inflow of investments translating into new construction and infrastructure projects?

At CFE Polska, we see the Polish market as cautious but slowly picking up. Growth is returning, though it's happening in specific sectors rather than everywhere at once. The construction sector is still adjusting to years of high inflation and interest rates. Since financing is tougher now, the recovery is fragmented – it's not happening everywhere at once. Investors aren't just chasing expansion anymore. They've become more cautious, prioritising solid project foundations and smart risk management over quick growth.

However, some sectors are showing strong growth. Industrial and logistics projects are still in high demand as companies move production closer to home and continue to see Poland as a top distribution hub. We can also see growth in strategic infrastructure, where CFE Polska is closely following the needs of the defence and military sector.

CFE Polska has cooperated with Majaland, one of the most exciting leisure developments in the region. What was CFE Polska's role in bringing this project to life?

CFE Polska played a key role in delivering the complex Majaland park projects in Kownaty, Warsaw and Gdańsk and now the new theme park in Gliwice, from start to finish. We worked using a design-and-build model, handling everything from design to construction. This included the buildings, infrastructure and utilities. We managed the entire site development to make sure everything stayed on schedule and met the investor's needs. What is important, involvement does not end when construction is completed. We support our clients throughout the entire investment process: from the tender stage, where we propose alternative and value-engineered solutions, through design-and-build coordination, to the final handover of the building for use. We continue to support the client long after project completion through the warranty period, ensuring they can rely on us even after the building has been handed over.

Our partnership with Momentum Leisure is based on years of working together across Poland. CFE Polska successfully delivered Majaland Góraszka near Warsaw, a complex facility with a usable area of approximately 9,900 m² and a volume of around 135,000 m³. This project used the experience we gained from previous Majaland phases, like Majaland Kownaty, helping us improve our construction methods and coordination

Photograph of the GLP Warsaw VI Logistics Centre project in Stary Konik, developed by CFE Polska

specifically for theme parks. We have also delivered Majaland Gdańsk, further strengthening our experience in this segment, and we are currently building a new innovative theme park in Gliwice, which will be our fourth project of this kind.

The Majaland facilities are technically complex, requiring high precision in everything from the structure to the themed fit-outs. We managed the entire coordination between construction, technical systems and specialist elements, while keeping safety standards a top priority. For us, success wasn't just about the technical details, but it was also about ensuring a high-quality guest experience from day one.

Sustainability and modern construction methods are becoming increasingly important. How is CFE Polska responding to these trends in its current and future projects?

For us, modern construction and sustainability are at the core of our strategy. At both the group and local levels, we base our actions on ESG principles, guided by the SPARC framework, which integrates innovation, operational excellence, social responsibility and long-term value creation. We approach sustainability from a full life-cycle perspective – covering design, construction and operation – ensuring that buildings genuinely serve both the environment and people.

In our current projects, we actively implement solutions such as waste reduction, the use of organic materials, and water retention and management measures. Furthermore, through our Pulse initiative, we support our clients in improving the energy performance of existing buildings. These efforts involve a thorough analysis of energy consumption patterns and the identification of effective solutions to reduce both energy costs and the operational carbon footprint. The proven solutions developed in this process are then proposed for new developments already at the tendering and design stages.

CFE has been active in the Polish market for over 30 years now. Looking ahead, what are CFE Polska's priorities for the coming years?

After three decades in Poland, we're focusing on smart, steady expansion, particularly in sectors like industrial, logistics and military infrastructure. Meanwhile, our residential projects provide a steady base, helping us balance our expansion with a lower risk profile.

We aim to adopt a more selective approach to the projects we undertake, ensuring that we consistently deliver services of the highest quality. This strategy not only strengthens our financial stability, but also enables us to build long-term, trust-based relationships with our partners. At the same time, we remain open to brownfield developments, where the key focus lies in adapting existing buildings to new functions rather than demolishing them. Such an approach contributes to the reduction of waste and embodied carbon. Of particular interest to us is the adaptive reuse of historic buildings, uncovering architectural and cultural "gems" and bringing them to life for future generations.

Our future strategy is simple: it's about technology and people. We're focusing on digital tools like BIM and data-driven processes to make our projects clearer and more efficient. At the same time, we consistently strive for the maximum digitalisation of all our processes, so that they are as simple, transparent and accessible as possible for everyone. We're not just digitising the construction side of things. We're also bringing our support teams – finance, HR and IT – into that same digital space. The goal is to get the whole company speaking the same language and working more efficiently. At the same time, we encourage our employees to look for improvements on a daily basis and to ask themselves how something can be done more simply. We believe that through these small, continuous changes, we are building a work environment that is more intuitive, comfortable and transparent for everyone.

Interview

Maciej Jakimiec

Managing Director and Board Member Device Europe

“Being a Dutch-owned company goes far beyond the ownership structure – it reflects a distinct business culture.”

In conversation with the leadership of Device Europe, Maciej Jakimiec, we explore how the company combines Dutch business culture with Poland’s operational strengths to support international clients in sustainable IT asset lifecycle management. We also discuss the growing importance of ESG, circular economy principles and long-term partnerships as the company celebrates its 30th anniversary.

Maciej Jakimiec, Managing Director and Board Member of Device Europe

Can you tell us more about yourself and what Device Europe is all about?

I am the Managing Director and co-owner of Device Europe, with over three decades of experience in sales, marketing and management within the IT asset lifecycle sector. My professional journey has been closely tied to the evolution of this industry, long before ITAD (IT Asset Disposition) even got its name. Today, Device Europe supports large international organisations in managing IT assets responsibly and securely throughout their lifecycle – from deployment to secure data erasure, refurbishment and final recovery. What defines us is our combination of strong operational discipline and strategic focus on circular economy principles. We design solutions that maximise value recovery, ensure data security and minimise environmental impact, always with a long-term perspective in mind.

Device Europe has been associated with the NPCC since the mid-2000s. What does being a “Dutch-owned” company mean?

Being a Dutch-owned company goes far beyond the ownership structure – it reflects a distinct business culture. It means transparency in communication, pragmatism in decision-making and a strong focus on long-term relationships rather than short-term gains. For us, it also means a certain level of predictability and trust, which is highly valued by international clients. At the same time, we are deeply rooted in Poland, which gives us flexibility, adaptability and strong execution capabilities. In practice, we act as a bridge between these two cultures, combining structured, consensus-driven Dutch thinking with the dynamic and solution-oriented approach typical for Central Europe.

Operating from Poland while serving clients across Europe, how do you combine Dutch business standards with Poland’s talent and cost advantages?

Our model is built on leveraging complementary strengths. Poland offers access to a highly skilled, well-educated workforce

and a cost-efficient operational environment, which allows us to scale effectively. At the same time, Dutch standards shape our governance, compliance and ESG framework. This combination enables us to deliver services that are both competitive and highly reliable. It also ensures that we meet the expectations of global enterprise clients, who increasingly demand not only efficiency but also transparency and accountability. Over time, this hybrid model has proven to be one of our key competitive advantages and a strong foundation for international growth.

In March, you received the "Equal Opportunities in Business" main award in the SME category at the Warsaw Stock Exchange, where the NPCC was also present. How do the values you were recognised for shape your company culture?

The recognition we received is an important validation of the systems we've been building over the years. Transparent remuneration and promotion policies create clarity and fairness, which are essential for building trust within the organisation. Employees understand how decisions are made and what is expected of them, which translates into higher engagement and accountability. Our Social Responsibility Action Plan extends this approach further, embedding ESG principles into our daily operations and long-term strategy. Together, these elements create a culture that is not only performance-driven but also responsible and inclusive. This balance is something we see as critical for sustainable growth.

