POLISH AMERICAN CHAMBER of COMMERCE IN TEXAS


# Polish-Texan Business Review

## Q1-Q2 2025 Energy Edition

**Official Business Magazine of the Polish-American Chamber of Commerce in Texas**

# Corporate Members

CHIPOLBROK AMERICA INC

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# Content

# 01 Foreword from the Chairman

Dear Readers,

It is an honor to present the Q1–Q2 2025 edition of the Polish–Texan Business Review, the official business publication of the Polish-American Chamber of Commerce in Texas. As the newly elected President and Chairman, I would first like to express my deepest gratitude to our previous leadership team for their outstanding service, dedication, and vision. Thanks to their efforts, PolChamTX stands on a strong foundation, with engagement across both Texas and Poland.

We now enter an exciting new chapter — one rooted in continuity, but also open to fresh initiatives. We are committed to expanding PolChamTX's mission by deepening cooperation with Polish companies seeking to invest in Texas, and by supporting Texas-based businesses in building their presence across Poland, the gateway to the dynamically growing Central and Eastern Europe region. At the same time, we aim to strengthen our ties with Polish communities beyond Texas, particularly in Chicago — home to the largest Polish population in the United States and a vital center of Polish-American life.

Texas' ties with Poland are stronger than ever, especially in the field of energy. Yet, these connections are not only commercial — they reflect a shared strategic vision for transatlantic energy security and innovation. At PolChamTX, our goal is to serve as a trusted platform that brings together public and private stakeholders from both sides of the Atlantic. Through this publication, we celebrate our achievements, share insights that drive new opportunities, and spotlight the individuals and organizations leading the way in Polish–Texan cooperation.

We thank you for your continued support. I invite you to explore the stories featured in this issue and look forward to working with all of you to shape the next chapter of our shared success.

Best regards,

Jim Mazurkiewicz

**Jim Mazurkiewicz, PhD**
President & Chairman
Polish-American Chamber of Commerce in Texas

# 02 Editor's Note

Dear Readers,

The new golden age of Poland is happening right now. With its GDP (PPP) reaching the level of Japan, the country is on track to become the world's 20th largest economy and a new member of the G20. A Polish astronaut, Sławosz Uznański-Wiśniewski, has gone to space. Iga Świątek continues to dominate tennis courts across the globe. And yes — for the first time in decades, Poland has struck oil. These are historic moments — and while we may be far from Warsaw, here in Texas we've had a front-row seat to one key piece of this success story: the growing strategic cooperation between Poland and the United States in the realm of energy.

That's why this edition of the *Polish–Texan Business Review* takes a closer look at the energy sector. In Q1 and Q2 of 2025, our calendar was filled with energy-focused events. The year began with the visit of Poland's Secretary of State, Dr. Władysław T. Bartoszewski, who delivered a powerful lecture at Texas A&M University on the importance of transatlantic energy infrastructure. We welcomed ORLEN's and UNIMOT's delegations to CERAWeek in Houston, and celebrated with a PolChamTX Energy Dinner that brought together top leaders in oil, gas, and renewables. We're proud to welcome UNIMOT — Poland's largest private energy company — as our new corporate member, and feature them in this issue following several meetings and a visit from CEO Dr. Adam Sikorski. Our spring and summer trade missions to Poland deepened relationships with ORLEN and new partners across government and industry.

This edition features expert perspectives on Polish-American energy ties from the Polish Institute of International Affairs, as well as a special interview with Joel Eacker of Westinghouse Electric Company, who is overseeing Poland's first nuclear plant. We also sit down with two Polish-American industry leaders based in Texas: Dr. Artur Dunal and Thalía Krüger. And in our Young Professional Feature, we catch up with Brad Mushinski, PolChamTX's 1st Vice President, on career paths, community, and what's next for the Chamber.

Of course, it hasn't all been business and we also had some fun along the way. In May, we proudly represented PolChamTX at the Constitution Day Parade in Chicago, riding in as Polish-American cowboys on our very own parade float. Pierogis, boots, and banners included.

