



## PROMOTING ROAD SAFETY IN POLAND

# SWISS KNOW-HOW TO TRY TO REVERSE THE TREND



The aim of the project is to improve road safety in Poland, where standards are currently far lower than those in the rest of Europe. Switzerland will inform its Polish partners about the experience it has accumulated in this area over the decades. Many exchanges and joint activities are planned.

Switzerland has achieved a marked improvement in road safety in recent years and was therefore well-placed to serve as a reference for Poland in its efforts to solve its serious traffic problems. Roland Wiederkehr, a former member of Parliament, founded an NGO that works to help road accident victims and to improve road safety and Switzerland. Over the years he has become an expert in this area. On the basis of his experience he has convinced the authorities in both countries of the need and of the usefulness of launching such a project.

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### A WORRYING DIAGNOSIS

The road safety situation in Poland is rather bleak. Traffic is increasing exponentially and is not well controlled. The management of road traffic is outdated, police are poorly equipped, unable to cope with the challenges facing them. Road infrastructure is not adapted to modern traffic conditions and road users' awareness of traffic dangers is almost non-existent. This applies to pedestrians too. As in all countries, but to a greater degree here, speeding and alcohol are among the main causes of accidents in Poland. The economic and social costs for the country are huge.

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### PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN POLICE FORCES

To remedy this tragic situation, changes are needed in the training of personnel dealing with road safety at all levels, and investments are required to install modern road signalling systems in notoriously dangerous areas and to raise road user awareness and improve prevention of accidents. The project takes all these aspects into account, together with targeted activities that take place alternately in Poland and in Switzerland, where partnerships have been established notably with the Zurich Cantonal Police and the Swiss Police Institute (ISP) in Neuchatel.





## NUMEROUS ACTIVITIES ARE PLANNED

The planned commitments are important because it is expected that more than 600 policeman and other security personnel will be involved in the training courses; and half a dozen strategic traffic points will be established with appropriate investments in the relevant area. Traffic police will be provided with modern and appropriate equipment and three national prevention campaigns focusing on the most vulnerable road users will be organised.

The project may appear to be unusual at first sight but in fact it belongs to the category of normal technical cooperation, with transfers of technology and know-how and a strong element of capacity strengthening. It is also part of the public security domain which has been defined as one of the thematic priorities of the Swiss contribution to EU enlargement.

The accident statistics in Poland will show whether this effort has borne fruit but on the basis of their experience in other countries the initiators of this project are optimistic.

## THE PROJECT IN BRIEF

### SUBJECT

Public security

### COUNTRY

Poland

### PARTNERS

The Swiss Police Institute (ISP) in Neuchatel

### STARTING POINT / BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Poland holds the unenviable record of the highest number of road deaths in Europe – 107 deaths per year per million inhabitants. After the fall of communism and Poland joining the EU, there was a spectacular increase in road traffic but there was little corresponding improvement in infrastructure. The need to modernise road traffic management has become a priority for Poland.

### PURPOSE

The aim is to improve road safety in Poland, especially for the most vulnerable users – cyclists, pedestrians and older people.

### ACTIVITIES

- The planned activities include visits to Switzerland by Polish persons responsible for road safety in their country as well as visits by Swiss experts to share their experience with their Polish counterparts.
- Moreover, 13 training courses involving 600 people are planned in Poland.
- Investments in the improvement of road safety have also been planned, as well as national accident prevention campaigns.

### TARGET GROUPS

- Local and national police
- Local government representatives and NGOs
- Young and old road users, cyclists and pedestrians
- There will be a particular focus on efforts to improve road safety in parts of Poland with high accident rates

### COSTS

Total project budget:

CHF 4.62 Mio.

Swiss contribution:

CHF 3.93 Mio.

### RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

National police, Warsaw

### DURATION

2012–2014

