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## EVALUATION OF SELECTED INITIATIVES IMPLEMENTED WITHIN POLAND'S DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION – PERFORMANCE OF A COPRODUCTION AGREEMENT BY THE BELARUSIAN RADIO RACYJA FOR THE YEAR 2013.

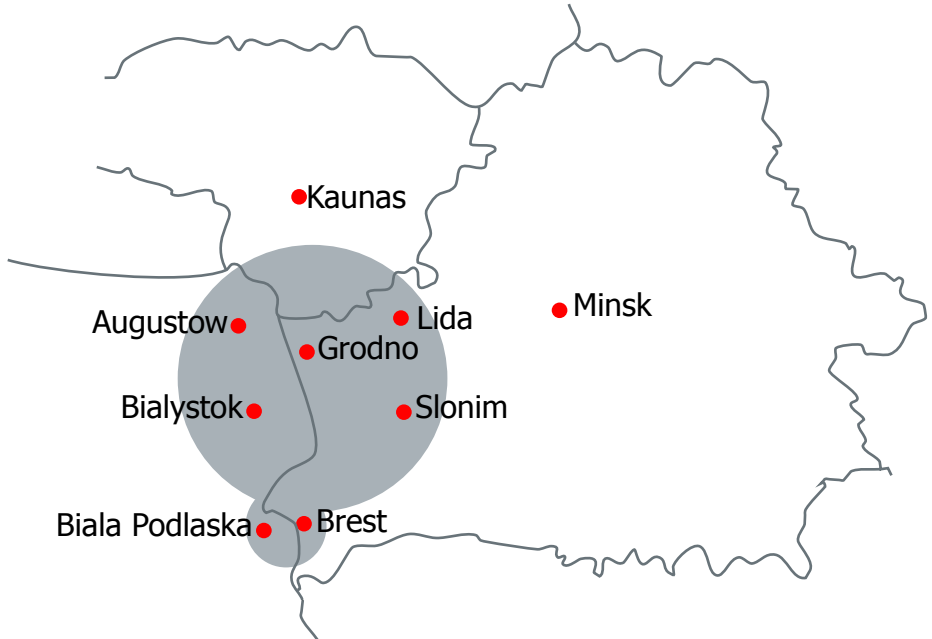
The purpose of the evaluation study was to examine the impact of Polish Aid Programme on the way and scope of operation of the Belarusian Radio Racyja (BRR) that is broadcast from Poland. The subject of analysis were activities undertaken in 2013.

The survey used a compilation of research methods and techniques, which included desk research, in-depth interviews, CAWI survey, panel of experts in the field of media studies and public relations, SWOT/TOWS analysis, case study, linguistic and semiotic audit.

The Belarusian Radio Racyja was founded in 1999 in Białystok. Its main purpose has been to create an additional source of information for the residents of Belarus.

Belarusian Radio Racyja suspended its activities in 2002 due to lack of funds. The radio resumed its broadcasting activity in February 2006. This was made possible largely by the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which provided support. One of the Radio transmitters doubled its power (from 60 to 120 kW) enabling the Radio to extend its coverage to approx. 1.5 million Belarusians.

### **BRR coverage in 2014**



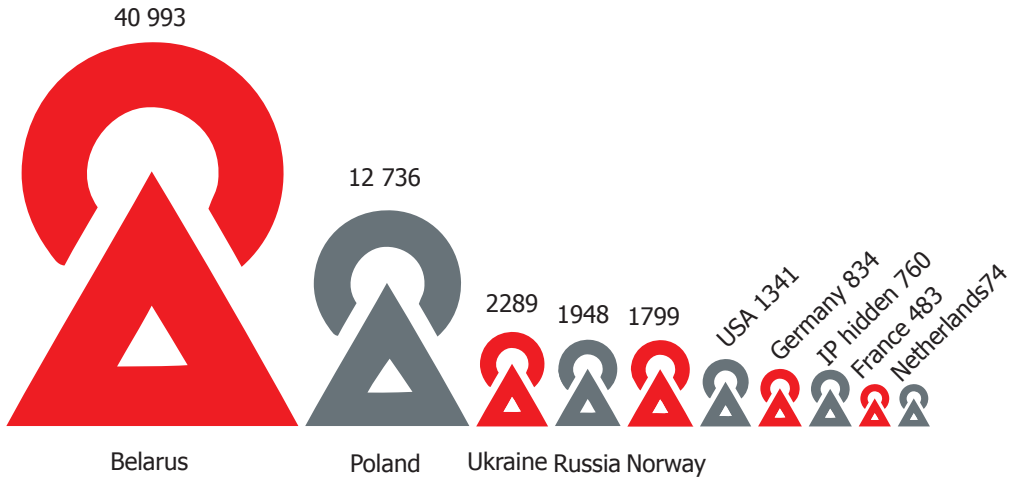
It is very difficult to find out how many listeners BRR has in Belarus. The reason is, among others, that people are too afraid of government infiltration to openly express their views about their access to objective information.

*At present conducting a reliable survey into the size of the Radio's audience in Belarus is impossible.*

(interview with a representative of the BRR editorial board)

The BRR has a website, it is also present in social media: Facebook, Twitter, Google+, Our Class and the largest Russian-language social media – “V Kontakte”.

## Website [www.racyja.com](http://www.racyja.com) hits (August – October 2014) by countries



A model of the radio station was developed on the basis of sociological studies, listeners' preferences and past experience. It has a news profile with socio-political and cultural commentaries (covering a wide context of Belarusian affairs at local and international levels). The Radio also plays different kinds of music, which feature prominently in its programme.

BRR cooperates with a number of institutions operating in exile and at home. One of the BRR's representatives says: "We are open to everything that concerns Belarus – we support all initiatives on the Belarusian side of the border – independent cultural communities, independent artists, (...) we have a weekly programme on human rights, on literature, we organise Polish-Belarusian Literary Meetings, (...) it would be easier to say who is not our partner."

The biggest advantage of the Radio station is its consistent Belarusian identity. Listeners note the fact that the Radio receives support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but they also emphasize that Radio Racyja's owners and authors are journalists of Belarusian origin and Poles who sympathize with the idea of access reliable information. Almost all the Radio programmes are in Belarusian. Also the vast majority of its authors and editors are Belarusians. This is very important for the realization of one of radio station's fundamental objectives, which is strengthening independent Belarusian national identity.

In general, the Radio's activity can be assessed positively. The activities undertaken by BRR that aim to expand access to independent information for Belarusians, include:

- a programming schedule that is adapted to the target groups identified in sociological studies;
- stable performance of the Radio throughout the year;
- providing information that is alternative to the information disseminated by official Belarusian media;
- increasing access to Belarusian music, language and culture for Belarusians;
- creating a positive image of Poland;
- expanding the Radio's activity by updating its website and presence on the biggest social networks;

With a view to continuing the project in the future and improving its quality, consideration should be given to the implementation of the following recommendations:

- introduction of cyclical sociological research concerning the realization of the project;
- activities aimed at increasing the BRR audience among young people;
- maintaining the Radio's formula focused on transmission of local information and web page development, further development of its website and social media presence;
- searching for other sources of funding in order to ensure greater financial stability;
- maintaining the Radio as a non-commercial station;
- creating a strategic document outlining BRR's long-term objectives, its target groups and their needs.

The full version of the report is available at:

[www.polskapomoc.gov.pl](http://www.polskapomoc.gov.pl)

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Photo of the radio studio by Curtis Kennington [www.flickr.com/photos/33613762@N07/3614198297](http://www.flickr.com/photos/33613762@N07/3614198297)  
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