Warm regards,

Jakub A. Bartoszewski

**Jakub A. Bartoszewski**
Editor-in-Chief & Board Member



# Corpus Christi

# 03 PolChamTX Insider News & Events

*In this section, we're presenting news from PolChamTX's activity, as well as events related to Polish-Texan business cooperation, highlighting initiatives organized by both PolChamTX and our valued partners. Stay informed as we explore the diverse landscape of business relations between Poland and Texas.*

## PolChamTX Energy Dinner

During CERAWeek 2025, PolChamTX hosted a dedicated Energy Dinner at King Ranch Texas Kitchen in Houston, bringing together leading energy professionals of Polish origin based in Texas and visiting from Poland. The evening featured members of the ORLEN delegation led by Dr. Adam Czyżewski and the UNIMOT delegation led by Dr. Adam Sikorski, alongside distinguished guests including Dr. Vince Kaminski (Rice University, Jones Business School), Dr. Greg Kusiński (Chevron), Dr. Artur Dunal (Dover Precision Components), Jarosław Wajer (EY Poland), and Rafał Kasprów (ORLEN Synthos Green Energy). It was a memorable night of high-level networking, good conversations, and classic Texas hospitality with steaks and drinks shared among peers shaping the future of energy.

## PolChamTX's Trade Missions to Poland

PolChamTX has been actively strengthening transatlantic business ties through two trade missions to Poland in 2025. The first, in April, included high-level meetings with ORLEN, UNIMOT, and Confirme Sp. z o.o. PolChamTX President Dr. Jim Mazurkiewicz and Secretary Jakub Bartoszewski delivered a presentation on the Texas energy sector at ORLEN's headquarters, and Dr. Mazurkiewicz was interviewed by TVN 24 BiS on U.S.-Polish cooperation. The June mission featured Vice-Presidents Maciej Bagiński and Brad Mushinski, alongside Secretary Jakub Bartoszewski, and included meetings with regional and municipal authorities in Rzeszów, the Peak Legal law firm, the American Chamber of Commerce in Poland, and ORLEN. These missions continue to build long-term partnerships and promote business opportunities between Poland and Texas.

## Throwback to Chicago May 3rd Parade

PolChamTX proudly participated in the 2025 May 3rd Constitution Day Parade in Chicago — the largest Polish cultural event in the United States and a flagship celebration of Polish heritage, often compared to Saint Patrick's Day in scale and spirit. Our delegation was honored to join the festivities with a dedicated PolChamTX parade float, which gave us outstanding visibility. In addition to the parade, our representatives took part in a series of meetings with leaders from the Chicago Polonia and visiting members of the Polish Sejm and Senat, strengthening ties between Polish-American communities across the U.S.


