FUNDACJA NOWEJ Community WSPÓLNΘΤΥ Foundation

The New Community

Poland, like so many societies, is fractured. Fear and distrust have gripped the nation, polarizing communities, families and citizens.

We work to reduce affective polarisation and enable dialogue across divides. Our goal is to restore the capacity for democratic consensus.

The data



How would you characterize the differences of opinions on major political issues in your society?

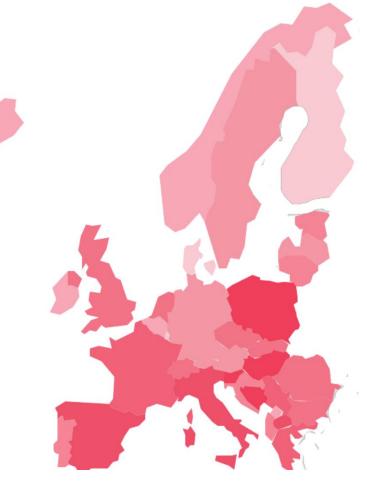
- **4 Serious polarisation.** There are serious differences in opinions in society on almost all key political issues, which result in major clashes of views.
- **3 Moderate polarisation.** There are differences in opinions in society on many key political issues, which result in moderate clashes of views.
- **2 Medium polarisation.** Differences in opinions are noticeable on about half of the key political issues, resulting in some clashes of views.
- **1 Limited polarisation.** There are differences in opinions on only a few key political issues, resulting in few clashes of views.
- **O No polarisation.** There are differences in opinions but there is a general agreement on the direction for key political issues.

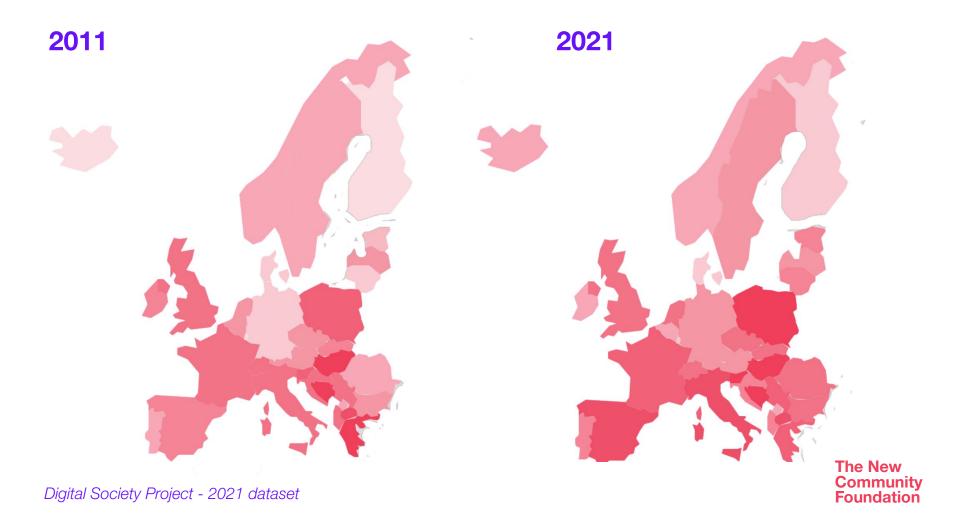


Polarization in Europe (2021)

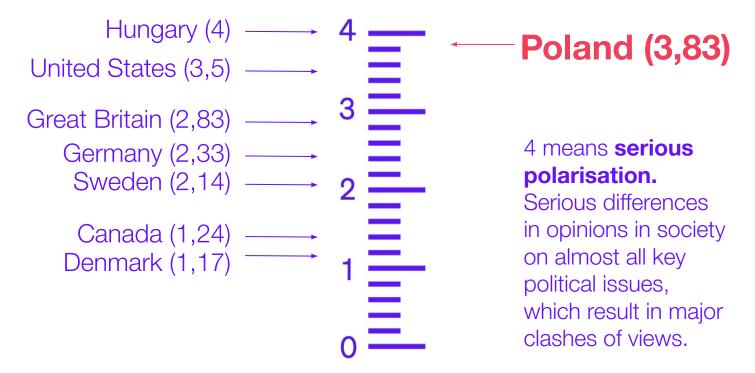
Hungary Bosnia Hercegovina Poland Italy Spain Serbia Greece France Switzerland	4 4 3,83 3,67 3,50 3,33 3,33 3,17
United Kingdom Netherlands Germany Sweden Denmark	2,83 2,83 2,33 2,14 1,17