Device Europe describes itself as an "impact company". What does that mean in practice?

For us, being an "impact company" is not about communication, but about decision-making. Our motto – "We don't have to be the best in the world, but we have to be the best for the world" – serves as a practical guideline in our everyday operations.

It influences how we design our services, how we choose our partners and how we define success. In practice, it means prioritising reuse over recycling, extending the life of IT assets whenever possible and ensuring the highest standards of data security. It also means working only with partners who share our values, and being willing to make decisions that favour long-term impact over short-term profit.

How do you promote your impact-oriented approach internally and externally?

Internally, our impact-oriented approach is embedded in our systems, not just declarations. We set measurable ESG targets, track our environmental performance and actively engage employees in these efforts. Communication plays an important role, but what matters most is consistency between what we say and what we do. Externally, we work closely with clients and partners to align expectations and standards. Many of our clients are large international organisations with their own ESG goals, and our role is to support them in achieving those objectives. One of the areas we are particularly proud of is our ability to translate sustainability into measurable outcomes, such as avoided emissions and extended product lifecycles.

You have three decades of experience working across Dutch and Central European markets. What do you see as the biggest cultural or business differences between Dutch and CEE clients?

There are noticeable differences, although they are gradually becoming less pronounced. Dutch clients typically value transparency, structured processes and long-term planning. They tend to invest more time in building consensus and defining frameworks before execution. Clients from Central and Eastern Europe, on the other hand, are often more flexible, faster in decision-making and more focused on execution. Differences are also visible in the approaches to risk and responsibility. However, as ESG and sustainability become more important across all markets, these distinctions are starting to converge, creating a more unified business environment.

This year, Device Europe celebrates its 30th anniversary. Congratulations! Looking back, what milestones have been most important in shaping the company you are today?

Celebrating our 30th anniversary on 28 May 2026 provided a fitting moment for us to reflect on our journey. Over the years, we have witnessed the transformation of the IT asset lifecycle industry from a largely operational activity to a strategic component of responsible business. Key milestones include our early recognition of ITAD as a distinct service area, our expansion into international markets and the development of long-term partnerships with global enterprise clients. More recently, our focus on ESG and the circular economy has become central to our identity. The most important lesson from these three decades is adaptability – our ability to evolve alongside changing technologies, regulations and client expectations.

You describe your model as one built on long-term partnerships with enterprise clients. How do you ensure that partnerships are not only profitable, but also socially and environmentally responsible?

Ensuring responsible partnerships starts with having clear standards and consistency in execution. We operate in a highly sensitive area, where data security, environmental compliance and traceability are critical. That is why we rely on international certifications, strict internal procedures and transparent reporting. At the same time, we work closely with our clients to align expectations and objectives. Our goal is not only to deliver economic value, but also to ensure that this value is created in a responsible way. This includes minimising environmental impact, ensuring ethical practices across the value chain and maintaining full accountability for the assets we process.

Looking ahead, where do you see the greatest opportunities for growth?

Looking ahead, especially as we celebrate 30 years of Device Europe, we see significant opportunities in further integrating our services into clients’ strategic decision-making processes. This includes expanding circular solutions, enhancing data-driven insights and supporting our clients in achieving their ESG goals. Growth will come not only from entering new markets, but also from deepening existing partnerships. Our ambition is to move from being a service provider to becoming a strategic partner. The “best for the world” philosophy will continue to guide these choices, ensuring that our development delivers both business value and meaningful environmental and social impact.

Zofia van der Kroft

Event & Relationship Manager

“Four centuries before the Chamber: Two Dutch nationals arrive in Warsaw”

When discussing relations between Poland and the Netherlands within our community, the conversation often turns to trade figures, logistics or innovation. These are undoubtedly important indicators of a strong bilateral partnership, yet some of the most enduring connections between our countries can be found not in boardrooms or annual reports, but within the walls of Warsaw's Royal Castle.

Among the treasures of the Royal Castle Museum hang two remarkable paintings by the Dutch master Rembrandt van Rijn: The Girl in a Picture Frame (1641) and The Scholar at the Lectern (1641). Created at the height of the Dutch Golden Age, these works had travelled a long and often turbulent journey before finding their place in one of Poland's most important cultural institutions.

The paintings were acquired in the 18th century by King Stanisław August Poniatowski, a great patron of the arts and the last king of Poland. Their subsequent history, also reflecting some of Europe's most dramatic chapters, involved changing ownership, wartime displacement, and eventual recovery back to Poland. Today, they stand not only as masterpieces of Dutch art, but also as symbols of resilience and preservation.

Their presence in Warsaw offers an interesting perspective on the relationship between Poland and the Netherlands. Long before modern economic partnerships and international chambers of commerce were established, artistic influences and cultural treasures crossed borders, forging connections that have endured for centuries. Trade routes carried more than goods; they also carried knowledge, creativity, and a shared appreciation for craftsmanship and innovation.

This exchange has never been one-sided, however. Across Europe, including in the Netherlands, Polish artists, composers, writers, and cultural institutions continue to enrich the international cultural landscape. From exhibitions and academic collaborations to contemporary design and the performing arts, cultural dialogue remains an important complement to economic cooperation. The Royal Academy of Art in the Hague (KABK) is a prime example of this thriving cultural exchange. From experience, you cannot cross the institution's courtyard without hearing some Polish students chatting among themselves along the way. A phenomenon so prominent that jokes on this matter have permanently made it's way into the KABK lexicon.

> **In an era increasingly focused on short-term results, cultural heritage reminds us of the value of long-term thinking.**

The preservation of works such as the Royal Castle's Rembrandts have required generations of stewardship and commitment. These same qualities are equally essential in building lasting business relationships and establishing successful institutions.

The two paintings hanging in Warsaw therefore represent more than a connection to a celebrated Dutch artist. They remind us that the relationship between Poland and the Netherlands has always been built on more than commerce alone. Running alongside economic cooperation is a shared cultural story — a tale that requires as much commitment from the business community as trade figures and economic investments, if that friendship is to remain strong for centuries to come. It is a story of two Rembrandt's that have found their home in Poland, as many of us have.

Łukasz Chodkowski
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Poland wants to catch up with the Netherlands, but does it have the work model to do so?

Poland increasingly likes to describe itself through the language of economic ascent: a trillion-dollar economy, stronger international visibility and an ambition to move into a higher league. That narrative is understandable and, to a large extent, justified. But from an HR and future-of-work perspective, the real question is not whether Poland wants to catch up with the Netherlands, but if it has the leadership model, work design and organisational energy required to do so.

This is where Gallup becomes deeply inconvenient. Employee engagement in Poland stands at 7%, compared with 14% in the Netherlands. It is the difference between an economy that still struggles to activate discretionary effort at scale and one that does it more effectively, even if it is far from perfect itself. Poland sits below the European average, while the Netherlands sits above it. If we want to talk seriously about overtaking more mature economies, we cannot do so simply with the language of GDP. We have to talk about execution capacity — and that starts with people, managers and the day-to-day quality of work.

> **That is the central paradox of Poland's growth story: the macro-narrative is relatively strong, but the organisational narrative remains weak.**

With only 7% of workers truly engaged, it means a large part of the economy still operates in a mode of compliance rather than commitment.