GRAND MARSHAL
2025


TEXAS
UNIMOT
EUROLEADER
POLCHAMTX

- Visit of Polish Secretary of State Dr. Władysław T. Bartoszewski to College Station, Texas. Lecture at Texas A&M. University **(Jan 30 2025)**
- New Board Elected: Dr. Jim Mazurkiewicz (President), Bradley Mushinski (1st Vice-President), Maciej Bagiński (2nd Vice-President), Timothy Magier (Treasurer), Jakub Bartoszewski (Secretary)
- Visit of Polish High School Students from Toruń to Texas **(Feb 2025)**
- PolChamTX Delegation to 60 Million Congress in Miami. PolChamTX Represented by Dr. Jim Mazurkiewicz and Maciej Baginski **(Mar 7 - 9 2025)**
- Polish Networking Night at SXSW **(Mar 8 2025)**
- PolChamTX Energy Dinner at King Ranch Texas Kitchen in Houston, Texas. Attended by ORLEN, UNIMOT, EY Poland, Polish Investment & Trade Agency, Consulate General of Poland in Houston **(Mar 11 2025)**
- ORLEN Delegation to CERA Week in Houston, Texas. PolChamTX represented by Dr. Jim Mazurkiewicz, Dr. Waldemar Priebe, Jakub Bartoszewski **(Mar 10 - 14 2025)**
- Game Developers Conference, San Francisco **(Mar 17 - 21 2025)**
- Tamara de Lempicka Exhibition at The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston **(Mar 9 - Jul 6 2025)**
- Visit of Poland's Chargé d'Affaires to the United States, Bogdan Klich, in Houston, Texas **(Mar 21 2025)**
- Meeting with Governor Abbott's Texas Economic Development & Tourism Office in Austin, Texas **(Apr 3 2025)**
- Quarterly Polish Tech Networking Events in Austin **(Apr 2025)**
- 40th Annual Space Symposium, Santa Clara **(Apr 7-10 2025)**
- PolChamTX Trade Mission to Poland **(Apr 2025)**
- Meeting with UNIMOT in Warsaw, Poland **(Apr 14 2025)**
- Meeting with Rajpol Sp. z o.o. in Błędów, Poland **(Jun 8 2025)**
- Meeting with Our Future Foundation in Warsaw, Poland **(Jun 9 2025)**
- Meeting with TELE-FONIKA Kable S.A. in Myślenice, Poland **(Jun 12 2025)**
- US & CEE Conference at Jagiellonian University - PolChamTX Represented by Dr. Jim Mazurkiewicz **(Jun 13 - 14 2025)**
- Polish Exchange Young Farmers visit to Texas **(Jun 18 2025)**
- Sławosz Uznański-Wiśniewski's Mission to Space **(Jun 25 2025)**
- Meeting with ORLEN in Warsaw Poland **(Apr 15 2025)**
- PolChamTX's President, Dr. Jim Mazurkiewicz, interview about US-Polish relations at TVN 24 BiS **(Apr 15 2025)**
- Meeting with Confirme Sp. z o.o. in Warsaw, Poland **(Apr 15 2025)**
- Texas A&M. Polish Association End of the Year Event in College Station, Texas **(Apr 2025)**
- PolChamTX Delegation for the May 3rd Parade in Chicago. PolChamTX President, Dr. Jim Mazurkiewicz, as the Grand Marshal of the Parade **(May 2 - 4 2025)**
- Meeting with the Consul General of the Republic of Poland in Houston, Jarosław Łasiński **(May 22 2025)**
- Meeting with Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Poland **(May 26 2025)**
- Meeting with the Polish Federation of Cattle Breeders and Dairy Farmers **(May 29 2025)**
- Meeting with Otinus Polska Sp. z o.o. in Bydgoszcz **(May 30 2025)**
- Meeting with Mzuri World Sp. z o. o. in Sadki, Poland **(May 31 2025)**
- TALL Emerging Leaders Delegation to Poland **(Jun 2025)**
- Meeting with Krajowy Ośrodek Wsparcia Rolnictwa in Warsaw, Poland - (Jun 3 2025) Meeting with the Undersecretary of State Adam Nowak at the Ministry of Agriculture in Warsaw, Poland - **(Jun 3 2025)**
- Meeting with Kuyavian-Pomeranian Voivodeship Marshal Piotr Całbecki in Toruń, Poland **(Jun 4 2025)**
- Meeting with Colian Holding Sp. z o. o. in Warsaw, Poland **(Jun 5-6 2025)**
- PolChamTX Trade Mission to Poland **(Jun 2025)**
- Meetings with Podkarpackie Region, Podkarpackie Center for Innovation and Rzeszów City officials in Rzeszów, Poland **(Jun 25 2025)**
- Meeting with Peak Legal in Warsaw, Poland **(Jun 26 2025)**
- Meeting with Peak Legal in Warsaw, Poland **(Jun 26 2025)**
- Meeting with the American Chamber of Commerce in Poland in Warsaw, Poland **(Jun 26 2025)**
- Meeting with ORLEN in Warsaw, Poland **(Jun 27 2025)**


CERAWeek
by S&P Global


Polish Networking Night


UNIMOT


The Podkarpackie
Centre for Innovation


ORLEN



# Warsaw

# 04 Our Partners

## UNIMOT - A new member of PolChamTX

The leader among independent fuel importers in Poland, driving a secure and diversified energy supply

*In this series of articles, we would like to present to you our business and institutional partners. In this edition, we are proud to feature UNIMOT S.A., the largest private energy company in Poland and a new corporate member of the Polish–American Chamber of Commerce in Texas. UNIMOT is a dynamic, multi-energy group operating across Europe in the wholesale distribution of diesel, LPG, natural gas, electricity, biofuels, and asphalt. With more than 30 years of experience and a strong focus on innovation and logistics, the company plays a key role in Poland's energy transition and continues to expand its international footprint. Earlier this year, UNIMOT joined PolChamTX as part of its broader strategic interest in the North American energy markets. We are excited to welcome UNIMOT to our network and showcase the story of a company that combines entrepreneurial spirit, strategic vision, and global ambition.*


