

In 2006, Oppland Archives, Maihaugen, within the framework of our activity, began the realisation of the project “Arkivdokumentasjon av nyere innvandring til Oppland”, with the aim of documenting the lives of new immigrants residing in our county. During the project, we had the opportunity to observe how, under the influence of migration from various countries, Norwegian culture is changing.

The results of this documentary-research project brought about a desire to create a separate Polish-Norwegian archival project. This led to cooperation with the State Archive in Cracow and the project “Polscy emigranci w Norwegii w XIX–XXI w. Materiały źródłowe do badań”. The publication which you are holding in your hands is a direct result of this cooperation.

Archives are the memory of the society in which we live and therefore should be its actual reflection. Archival institutions are responsible for the securing of, as well as for providing access to, archives which are an integral part of our common memory.

Oppland Archives, Maihaugen in Lillehammer is a regional institution responsible for private archives, which takes part in activities helping to protect culture, for which the Maihaugen Museum is responsible. Oppland Archives was established in 1981 and currently stores approximately 1,700 various types of archives from companies, organisations, families, and private individuals (with the exception of official acts). Its resources allow the development of society to be viewed from a different perspective.

As can be seen from the archival and scientific research we conducted throughout the project, Polish migration to Norway is not a completely new phenomenon, but one that has taken place over hundreds of years. In our research, however, we concentrated on the migration of Poles to Norway during the last 200 years. The articles contained in this publication aim at bringing this occurrence closer to you, its readers.

Since 2008, Poles have been the largest group of immigrants in Norway, and likewise in the region of Oppland. In 2009, 1,040 Poles were resident in our county, while in all Norway

44,482 people of Polish origin were registered. The total population of Norway is currently 4,799,252.

I would like to thank the Fund for Cultural Exchange, which has, to a large extent, financed our project, the first one in the field of archives that has received the support of the Fund. I would also like to express my gratitude to our partner, the State Archive in Cracow, for its help in making this project possible and its cooperation, which went beyond the bounds of archival knowledge. I am also extremely grateful to Monika Sokól-Rudowska, our employee, who was responsible for the whole project. Without her expert help and language skills, the project would have been very difficult to realise. Finally, I would like to thank ABM-utvikling, which provided funding during the preparation of the project and for participation in this international undertaking, as well as Maihaugen for its expertise and economic support.

We have great hopes that the materials collected by us and presented in this publication, as well as at exhibitions in Cracow, Lillehammer and on the Internet, will arouse your interest. We also hope that the research into Polish-Norwegian relations will continue, helping to strengthen and deepen the ties between the two countries.

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