From an HR standpoint, that is a structural constraint. It limits innovation, slows adaptation to AI, weakens productivity in knowledge work and reduces the quality of transformation execution. An economy can keep growing for some time on the back of investment, EU funds, industrial relocation and strong domestic demand, but it will not sustainably outperform better-organised systems if it continues to underuse its human capital.

The Netherlands is an especially useful mirror here. Not because it is flawless — 14% engagement is still modest by global standards — but because it combines that result with a much stronger work ecosystem. Dutch employees are more likely to be thriving in life overall (68% versus 43% in Poland), while 86% of Dutch workers say it is a good time to find a job, compared with 57% in Poland.

In business terms, this suggests a labour market with more confidence, more mobility and a higher-quality relationship between talent and employer. The Dutch advantage doesn't just lie in its economic size, but also in its more mature operating model of work, with stronger trust, greater employee agency and a higher baseline of managerial quality.

"We have to talk about execution capacity — and that starts with people, managers and the day-to-day quality of work."

That is why Poland's ambition to move up the economic ladder cannot be delivered by growth momentum alone. It requires a different work operating model, with better line managers, faster learning, stronger adoption of technology, less wasted organisational energy and a much sharper translation of workforce capability into business value.

Put bluntly, low engagement is not a soft HR issue; it is a hard competitiveness issue.

Poland is not facing the simple task of "growing a bit more". It is facing the much harder challenge of building a system that can grow faster and smarter than more mature economies. From an HR perspective, that means one thing above all: without higher-quality leadership, stronger engagement and a better-designed work environment, Poland's ambition will remain ahead of its organisational readiness.

If I had to reduce it to one line, it would be this: Poland has the ambition of a top-tier economy, but it still too often works like an economy in catch-up mode. Until it upgrades the quality of leadership, engagement and execution, the Netherlands will remain less a target to overtake and more a mirror showing what is still missing.

This column is written à titre personnel and does not necessarily reflect the views of the NPCC board or its members.

All figures sourced from "Gallup State of the Global Workplace 2026 Report"

“Trade Mission from the Netherlands to Poland: Food & Beverage Sector”

The Dutch Food Trade Mission to Poland in April brought together leading companies and industry representatives from the Dutch and Polish food and beverage sectors for a three-day programme focused on strengthening business ties and exploring new market opportunities.
Organised by the NPCC in collaboration with Export Partner and the Embassy of the Netherlands in Poland, the mission provided participants with valuable insights into the rapidly evolving Polish food market, while also facilitating new connections, which could lead to potential commercial partnerships.

Day one: market insights and retail exploration

The mission officially commenced on April 13th with a seminar at the Dutch Embassy in Warsaw focusing on current trends and developments within the Polish food sector.

The delegation at the Embassy of the Netherlands in Warsaw

Representatives from PKO Bank Polski opened the session with an in-depth overview of the market, looking at consumer trends and the retail landscape, as well as the key factors driving imports and exports. Their analysis provided delegates with a clear picture of how the Polish retail market is evolving and where they can seek opportunities for entrance.

Bilfinger followed with a presentation on food production facilities, highlighting the practical aspects of construction

Day one: Seminar at the Embassy of the Netherlands in Warsaw

processes, investment timelines, operational efficiency and cost considerations for companies seeking to expand or modernise their own production capabilities.

The seminar concluded with a talk from Flora Food Group that explored evolving retail trends, changing consumer demand, sustainability strategies and the growing popularity of plant-based products within the food sector. A sector that is still largely open compared to other Central European countries.

Following the seminar, delegates toured a number of retail sites across Warsaw, visiting major chains including Biedronka, Żabka, Lidl, Frac and Carrefour. These visits provided a valuable opportunity to observe retail strategies firsthand, from product placement and store formats to consumer purchasing habits.

Day two: industry visits and networking

Day two: Company visit at Lotte Wedel

The following day, the Dutch delegation visited Lotte Wedel, one of Poland's best-known confectionery producers, for a behind-the-scenes tour of its facilities, along with insights into the brand's heritage, production processes and approach to innovation. This visit proved to be both highly interactive and extremely engaging.

Day two: Company visit at Euroser Dairy Group

Next came a visit to Euroser Dairy Group, where Marc Benning discussed the company's growth and position within the dairy industry. Delegates learned about the key factors behind the company's success, as well as the broader opportunities emerging across the Polish and European dairy markets.

Day two: Business networking reception at the ambassador Jennes de Mol's residence

The day concluded with a networking reception at the residence of the Dutch Ambassador in Warsaw, which drew around 50 key stakeholders from the food and beverage sectors in both countries and created an excellent platform for meaningful dialogue.

Day three: looking ahead

The mission closed with a visit to WorldFood Poland 2026, one of the largest food and beverage trade shows in Central and Eastern Europe. Whilst there, the delegates were able to explore the latest innovations shaping the market, connect with sector leaders and identify new business opportunities across the region.

The exhibition provided a fitting conclusion to the programme, offering participants one last opportunity to establish new commercial ties between the two countries.

Strengthening Dutch-Polish collaboration

The Dutch Food Trade Mission to Poland 2026 highlighted the strong and growing relationship between the Dutch and Polish food & beverage sectors. Through a combination of market insights, company visits and strategic networking, the mission successfully laid the foundation for continued collaboration and future business opportunities between both countries.

Dutch delegation at the Wedel office

New Members

Avison Young

Avison Young is a Canadian consulting firm delivering real estate advisory services across 20 countries worldwide. Founded in the 1970s and headquartered in Toronto, the company has expanded rapidly in Europe since 2017, establishing offices in the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Poland, Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia, Austria, Czechia and Hungary.
The Warsaw office opened in 2017 and has grown its team sevenfold, bolstering its position by attracting top experts and specialised teams. In Poland's commercial real estate market, Avison Young offers advisory services in valuation, office and industrial leasing, investment and technical consultancy, plus project management. With its in-house expertise, the firm continues to broaden its services to meet the evolving needs of its clients, ranging from investors and developers to domestic and international companies.

Avison Young Polska Sp. z o.o.
Grzybowska Park, 2nd floor, 5A Grzybowska street
00-132 Warsaw, Poland
+48 22 243 72 97
https://www.avisonyoung.pl/, office.poland@avisonyoung.com

Device Europe

Device Europe is a European leader in IT Asset Disposition (ITAD) and secure technology lifecycle management, combining nearly three decades of industry expertise with operational precision, environmental responsibility and advanced data-security standards. As a boutique yet highly specialised ITAD provider, Device Europe supports enterprise clients across Europe in maximising asset value, protecting sensitive information and reducing environmental footprints.
In a market shaped by rapid technological change, cybersecurity challenges and rising ESG expectations, it delivers a comprehensive portfolio covering the entire IT lifecycle.

Device Europe
https://deviceeurope.com/
Poland
+48 523 706 868
Ernsta Petersona 4a, 85-862 Bydgoszcz
Netherlands
+31 (0) 23 303 77 74
Waarderveldweg 91, 2031BK Haarlem

The Bridge Co. Europe

The Bridge Co. Europe is a leading international service provider, offering comprehensive solutions for the defence sector and supporting industries. With a strong presence in strategic locations worldwide, the company blends global expertise and localised insights to deliver efficient, seamless project execution. Combining a commitment to quality with safety and reliability, it helps its partners achieve top operational standards.
Services include manpower supply, housing, transport, equipment and vehicle leasing, plus bespoke operational solutions tailored to the needs of its clients in the defence sector. From personnel deployment through to logistics and custom setups, The Bridge oversees every stage of the process, ensuring durability, precision and rapid response.