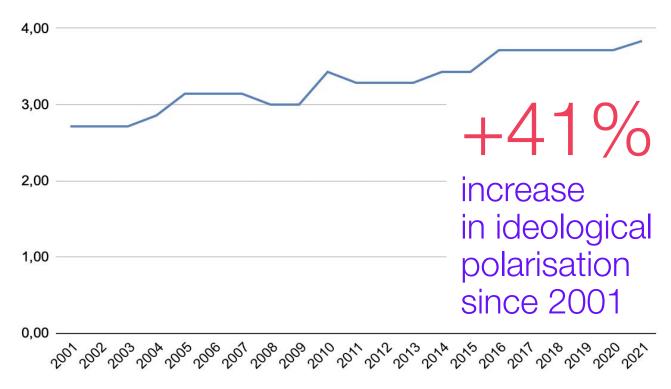




Poland is the third most polarized nation in Europe



Polarization has built up over 20 years...



...and runs much deeper than political preferences

- immigration
- gender relations
- LGBTQ+ rights
- moral values
- family models
- climate change

- social assistance
- EU membership
- Russia
- Germany
- earning power
- social status



Poles experience polarization first-hand

79% of Poles have never in their lifetime experienced their nation more divided than today

of Poles are tired of polarisation, both in the public sphere and in their private lives

92% of Poles would like to see different social groups, now in hostility, finding common ground

Our method



Community dialogues bring together people who otherwise wouldn't meet.

Citizens from across Poland, holding divergent views, talk online for 3 hours.

The purpose is not to change political views, but to learn to live with the difference.

As respectful diversity is experienced, a **sense of community** emerges.

Community dialogues are different from citizens' assemblies or people's panels.

They don't produce political decisions – they **outline democratic consensus**.

What happens in dialogues is **depolarization**, **not deliberation**.

Because reducing distrust and hate is a prerequisite for democratic cooperation.

50 community dialogues organized 70%

feel that they have a better understanding of people holding opposing views after the dialogue

74%

are more willing to cooperate with people holding opposing views after the dialogue

533 citizens have participated

98%

want to apply the newly acquired conversation skills beyond the dialogue experience

Evaluation results from 2022-2023 dialogues

Examples of domestic dialogue topics (Facebook ads)





















Examples of immigration-related topics (Facebook ads)











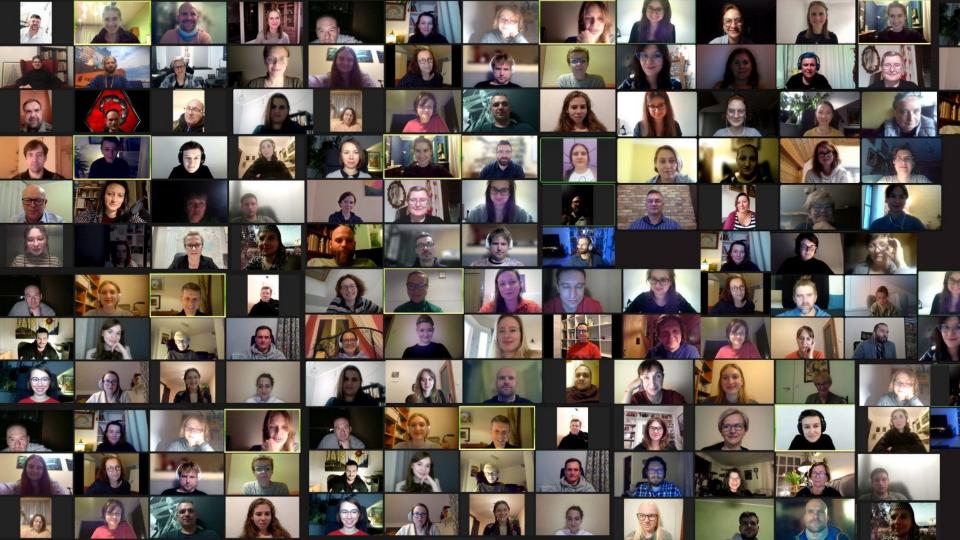




In partnership with:



The scale-up



We have launched a nationwide program of **100 community dialogues** in Poland.

