

TOGETHER WE CAN DO MORE

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When describing social groupings, sociologists often use Ferdinand Tönnies's classic distinction between *Gemeinschaft* (often translated as "community") and *Gesellschaft* ("society"). The difference lies in the type of social ties. In a *Gemeinschaft*, they are based on family relationships, togetherness, and emotional closeness, with customs and traditions serving as social control mechanisms.

A *Gesellschaft*, by contrast, is based on other types of social bonds. As Jerzy Szacki wrote, a *Gesellschaft* "is formed in order to put into effect a specific intention, advance a specific interest, realized earlier, even before the attempt was made to unite and work together." Social control is exercised through public pressure and the legal system.

Tönnies's concept of *Gesellschaft* helps us understand lobbying both in the international arena and in the European Union. Let us therefore take a closer look at the activity of interest groups in Brussels, which is often referred to by commentators as "the world's number-two capital of lobbying" (after Washington). Lobbying, interest representation, and public interest advocacy are all treated as synonymous concepts in the context of the EU.

Discussions about establishing a regulatory framework for lobbying in the EU started in the 1980s. However, it was not until 2011 that the European Parliament and the European Commission set up a joint Transparency Register: a system that categorizes all interest groups and self-employed consultants who take up activities in order to influence the legislative process. Registration is voluntary, but for the European Commission, no registration means no meetings with commissioners, officials, or directors-general.

By November 2018, the Register included 11,924 entities falling into six categories: professional consultancies, law firms, and self-employed consultants (1,226); in-house lobbyists and trade, business, and professional associations (5,899); non-governmental organizations (3,147); think-tanks, research and academic institutions (924); organizations representing churches and religious communities (56); and organizations representing local authorities (589). Over three-fourths of all the registered entities are headquartered in the EU (the situation as of 20 November 2018).

The Polish Science Contact Agency "PolSCA" of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Brussels, one of the Academy's six foreign scientific centers, has legal personality under Belgian law, and has been listed in the Register since 2016.

The Agency draws together the world of European decision makers, the Polish Academy of Sciences, and the whole of Poland's scientific community. It collaborates with the National Contact Point for Research Programmes of the European Union, which oversees the process of applying for research funds from the EU programs (Framework Programs, Horizon 2020). In 2018, it started advocacy on behalf of the Polish scientific community in Brussels. It contacts decision makers, in other words the people who draft and decide on the final wording of regulations. It remains in constant contact with the Permanent Representation of the Republic of Poland to the European Union and members of the European Parliament, in particular those who take actions to the benefit of science, innovation, and research. An important group is formed by the Poles who work above all in the European Commission, in the Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (DG RTD).

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Advocacy on the part of the groups that represent the scientific community in Brussels may be broken down into three categories: information and promotion activities, expert and lobbying activities, and science diplomacy.

Information and promotion activities mean traditional seminars and conferences. A new element of the Agency's operations in this field involves looking after visibility also at home. Hence the decision to participate in the Festival of Science, held in the Palace of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Jabłonna. The Agency prepared two events: a lecture popularizing the Belgian francophonie "The ABC's of the Belgian Francophonie" and a panel discussion with the participation of the PAS scientific center in Paris "Science Diplomacy in Poland: How Do PAS Foreign Scientific Centers Work?" Another important form of the Agency's activity involves organizing study visits for representatives of the scientific community in Poland. Examples include visits of rectors of Polish universities from southern Poland organized by the "Pro Silesia" Association as well as visits of decision makers from higher-education institutions from the Warmińsko-Mazurskie Province and academics from the higher-education institutions from the provinces of Zachodniopomorskie and Lubuskie. PolSCA also had its debut at the European Forum for New Ideas in Sopot, where I moderated the panel "Polish Lobbying in Brussels – How To Bridge the Gap Between New and Old EU Member States?" and participated in the debate "Polish Progress Makers – How Will Poles Move the World Forward in the 21st Century?"

Expert and lobbying activities pertain above all to efforts to build a European research and academic space, which in turns requires the establishment of a relevant framework for European science policy in collaboration with representations of nation states and scientific communities. That is why we not only should but also must be present there and remain actively involved in the decision-making process. The PolSCA Agency is part of the Informal Group of RTD Liaison Offices (IGLO), an informal association comprising thirty non-profit organizations that deal with issues related to research and innovation. PolSCA remains in constant working contact with the V4 network of science and innovation agencies from the countries of the Visegrad Group. We jointly organize training for managers of research programs twice a year.

We are also involved in the European Commission's consultation for the EU's 9th Framework Programme for Research and Innovation and research missions, a new proposal under the "Horizon Europe" program, which is currently being prepared. The Agency also organizes monthly meetings for representatives of Polish regions, which are sometimes attended by Polish business organizations present in Brussels.

These activities provide a basis for science diplomacy.

In 2016, the European Commission published a document "Open Innovation, Open Science, Open to the World," which presented a broad perspective on European science diplomacy. It defined science diplomacy as "the use of science to prevent conflicts and crises, underpin policy making, and improve international relations in conflict areas where the universal language of science can open new channels of communication and build trust." Science diplomacy may be considered as part of public diplomacy. Global problems such as climate change, rapid technological changes, conflicts based on cultural values, and growth in populist sentiments all require joint and multifaceted action. Such action can be taken by the PAS foreign scientific centers. They form a network – a *Gesellschaft*, so we can hope to achieve synergy and economies of scale. It is necessary to put an effort into creating a consistent brand while retaining the distinctive nature of each scientific center that results from its history and characteristics as well as the context in which it operates.

Rinus van Schendelen, a theoretician and practitioner of European lobbying, believes that the effectiveness of lobbying is determined by effective management and the use of synergy between three component parts: people, procedures, and position papers (3P). "People" means contacts and access to information sources, which often determines the speed of action. "Procedures" means knowledge of the decision-making process, the specific characteristics of institutions. "Position papers" means the ability to draft properly, in terms of both form and substance, documents adjusted to a specific stage of the decision-making process. The PAS foreign scientific centers have all of these three components, and they should all be harnessed to the fullest possible extent. ■