The Bridge Co.
ul. Slowackiego 7A/2,
60-821 Poznań, Poland
+48 573 969 496
https://thebridgeco.com.pl/, support@thebridgeco.com

Kan-Bud

A Canadian firm operating in Poland, and a sister company to Northgate Industries in Alberta, Kan-Bud has been delivering modular buildings worldwide for over 30 years. Founded by Dutch pioneers who moved to Canada in the 1960s, Kan-Bud was established in the post-communism period and it has since grown with engineering precision and innovation.
Its operations focus on two main business lines: firstly, specialised technical containers for industrial clients in the energy, telecom, renewables and Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) markets, featuring robust enclosures for switchgear, control systems and batteries with rapid, safe deployment.
The second line is modular buildings for private customers, developers and investors, as well as public facilities – including offices, homes, residences, schools, kindergartens and clinics. Combining custom design, in-house production, logistics and on-site assembly, Kan-Bud ensures turnkey solutions tailored to the unique technical and environmental demands across Poland.

Kan-Bud Sp. z o.o.
ul. Gostyńska 9,
64-113 Kąkolewo, Polska
+48 65 529 50 09, +48 65 529 50 42
https://kan-bud.pl/, info@kan-bud.pl

Apeiron Europe

Apeiron Europe is a premier Warsaw-based training facility for military and law enforcement, owned and led by a former Dutch Marine (Korps Mariniers) with 26 years of operational experience. The company specialises in advanced tactical, maritime and security training programmes, designed exclusively for governmental units.

With its motto of "Securitas Omnium Futurorum" (Security for all future generations), Apeiron empowers clients across Europe to elevate their security and level of preparedness through high-stakes, mission-critical courses. Combining expertise, technology and strategic insight, it offers a unique secured location for specialised training in complex scenarios. With a vision for a sustainable, future-focused facility, Apeiron exclusively partners with governmental organisations to strengthen national and international security across Europe.

Apeiron Europe
https://apeiron-europe.com/
info@apeiron-europe.com

Rabobank / DLL Polska

Rabobank is an international cooperative bank with Dutch origins, headquartered in Utrecht. For over 125 years, collaboration has been at the heart of everything we do. Today, we employ more than 49,000 people across 35 countries. In the Netherlands, we offer financial products and services to private and commercial customers both domestically and abroad. Worldwide, we focus on the Food & Agri sector and Energy Transition. Our guiding principle is that together we accomplish far more than we ever could individually.

DLL is a global asset finance company for equipment and technology. Founded by Rabobank, DLL is a wholly owned subsidiary headquartered in Eindhoven, the Netherlands. It provides solutions in the Agriculture, Construction, Energy Transition, Food, Healthcare, Industrial, Technology, Transportation and Workplace Solutions industries across more than 25 countries, partnering with manufacturers, dealers and distributors. Committed to sustainability, DLL finances the complete asset lifecycle with commercial, retail and used equipment finance.

Rabobank/DLL
https://www.rabobank.com/
+31 (0) 88 722 66 00
Croeselaan 18, 3521 CB Utrecht, The Netherlands

Lynx Logistics Support

Lynx Logistics Support is a logistics consultancy company that transforms the logistics operations of any company into a competitive advantage. With over 30 years of experience in multinational companies, we adopt a 1-2-3 approach to our work – firstly, performing the audit, then implementing the solutions, and finally transferring the IP to our client's team, enabling them to continue making improvements while still providing external consultancy services.

Drawing on years of industry experience, we support clients in implementing greenfield solutions, optimising existing operations, and crisis management.

Lynx Logistics Support has teamed up with 55Partners – an initiative of six specialists in the areas of logistics, production, R&D and planning, supported by a network of over 200 experts – which enables us to offer complex consultancy services on supply chain issues.

Lynx Logistics Support
https://www.lynxlogisticssupport.pl/en/
jan.degroot@lynxlogisticssupport.pl, +48 789 138 138
ul. Świętojańska 36, 05-500 Piaseczno

Gate Sp. z o.o.

Gate Sp. z o.o. is a Warsaw based provider of advanced defence industry solutions and strategic military support. The company delivers mission critical services, including armoured systems integration, precision parts supply and infrastructure development to NATO forces and defence partners across Europe.

Founded by experienced defence industry specialists, Gate (Global Armament Trade & Engineering) provides innovative, mission critical solutions to NATO forces and defence contractors operating both in Poland and throughout Europe.

Headquartered in Warsaw, its leadership team brings deep expertise in designing and executing large scale armoured vehicle programmes, and crafting cost effective strategic solutions that help clients overcome their most complex operational challenges.

Gate Sp. Zoo
Rondo Daszynskiego 1, 00-843,
Warsaw, Poland
https://gate-ltd.eu/, info@gate-ltd.eu

New Members

Rotom Group

Rotom Group is Europe's first choice in sustainable load carriers, optimising logistics with a carefully selected range of equipment for transport and storage. Headquartered in the Netherlands, the company has branches across the UK, Poland, Belgium, Czechia, Germany, France and Portugal, and has been active on the European market for over 40 years.
Rotom's mission is to deliver tangible benefits to its clients by enhancing supply chains with top quality products and services, allowing companies to focus on their core activities. Sustainability is at the heart of its operations, with efforts to prevent deforestation, reduce waste and improve ecosystems through efficient solutions such as load carrier rental, repair and maintenance, sustainable packaging flows and pallet banking.
The company holds a range of international certifications, including an EcoVadis Bronze Medal for Sustainability, ISO, ISPM15, EPAL, PEFC and TÜV.

Rotom Polska Sp. Z o.o.
https://rotom.pl
Polna 19 55-300 Komorniki Poland
713 811 699

FM Capital

FM Capital is a company specialising in the development and management of investment land banks across Poland, with a focus on strategic locations near highways, expressways, transport hubs and major urban centres. The company handles the full preparation process for the land – legal, planning and design – including due diligence, optimisation of its legal status and development of the investment concept, so that sites are ready for swift project implementation.
As a result, FM Capital is able to offer investment-ready land to domestic and international investors in the production, logistics and defence sectors.

FM Capital
https://fmcapital.pl/
Dwa Światy 1, 55-040 Bielany Wrocławskie, Poland
+48 514 773 434
fmajchrowski@fmcapital.pl

Vuurin

Vuurin is an employment agency placing workers from Poland and Romania in the Netherlands. The company arranges work, housing, insurance and transport, all in line with applicable laws and with mutual respect for all involved. With our motto of "You give good, you receive good", we have recruitment offices in Poland, Romania and Heinenoord, near Rotterdam. Besides being a great place to work and earn money, the Netherlands is also a wonderful country to live in for a while – and that's where Vuurin comes in. We are here to help.

Vuurin
https://www.vuurin.pl/ovuurin
ul. Rzeszowska 2, 37-400 Nisko, 531 072 394, praca@vuurin.pl

Bactoforce

Bactoforce is a European specialist in on site inspections of food processing equipment, with over 25 years of experience supporting the food industry. Their services help manufacturers manage hygienic risks, protect product quality and ensure the safe operation of critical production equipment. With inspectors located across Europe, Bactoforce responds quickly and flexibly to changing production schedules while maintaining independence from equipment suppliers, retailers and authorities for objective, client focused assessments. Combining practical industry experience with specialised training, they help producers identify hidden risks, improve equipment integrity and uphold the highest standards of hygiene and food safety.