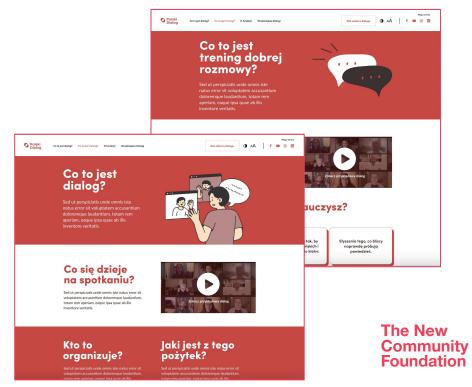
We will bring together 1200+ citizens to talk about **100 divisive issues**.

The goal is to regain capacity for **democratic consensus** in a highly-divided society.

We are also documenting and publishing the **common ground** on each dialogue topic.

Polish Dialogues platform launched in May 2023





People register via our platform to talk on specific topics, on scheduled dates.

Groups are composed to reflect a diversity of views, ages, genders and backgrounds.

Dialogues are guided by 2 professional facilitators and run according to a protocol.

A common ground and how-to-talk guide on each topic is published after the dialogue.

How-to-talk guides for regular citizens



on meat consumption

Practical advice and hints on:

- how to start the conversation
- how to approach difficult topics
- what to do when the conversation gets hostile
- how to conclude a conversation



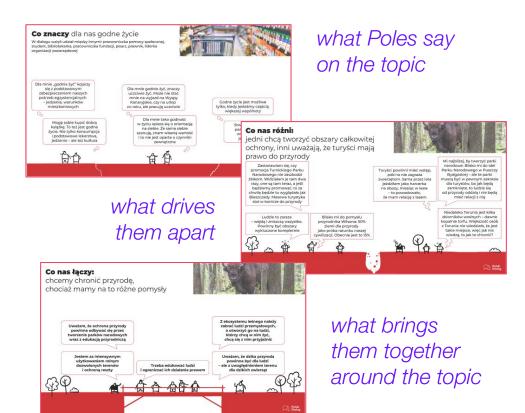
on rising living costs



on protecting wildlife

Common ground mapping for each topic (examples)





What's next

We are going personal and local in Poland:

- in March 2024, together with the German organization My Country Talks, we will launch one-on-one conversations for 1000 Poles holding opposing views (full funding awarded by the Bosch Foundation)
- in April 2024, we plan to launch an online **School of Dialogue** for 20 local activists from across Poland, enabling them to use dialogues to resolve polarization-based deadlocks in their local communities (*awaiting funding decision*)
- throughout 2024 we plan to scale up our national effort to 52 online dialogues on topics ranging from education, to healthcare and EU membership (we are seeking funding for 25 dialogues)

We are thinking **regional** and **Europe-wide**:

- as our international depolarization toolbox gets ready by December 2023, we are looking for partners in Hungary and Slovakia to help them set up their dialogue platforms (we are seeking partners & funding)
- we are mulling a multi-national project, involving Central and West European countries that struggle with populist politics and rising polarization. **Germany, Italy and Poland** would be a great start (we are seeking partners & funding)
- we think depolarization should enter the **EU agenda** as a measure increasing social cohesion, empowering citizens and strengthening national democracies

We need to strengthen our capacities:

- The NCF has no endowment and has been financed exclusively through project funding from international grantmakers
- Fundraising is consuming a disproportionate amount of time and effort, given the energy we could spend on driving change
- We are actively seeking core funding to grow our organizational capacity and stability, while retaining agility, innovation and impact

Our organization

The **New Community Foundation** is a CSO registered under Polish law in 2020.

The foundation is run by a **board**, advised by a **council** comprising the whole team.

We are **non-partisan** and our mission is independent from grantmakers.

Current funders include the **Bosch Foundation**, the **National Endowment for Democracy** and the **European Climate Foundation**.

The **New Community Foundation** is a team of 20+ skilled professionals:

- scientists certified in social research and evaluation
- facilitators trained in conflict mediation and resolution
- activists with civic engagement and communication skills
- managers with corporate project management experience



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