

Within the framework of

Polish EU Presidency activities

The Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Los Angeles

announces

Children and Youth Contest

entitled

Become an Ambassador

of Europe, European Union,

Poland and Polish EU Presidency

at Your School

A trip to Brussels to win!

Dear Young Friends,

We have reached a half way point of the Polish Presidency of the European Union (<http://pl2011.eu/>). Various important events have already passed while others still await us. The financial crisis of the Euro zone, the summit of Eastern Partnership and the situation in the Middle East are the issues which until now have dominated the thinking about Europe in the past three months. Poland's work within the Presidency are highly valued not only by the member countries but also outside observers, among them USA. Nevertheless, the knowledge about Europe and the European Union, and therefore the Polish Presidency is far from widespread in the US. Therefore, we aim to publicize it on the Western Seaboard. In order to accomplish this ambitious task, we invite the young generation to participate in it: children and young people proud of their Polish roots, who, be it for some time only, would like to serve as "The Ambassadors of Europe" in the United States.

In view of the above, we have decided to invite young people residing in the Western United States (consular region encompassing Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Oregon, Texas, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming) to participate in our prize competition for the best project showcasing the European Union as well as the role and priorities of the Polish Presidency (07/01/2011-12/31/2011). The completion bears the title of "Be an Ambassador for Europe." All the presentations are to take place at American schools.

You are all welcome to participate! We offer three main prizes in the form of a field trip to Brussels! Below, please find details regarding the competition.

Principles of the Competition

Poland's Presidency of the European Union presents not only a chance to strengthen our European identity but also to familiarize your American friends with the European Union and the active role of Poland within

the Commonwealth. Therefore, we heartily invite the young people aware and proud of their Polish roots to assume for a while the role of the "Ambassador for Europe."

In order to do that you need to approach your teacher/s and/or school principal with an offer to prepare and showcase your presentation within the frame of school classes or extracurricular activities an event/broadcast/lesson/paper/poster/electronic newsletter (the form is entirely up to the participants) dealing with the subject of the European Union and the Polish Presidency. We should like to emphasize that the role of the "Ambassador for Europe" entails, among others, a diplomatic persuasion to achieve the goals aimed by us.

You will undoubtedly find useful the enclosed letter, which I have addressed to principals and teachers, presenting the idea and asking for assistance and permission for your activities.

Terms of participation

Competition participants must be school children and students (ages 6-18) and attend a local school (public or private), accredited within the system of compulsory education.

During the competition, they need to reside with the Los Angeles consular region in one of the following states: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Oregon, Texas, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming).

The goal of the competition is to enlarge the knowledge about Europe among American friends. Therefore, the school which one attends within compulsory education (public or private) may be the place for such a presentation or afterschool activities, sanctioned by the school, e.g. activity clubs, special interest groups, etc. Regrettably, the courses at a Saturday/Sunday Polish school, boy scouts or parish activities do not qualify. We encourage the participants to make additional presentations at Polish-American centers even though such presentations will not be considered in the assessment of the competition merit.

As the competition is geared towards youngsters less than 18 years of age and since it involves travel to Europe (accompanied by guardians), participation in the completion requires consent of parents or legal guardians. A signed consent needs to be submitted along with the questionnaire and the competition materials.

We invite young people who identify with the Polish ethnicity to participate in the competition. The completion is announced at the time when Poland holds the Presidency of the EU; therefore, participants are considered Polish ambassadors for Europe. It is not necessary to document Polish descent in any legal way. The questionnaire asks only to describe the claim to the Polish heritage in a general way, e.g. "I hold a Polish passport," "I was born in Poland," "My parents come from Poland," but it is also acceptable to provide information like "My ancestors came to the US in the 19th century; they hailed somewhere from Lvov and always cared about preserving the Polish language, traditions and culture at home. I consider myself American and Polish."

Duration and deadlines

The completion starts at the date of its announcement and lasts till the end of February 2012, which marks the deadline for presentations and sending the competition materials. Therefore, it is longer than the duration of the Polish Presidency which may allow for its full assessment and at the same time falls within the first semester of the school year 2011/2012.

All the competition reports should be sent no later than 2/29/2012 to the following address: Consulate General of the Republic of Poland, 12400 Wilshire Blvd, Suite 555, Los Angeles, CA 90025.

The final results of the competition will be officially announced on April 30, 2012 on the Consulate's website. Winners will also receive letters from the Consulate.

Age categories

The competition has three age categories: Elementary School, Middle School, and (High School). All youngsters of Polish ethnic roots may participate in the competition, providing they had ancestors who once held Polish citizenship or resided on the territory of Poland. Although documenting Polish heritage is not necessary, it is required that the participants describe their family connections with Poland in the questionnaire.

Due to the character of main prizes, the participation in the competition is only recognized on the individual basis only.

Language

Both the presentations as well as the reports should be sent exclusively in the English language.

Source materials

Together with this letter, Polish schools within our consular region will receive source (brochures on the EU in English) and promotional materials (pencils, pins, and note-books) on the European Union and the Polish Presidency to be distributed to the recipients of your presentations. If you learned about the competition in some other way (for example, from the Consulate's website or your friends) you may receive these materials directly from us by writing to us at losangeles.culture@msz.gov.pl and providing the number of expected participants. We shall do our best to provide you with the requested materials.

Assessment of presentation

The assessment of the presentations will be done on the basis of the questionnaire sent to the Consulate General of Poland in Los Angeles (enclosed) which will list information regarding it, materials reporting the event, and confirmation of the data presented in the questionnaire by a teacher and/or school principal. Additional points may be won by including the comments of the participants on the event.

The report, apart from the written answers to questions asked, may include video or audio material about the event. The manner of reporting the event also counts in the overall evaluation.

Criteria of evaluation

The following criteria will be applied when assessing the presentation:

- 1) Factual merit of given information
- 2) Number of recipients
- 3) Inventiveness
- 4) Form of presentation
- 5) Credibility of the report (based on the description of the event, confirmation by the teachers and opinions of the participants)
- 6) Form of report of the event

Competition Patrons

- Consulate General of Poland in Los Angeles
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland
- Permanent Representation of Poland to the EU
- Polish National Alliance, lodge Southern California

Once more, we encourage you to participate in the completion and propagate it broadly.

All additional queries should be directed to consul for culture, press, education and Polish community at losangeles.culture@msz.gov.pl. Info regarding the European Union can be found on http://europa.eu/index_pl.htm. Information on the Polish Presidency available at <http://pl2011.eu/>.

Prizes

The main prize is a week-long stay in Brussels for the winner in every age category (3 winners). Most probably, it will fall at the beginning of the summer holidays of 2012 (end of June/beginning of July). All the remaining awards will help the participants broaden their knowledge about Europe. All the participants will receive commemorative diplomas.

I wish the best of luck to all Ambassadors for Europe!

Joanna Kozińska-Frybes

Consul General of Poland in Los Angeles