Bactoforce Poland
https://bactoforce.com/
Ul. Św. Marcin 29/8, 61-806 Poznań, Poland
M: +48 796260910, E: ak@bactoforce.com

Vreuls Customer Network

Vreuls Customer Network is a Polish online store offering high quality sports apparel and equipment, with a website serving international customers, including the Dutch market. It specialises in protective suits, gym bags, tumbling mats, taftex and windtek clothing, personalised vests, hoodies, scarves and sports bags. The company sponsors local futsal teams such as Dreman Komprachcice and produces durable, custom products tailored to the needs of athletes and sports clubs.

Vreuls Customer Network
ul. Kępska 3-5, 45-129 Opole, +48 511413808

New Members

Synergy Stride Solution

Synergy Stride Solution supports organisational leaders in making impactful decisions for financial performance and operational stability. Drawing on 30 years of international management experience, it acts as an external sparring partner, analysing company challenges with the slogan “Before a decision is made” to validate development directions and avoid costly changes.
The service helps entrepreneurs structure decisions, processes and cooperation by blending people, values and systems for cohesive, effective organisations. This approach ensures strategies deliver tangible results and changes the future of businesses.

Synergy Stride Solution
https://synergystride.pl/
ul. Kazimierza Pułaskiego 39a
05-270 Marki
+48 532 145 658, biuro@synergystride.pl

De Weerd Infra Support

De Weerd Infra Support provides expertise, advice and full project management for underground infrastructure projects. With over 20 years of experience, the company stands for quality craftsmanship, reliability and problem solving, supporting the infrastructure that underpins modern energy supply.
At De Weerd Infra Support, everything revolves around reliability, quality and honouring agreements. With more than two decades of experience in the sector, the company knows what it takes to complete projects successfully. It thinks proactively, is always available and offers solutions where others see problems. The craftsmanship goes beyond technical knowledge, however.
De Weerd also invests in the personal relationships with its clients, understanding their challenges and offering a reliable foundation they can build upon. The company takes the burden off its clients through its complex advisory processes, preliminary designs and project structuring, actively contributing to the energy transition.

De Weerd Infra Support
https://deweerdinfra-support.com/
Verlengde Lageweg 19, 1628 PM Hoorn
info@deweerdinfra-support.com
+31 6 2162 0387

4transition

4transition supports organisations operating between Poland and the Netherlands in navigating growth, change and cross border complexity. The firm specialises in organisational transformation, leadership development and building effective governance structures in international environments.
It assists companies expanding between the Dutch and Polish markets, helping to unite multicultural teams, improve decision making and governance, manage rapid change and strengthen People & Culture approaches. Combining senior management expertise with hands on Dutch and Polish experience, 4transition designs practical solutions, supports their implementation and delivers a measurable impact as a trusted partner.

4Transition
https://4transition.nl/
Van Limburg Stirumlaan 17, 1411 BM Naarden
+31 6 27386 127, marc@4transition.nl; monika@4transition.nl

SusBDe

Headquartered in Utrecht in the Netherlands, SusBDe is a Dutch company specialising in turning chicken litter into sustainable renewable energy. The company’s proven technology enables it to transform chicken litter and DAF sludge – a major cost and environmental challenge for meat processors – into clean energy, fertiliser and other usable outputs, delivering direct cost savings and high returns. SusBDe stands out for its turnkey, ready to operate installations backed by robust guarantees and support. The key benefits for poultry farmers include zero waste disposal costs, on site energy independence, and stable and secure additional revenue streams, as well as a high return on investment, green branding for egg and broiler production, and seamless integration without disrupting operations. The company’s unique selling points include a 10 year service agreement and technical performance guarantee, plus a 10 year energy production financial guarantee backed by A rated S&P standards. Its mono stream digestion process handles up to 80% chicken litter for high gas yields, but it also has the flexibility to accept other biodegradable feedstocks. It also has a comprehensive global insurance package, and a short, secured realisation time of 18 months.

SusBDe
https://www.susbde.com/
Wolvenplein 25, NL-3512CK Utrecht, The Netherlands.

“Poland is definitely the place to be – both right now and in the future.”

In conversation with the founders of Alux Profile, Justyna and Kennard Piereij, we explore how the company grew from a small business in southeastern Poland into an international supplier serving customers across Europe and beyond. We discuss the rising demand for customised aluminium profile solutions, the role of e-commerce, automation and AI in scaling the business internationally, and why Poland has become an increasingly attractive hub for manufacturing and export-focused growth.

Justyna Piereij and Kennard Piereij, Founders of Alux Profile

Could you introduce Alux Profile to our readers and share how the company has grown from a local business in Podkarpackie into an exporter serving customers across Europe and beyond?

At Alux Profile, we sell aluminium construction profiles, as well as accessories for those profiles. The profiles have a wide range of uses, including industrial automation, machine building, custom campervan conversions, off-road overlanding equipment and sim racing. We started in 2019 when we noticed that there wasn't a good supplier on the market that was able to offer transparent pricing, easy ordering and fast delivery. We set out to tackle those issues and be the best supplier.

In 2021, we got married in Poland and decided to move from the Netherlands to Poland. Ever since our company's incorporation in Poland in 2021, we have seen rapid and continuous growth, helped by increasing international sales which now account for 80% of our total orders.

Your company exports around 80% of its orders internationally. What has enabled Alux Profile to compete so successfully in cross-border markets?

Since the very beginning, we have focused on not limiting the market we sell to. We invested considerably in our e-commerce website, and for years we offered market-specific sites in 4 languages: Dutch, Polish, German and English. This makes it easy for our customers to order from us, no matter where they are from. We also optimised our logistics process and are able to ship aluminium profiles of up to 6 metres in length throughout Europe. We are able to process all types of orders – big and small, long or short – quickly and then ship them from our company's location in Jawornik Polski, Podkarpackie.

You are based in a small village in southeastern Poland. How does modern technology make it possible to run an internationally focused business from this location?

At first, it might seem surprising that our company is located where it is. Jawornik Polski only has about 1,100 inhabitants and is 40 minutes away by car from the city of Rzeszów. Investing in technology has been crucial in making this location a success for our company. E-commerce enables us to sell all over the world, as it doesn't matter to our clients where the order is shipped from. Automating our production was key to simplifying the entire process, and it also enabled us to hire local people. The training process is short and the jobs are relatively simple.

The aluminium profiles market serves a wide range of industries. Which sectors currently generate the strongest demand for your products, and how has this changed in recent years?

We have seen some markets grow considerably over the years. During Covid, we saw a big growth in campervan conversions, sim rigs and off-road. Our profiles proved ideal as they are lightweight, strong and easy to use, and both B2B and B2C sales increased during that time. We also saw more orders from the defence industry and related companies, not just in Poland but in most European countries. The e-sports market has exploded and now a whole range of profiles and accessories has been specifically designed for simulated racing. Alux Profile is an OEM supplier of these products and we are planning to expand into flight simulations as well. Our website will be the only one in the world offering an online configurator for sim racing – a new development that we are very proud of. The key features of this tool will be complete customisation and an integrated augmented reality experience.

Your business adds value through customised cutting and product preparation rather than simply reselling goods. How important is this production element in today's competitive market?

In our opinion, the key to success in e-commerce is customisation. If you are one of a hundred shops selling the same product, then growing and being successful will be difficult. But in our market, where each aluminium profile can be customised, we provide huge value to our customers, enabling us to stand out from our competitors and be better than them.

Aluminium profiles usually come in 6m lengths from the factory, but only select customers need that size. In most cases, lengths of up to 2.5m are needed. We can cut profiles to size with exceptional accuracy (0.1mm) on our fully automated sawing line. We don't only cut profiles to size for the customer, but we also provide CNC machining and assembly services.

Many industries are facing pressure to become more efficient and sustainable. What trends are you currently seeing in the aluminium, construction or industrial sectors that are shaping customer expectations?

Aluminium profiles require a lot of energy during the production process. Green aluminium, processed using renewable energy, is a new development that we are actively looking at. Alux Profile has invested heavily in solar energy and energy storage, so we have an electric delivery vehicle and an electric company car. The heating and cooling systems in our production buildings and offices use advanced heat pumps, and we prioritised high-efficiency insulation when constructing our production hall. All this was a big investment, but it will pay for itself in the long run and save us money every month. In March, we were able to generate 65% of our energy needs by ourselves, and in April it was 75%. Now with the summer coming, we are on track to be 90% energy self-sufficient.

Your sales process is highly automated, from customer configuration to ERP integration and production planning. How has digitalisation changed the way Alux Profile operates and competes?

Our focus has been to invest in automating processes as much as we can – not just in production, but especially within our sales and back-office operations. Our e-commerce platform is seamlessly integrated into our ERP system, enabling us to have fully automated stock levels and production planning. This saves a huge amount of time and allows us to ship orders much faster. In fact, 95% of our orders require no additional communication by email or phone with our clients. They are able to spec out what they need on our website, and our system keeps them informed of the production process and shipment tracking. The foundations are there to scale the business going forward, without the need to keep hiring office staff who don't necessarily add value for our customer. Employees with roles that can add value, like providing assembly services and packing custom orders, will be required when we expand further.

You recently expanded your website into six languages, including French and Spanish. How has multilingual e-commerce and AI-supported translation influenced your access to new markets?

We launched our e-commerce site with four core languages, and added French and Spanish as our fifth and sixth languages earlier this year. Getting the translations right was a challenge, but with the help of AI, the process has been made a lot easier. We noticed an immediate increase in sales, specifically from those two countries. AI has also been a huge help in another area, as it enables us to provide customer service in the client's native language. At a later point, as AI capabilities improve, we might translate our platform into localised languages for smaller or more specialised markets, such as Portuguese, Italian and Lithuanian. This will make us a truly European player in this market.

Alux Profile has grown significantly in recent years. What were the key drivers behind tripling your growth between 2023 and 2025, and do you still see strong market potential ahead?

What has been great for our growth is that we make ordering profiles very easy. Customers can place a fully customised order with just a few clicks, and it is now very simple to order a complicated product. Alux Profile has always used its own money to re-invest, in both automation and stock, and this ensures we are not dependent on banks or investors. We are still seeing growth in sales every single month, and the next step for us will be a new factory location in Jawornik Polski to increase our offerings and be even more efficient in production.

Poland is increasingly recognised as an attractive place to do business. From your perspective, what advantages does Poland offer today for companies active in manufacturing, logistics and export-focused sectors?

For us, what has really helped are the business and technical services available in Poland. The region boasts a lot of knowledge about automation, which has helped us in our goals. Integrating our complex e-commerce environment with Poland's biggest ERP system provider would have been impossible without the exceptional local IT and programming talent. Our new configurator was designed with the help of a Polish company which developed this new technology and adapted it for our needs. In both these cases, we were able to help those companies further develop their own offerings for a broader European market, not just focusing on Poland. The Polish economy is growing rapidly and we are seeing an increase in the volume of Polish B2B and B2C orders. Poland also has an excellent logistics infrastructure that enables us to ship throughout Europe quickly and efficiently. Our company could operate in any country in Europe, but Poland is definitely the place to be – both right now and in the future.

Expanding to Poland or the Netherlands?

Let the NPCC match you with the right business partners.

Netherlands Polish Chamber of Commerce

MATCHMAKING PROCESS

1 Participant Profile & Needs Definition

- intake form + consultation,
- understanding of goals, product fit, target group,
- agreement on search scope and partner profile.

2 Market Research & Long List

- market outlook (size, trends, drivers, barriers),
- competition overview,
- market landscape / sales channels,
- long list of 20–80 companies withshort descriptions,
- initial filtering based on client criteria.

3 Outreach & Validation

- moutreach to companies,
- sharing the company's profile with Polish/Dutch companies,
- validation of relevance, size, and availability,
- preparation of a confirmed shortlist of 3–5 companies (depends on sector and product).

4 Meetings Execution

- scheduling and confirmations,
- coordination of meeting logistics,
- onsite meetings in Poland (online if necessary),
- access to NPCC events during the visit.

5 Follow-Up Review

- follow-up call approx. two months after meetings,
- assessment of progress: promising leads, bottlenecks, next actions,
- recommendations for future steps in the Polish/Dutch market.

"The purpose of our matchmaking service is to connect your company with the most relevant Dutch or Polish business partners, while also providing structured opportunities for knowledge exchange and market exploration. Since 2014, the NPCC has supported over 500 clients and facilitated more than 2,500 targeted meetings across Poland and Netherlands. Leveraging our extensive network and long-standing experience, we identify and introduce the partners that best fit your commercial goals in the Polish market."

~ Anna Zadrożna, Managing Director of NPCC

MATCHMAKING TIMELINE

Week 1	Week 2-3	Week 3-4	Week 4-6	Week 8
Onboarding & Brief Finalisation	**Market Research & Long List**	**Outreach & Validation**	**Meeting Scheduling & Preparation**	**Follow-Up Review**
Intake call, form, confirmation of goals and partner criteria.	Market outlook, competition scan, long list delivered.	Contacting selected companies, sharing delegate profile, confirming interest.	Securing 3–5 confirmed meetings, logistics.	Post-matchmaking call after ~2 months to evaluate outcomes and next steps.

Kaj Bergman

Co-Owner of PLBS

“ If I was going to give something my full energy, I wanted it to be my own. ”

Ruud Vincent speaks with Kaj Bergman, co-owner of PLBS (Polish Business Services), a company with more than 20 years of experience in the co-packing industry. Rooted in its identity as a family business, PLBS has remained true to its core values while steadily expanding over the years — tripling its turnover, broadening its capabilities, and successfully delivering hundreds of projects for clients ranging from startups to large corporations.

Kaj Bergman and Arjen Bergman, Owners of PLBS

Can you tell us a little bit about your company? How did it start and what inspired you to join the family business a couple of years ago?

We are a family business, and the company dates back over 20 years. My father, Arjen, previously worked for Perfetti van Melle Poland, where he helped set up the head office and factory. After many years there, he decided to start his own business, initially providing co-packing services in Poland for Dutch and Belgian companies.

I joined the company seven years ago after working in marketing and sales roles at multinational companies like Henkel and Bic. At some point, I started questioning whether continuing to climb the corporate ladder – with all the politics, endless meetings and presentations – was really the right path for me. I realised that if I was going to give something my full energy, I wanted it to be my own. Around the same time, my father was considering taking things a bit easier. The business was stable – it paid the bills – but there was clearly more potential.

It turned out to be the perfect moment to join forces. My father brought strong financial expertise, while I added a fresh commercial perspective. Looking back, it was the best decision I could have made. The business is growing rapidly, and I get to work with my father, whom I also consider one of my best friends. The only thing that didn't quite work out was the "taking it easier" part – we're both working more than ever, but enjoying every minute of it.

How would you describe the competitive advantage of PLBS? How would you define your core offering in this area, and what sets your approach apart?

In simple terms, we make our clients' lives easier. Our main advantage is that we can handle all projects under one roof, with a single point of contact. Beyond co-packing, we also support transportation, local sourcing of materials (from outer cartons to stickers and laminates) and even product development from concept to shelf. For example, if a client wants to launch an advent calendar, they can simply send us the products without having to worry about moulds, mock-ups or assembly. We take care of the entire process.

We also offer exceptional scalability. We can move from a few thousand units to millions within days, which is very difficult to

achieve elsewhere. We operate across seven facilities in Poland and work with over 350 people, allowing us to respond quickly and flexibly. So, in all honesty, why deal with seven different co-packers when you can just call one?

What are the main reasons companies choose to outsource their packaging processes instead of handling them in-house?

Because doing it yourself sounds easier than it actually is. If you have stable, year-round production, in-house can make sense. But most of what we see isn't like that. It's seasonal, unpredictable and often urgent. Suddenly, you need 50 people for three weeks. Then nothing. Then again two months later. That's not easy to manage internally.

Add to that the fact that many companies don't have the machinery for all packaging formats – and buying it for a one-off project makes no sense. That's where co-packers come in. We already have the people, the machines and the experience. So instead of building everything from scratch, clients can just plug into an existing system.

How important is automation versus manual work in your packaging operations, and how do you decide the right balance for each project?

If a machine can do it better, we use it. If not, we use people. And sometimes we use both. It's not about ideology, but efficiency. A lot of our work still requires manual handling, especially with more complex packaging. But automation is becoming more

important, and therefore we continuously invest in machinery to cover around 90% of common packaging formats on the market.

Can you walk us through the typical journey of a client product – from arrival at your facility to the final packaged goods ready for distribution?

It usually starts in a simple way – with a short brief and a rough idea. We then quickly give a price indication as no one wants to spend weeks on something that won't work financially. Once things move forward, we test with samples, lock the process and plan production. Then comes logistics, which is where a lot can go wrong – with wrong products or wrong quantities, for example. It happens more often than you'd think so we monitor that part very closely to avoid surprises.

Once everything arrives, we validate the materials, prepare some samples for approval and then start production. During packing, we run continuous quality checks and then, finally, we ship the finished goods wherever they need to go – to a warehouse, or retailer, you name it. A few months later, we usually find the products on the shelves of the retailers.

What are the biggest challenges in your industry, particularly in the Polish or European market?

Of course, there are external challenges like inflation and geopolitical uncertainty, but these are beyond our control. I prefer to focus on areas that we can impact. Looking ahead, robotics will significantly change our industry. Tasks like palletising and basic handling will increasingly be automated, and over time robots will take on more complex roles.

Co-packing itself will remain essential, but companies need to adapt quickly. Those who fail to evolve will be left behind. That's why we are already exploring automation and planning to introduce our first humanoid robots soon. The impact may be limited initially, but building experience now will be crucial for long-term competitiveness.

Looking ahead, what are your strategic priorities for PLBS over the next 3-5 years? Are there plans for expansion or new service offerings?

Over the past four years, we have tripled our turnover, and we're not planning to slow down anytime soon (sorry, Arjen). We will continue strengthening our co-packing operations, particularly in the health and supplement segments, while also investing in automation and capacity. At the same time, we have also developed our own product range, which we plan to expand across Europe and potentially into the US market.

Finally, we see strong demand from small and medium-sized companies looking to enter the Polish market. We plan to support them not only with co-packing but also with distribution and sales. By combining these three pillars – co-packing, our own products and distribution – we aim to build a resilient and future-proof business.

Interviewed & photographed by
Ruud Vincent
CEO Ocean Systems, Owner VM Trading,
Board-member NPCC

King’s Day 2026 in Poland

On 27 April, the Embassy of the Netherlands celebrated our national day – King’s Day! Around 750 guests were in attendance, including government officials, members of the business community, NGOs and Dutch citizens living in Poland. H.E. Ambassador Jennes de Mol opened the celebration, the main theme of which this year was the international rules-based order, which is coming under increasing pressure but remains essential to international cooperation and joint efforts between countries. We were also honoured by a speech from Kevin Allen, the UNHCR representative to Poland. Another theme closely connected to a rules-based form of international cooperation – and one that strongly unites the Netherlands and Poland – is football. In recognition of the important role Leo Beenhakker played in leading the national teams of both countries during his long and impressive career, the Embassy has named its courtyard after him. It was an honour to welcome his son to the ceremony inaugurating the courtyard’s new name.

The Embassy of the Netherlands would like to thank everyone who came to our King’s Day event to celebrate this important national day.

Messages
from the Embassy

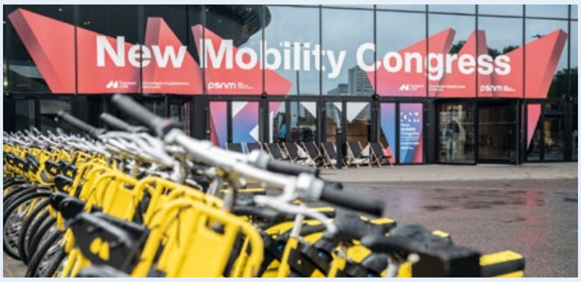
Defence

Recently, we have been promoting Polish-Dutch cooperation within the Defence industry through several events. Last year, we organized a successful trade mission to Katowice, Krakow and Kielce (where Dutch companies attended the largest defense exhibition in CEE, the MSPO). This was followed by a second trade mission under the umbrella of the EDF (European Defense Fund) last February, focused on innovation and technology development. Lots of connections were made between Polish and Dutch companies and research institutions.

We continue the calendar with a large trade mission from the Netherlands to the MSPO in Kielce (8-10 sept), including a Netherlands country pavilion. We look forward to facilitating successful Dutch-Polish (commercial) partnerships in this important and fast-growing sector in Poland.

New Mobility Congress

Following the trade mission from the Netherlands to the Velocity conference in Gdańsk last year, a sector study "Urban mobility, city logistics and cycling infrastructure" was made by the Embassy. It presented the commercial opportunities that are present for Dutch companies in Poland. The Embassy is organizing another trade mission from the Netherlands to Poland in the fields of, city logistics and urban mobility from 22 till 24 September. The program will include business-to-business matchmaking in Wrocław and travel to Katowice to participate in the 10th New Mobility Congress.



Ukraine

The Embassy has organised several events that brought Dutch companies in contact with Polish and Ukrainian partners within the framework of the reconstruction of Ukraine.
Exploring market opportunities, starting initiatives that support the reconstruction effort, and informing companies of the financial support programs available.
In 2026, the Embassy is involved in various Rebuild Ukraine activities, like the Ukraine Recovery Conference (URC) event in Rzeszow (27 april) and the large URC in Gdansk (25-26 June). Furthermore, on 12-13 November, the Embassy will organise for the 5th time, a trade mission from the Netherlands to the Rebuild Ukraine conference at the Expo in Warsaw.
All these events serve as platforms for (commercial) partnerships between Dutch, Polish and Ukrainian stakeholders.

Biogas

Decarbonization of Polish industries offers lots of opportunities for Dutch companies. Poland is set to increase its production and use of biogas/biomethane and transportbiofuels the coming years.
The Embassy has written a report on this growing sector in Poland, identifyingthe most promising areas. It will be available in June.

Contact

Interested to be a part of our activities?
Follow us on LinkedIn!

Or contact us at war-ea@minbuza.nl

WHAT CAN'T YOU SEE?

Julia Asperska is a performing arts curator, cultural innovator and coach asperska.com
She is a co-founder of KinetiQ Lab, and specialises in bridging facilitation and artistic tools when working on challenges in organisations kinetiq-lab.com

image credit: Julia Asperska by Magda Ośko

THE BLIND SPOT

What if I told you that, in a local context, there are thousands of people with precisely the skills that teams, industries and organisations need – and yet they are largely ignored? They know how to imagine new futures and build flexible strategies. They are resilient and comfortable responding to complex, unfamiliar challenges, and they also work naturally with uncertainty, collaboration and collective intelligence. These people are ARTISTS. Overlooking this talent pool is a major blind spot, and a missed opportunity for innovation within the economy and society as a whole.

A NEW RENAISSANCE

We're living in a time of polycrisis, and an increasing turn towards AI for solutions, which then brings with it greater levels of AI fatigue. The answer to this situation is a renewed focus on the human aspect – a new Renaissance built on truly multisectoral and cross-disciplinary collaboration.

Reimagining artists' roles means dismantling false divides – not just between sectors,
but between ways of knowing.
Art and strategy.
Imagination and implementation.
They aren't opposites, they are dance partners.
And it's time we let them lead. [1]

CAN YOU IMAGINE?

I'll be blunt with you – I'm fed up with art and business ideas that don't go below the surface of beauty and well-being. Don't get me wrong, it is good to have quality art pieces in the office and to work in beautifully designed spaces, but that alone is not a true cross-sectoral, innovative partnership.

What I'm proposing goes far beyond decoration and entertainment. It's about recognising the artist not just as a creator of beauty, but as an expert, an innovator and a change-maker.

A painting is not a solution to a problem, nor is a piece of music or a great novel. But the ability to think beyond boundaries, to develop ideas that are more than pat answers to recognized problems, is almost impossible to find in institutions today. But getting ahead of an unknown future demands imagination, creativity, the capacity to think freely and work across disciplines, and the ability and nerve to take action before it's obviously needed. That's what artists do all the time. [2]

THE PRACTICE

Once upon a time, I worked closely with a Uruguayan choreographer, Tamara Cubas, whose artistic practice focused on communities. She developed a methodology of working with large groups that involved adopting an innovative approach to challenges, exercising leadership, delegating responsibility and ceding power. I went with her on a world tour and witnessed the effects of the choreographic tools she used on various communities across different cultures. A couple of years after our collaboration ended, I found myself attending a leadership programme, locked up in a hotel with around 40 other business leaders. At some point, the group became stuck, and the atmosphere grew heated. I suggested trying a choreographic exercise I had learned from Tamara. Everyone joined in. We ended up running across the garden in the middle of a Polish winter. We returned to the classroom transformed, and it was obvious to us that we had made progress. Because of this experience, I realised that choreographic tools should be used within a business context and could have a transformative power in other sectors too. I began testing this idea out and curated a series of cross-sectoral residencies. According to the participants, the effects were transformational. So then I built a start-up that bridges business with the performing arts. My daily work draws on something I had already observed over many years: choreographers possess exceptional tools for building teams out of any random group. They communicate beyond words, teaching people how to listen and respond, and they know how to bring individuals together as a collective where trust, improvisation and real collaboration are practised daily.

THE QUESTION

We started with a blind spot. But the question was never whether artists belong in your organisation – it's what you've been missing without them. What could an artist help you see?

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[1] A. Lewis & L.M. Williams, What if Artists Were Your Strategic Weapon in the Boardroom? Manifesto Substack: https://ourmanifesto.substack.com/p/what-if-artists-were-your-strategic
[2] M. Heffernan, (2025). Embracing Uncertainty. Simon & Schuster. Kindle edition.

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Thank You for Choosing a Bicycle

I recently had to run an errand for a client visiting BNP Paribas on Kasprzaka Street. Coming from my office near Plac Konstytucji, I decided to take my orange bicycle – yes, I sometimes like to underline my "Dutchness". From the moment I turned right on Marszałkowska Street, Google Maps showed me a route to the Wola district that used only cycle paths. At certain traffic lights, the city has installed these beautiful footrests saying "Thank you for choosing a bicycle". I call that progress. When I first tried cycling in Warsaw back in 1992, it was a hazardous affair with buses belching out black smoke and pushing you off the road. Poland has been making progress ever since, unlike Hungary.

A few years ago, we drove through Hungary on our way back from holiday in Croatia. We ended up in Szombathely, which looked much like Poland did in 1985. From what I read in the newspapers, this may have had something to do with widespread corruption there causing EU money to end up in the wrong hands. In Poland, except maybe for the odd unnecessary noise barrier in the middle of nowhere, EU money has mostly been put to good use, especially in smaller cities.

Péter Magyar, the incumbent prime minister, has just won a two-thirds majority in parliament based on a promise to change the system and end corruption. Apparently, the Hungarian opposition was inspired by the last Polish parliamentary elections, but as a lawyer with a weak spot for the rule of law, I am jealous of the Hungarians, who can now change their constitution.

> **In Poland, we still have to make do with a government that would like to restore the rule of law and a president who has earned the nickname, the "Vetomat".**

The presidential right to veto laws was put into the constitution as a safety valve against governments trying to adopt laws that do not conform to it, with the president acting as constitutional guardian. It was never intended for the president to be the head of government, like in France. In practice, however, the current president treats this right of veto as a mandate to co-govern the

country. Needless to say, in the polarised politics of Poland, this will not work. One of the most recent uses of the veto concerned a law granting the KNF (the financial authority supervising banks and insurance companies, among others) regulatory power to oversee the cryptocurrency market. Derived from an EU regulation, this right would allow the KNF to sanction companies established in other EU states that offer crypto in Poland. President Nawrocki argued on Channel Zero that there was no need for such a law because the firms offering crypto in Poland operated from Estonia and Cyprus.

Apart from vetoing laws and pardoning the occasional criminal, the role of President of Poland was meant to be mainly ceremonial, much like that of the King of the Netherlands. President Nawrocki is now trying to twist his ceremonial role in any way possible. His interpretation is that because the constitution requires judges of the Constitutional Tribunal, as well as ambassadors and generals, to take an oath of office before the president, then he has a de facto right of veto over their appointments. As a result, in 88 countries around the world, Poland is currently not represented by an ambassador, while newly appointed generals are unable to start their duties.

Furthermore, of the six judges recently appointed to the Constitutional Tribunal, only two were invited to the Presidential Palace to take their oath of office. The other four took their oaths in parliament before a notary, with the President invited to attend. However, the chair of the Constitutional Tribunal (appointed by the previous PiS-controlled parliament) refused to allow them to take up their seats. As a result, the Constitutional Tribunal remains a useful tool in the hands of the opposition instead of an independent court of law.

“The Constitutional Tribunal remains a useful tool in the hands of the opposition instead of an independent court of law.”

Meanwhile, the Tusk government has been criticised by the LGBTQ movement for failing to implement immediately a recent decision of the highest administrative court in Poland (following an earlier ruling by the Court of Justice of the European Union) stating that same-sex marriages entered into abroad should be recognised in Poland. In a recent column in Gazeta Wyborcza, Professor Matczak, an expert on the constitution, called for patience and advocated a low-key implementation rather than high-profile press conferences. Otherwise, he warned, this would simply become ammunition for the far right in the upcoming elections.

He is probably right but the optics are not very good as the government appears to be ignoring a court ruling – and appearances are all that count in these days of Tik Tok politics.

This column is written à titre personnel and does not necessarily reflect the views of the NPCC board or its members.

N.B. Between the writing of this column and its publication the first same-sex marriages entered into in other EU member states, have since been formally registered in Poland. What this will mean in practice, for example when it comes to taxation, is still unclear.


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