UNIMOT's Strategic Advisory Board

**UNIMOT – a new member of PolCham TX**

**The leader among independent fuel importers in Poland, driving a secure and diversified energy supply.**

**UNIMOT, publicly listed on the Warsaw Stock Exchange (GPW), is a dynamic multi-energy group and one of Poland's 50 largest companies by revenue. With over 30 years of market experience, the company combines tradition with forward-looking innovation to deliver stable and diversified products across Poland and beyond. The UNIMOT Group comprises 20 companies and employs over 1,000 professionals across six key branches in Poland and abroad.**

The UNIMOT Group manages a broad multi-energy portfolio, focusing on maximizing the potential of its core business segments while diversifying its operations. Committed to actively supporting the energy transition, the company aims to achieve climate neutrality by 2050. Through a comprehensive business approach and investments in modern technologies, UNIMOT has become a key player shaping the Polish energy market.



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**Company's share capital:** 8 197 818 PLN
District Court in Opole, VIII Commercial Division
**KRS:**0000382244 **NIP:**7561967341 **IDS:** 160384226 **BDO:** 000120163
LISTED ON GPW WARSAW STOCK EXCHANGE

# The leader among independent fuel importers in Poland

In Poland, domestic refinery production covers about 70% of fuel demand, with the remaining volume needing to be imported. For over 10 years, UNIMOT has successfully supplied the domestic market with high-quality diesel oil and gasoline, filling the import gap in this sector. The company serves over 1,000 active customers, including transport and construction companies, fuel wholesalers, petrol stations, and the agricultural sector. Annually, the UNIMOT Group sells approximately 580 million gallons of fuel on the domestic market.

> UNIMOT is the largest private energy company in Poland. With more than 30 years of experience, the company plays a key role in Poland's energy transition and continues to expand its international footprint.

> UNIMOT supplies over 580 million gallons of liquid fuels annually and operates one of the country's largest storage networks Poland. The company also manages over 140 AVIA stations, manufactures photovoltaic panels, and operates a modern logistics network including its own locomotives and tank cars. In the LPG segment, UNIMOT delivers over 160 million gallons annually, supported by dedicated rail tankers and a network of strategically located terminals.

Recognizing the evolving needs of its customers and environmental goals, UNIMOT was the first company in Poland to introduce HVO100 – an advanced, cleaner fuel for diesel engines. The HVO offered by UNIMOT can reduce emissions by 80-90% over its entire life cycle, compared to regular diesel (B0), allowing customers to lower emissions without replacing their fleets. This product is currently available at five AVIA stations operated by UNIMOT.

UNIMOT also specializes in sales of aviation fuel, with its flagship product being JET A-1. Through its aviation division, the company supplies JET A-1 to major Polish airports. The Group also manages the physical delivery of distillate marine fuel, expanding its presence in specialized fuel markets.

## Third-largest player in Poland's fuel storage market.

UNIMOT's strong market position is supported by its advanced logistics infrastructure. The company operates nine fuel terminals equipped with storage tanks for various types of liquid fuels. Strategically located in high-consumption regions, these terminals facilitate fuel transportation and ensure efficient customer access. The total storage capacity of all the terminals currently stands at approximately 2.4 million barrels, with expansion projects underway to increase storage volume further.

## Strengthening Poland's LPG market

The UNIMOT Group imports LPG, propane, and butane, which are transported to Poland by rail and road. These products are then delivered to wholesalers, including petrol stations and local fuel distributors. In addition, the company actively serves the retail LPG market, supplying gas for household and industrial heating installations. The Group ensures professional logistics with a total LPG storage capacity of approximately 100,000 short tons (about 48.8 million gallons) across its terminals in Zawadzkie, Piotrków Trybunalski, and the leased terminal in Wilhelmshaven, Germany.



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UNIMOT also operates its own fleet of railway tankers dedicated to LPG transport, ensuring efficient and secure deliveries. Annually, the UNIMOT Group introduces around 330,000 short tons (approximately 160.6 million gallons) for sale.

**Domestically managing one of Europe's largest fuel station chains**

UNIMOT manages the AVIA brand in Poland and Ukraine. AVIA is a Swiss fuel station chain with over 90 years of history, operating at more than 3,200 locations across 15 European countries, making it the seventh-largest fuel station network in Europe. Since 2017, UNIMOT has been actively expanding the brand in Poland and currently managing over 140 stations, with numbers steadily increasing. The company provides an attractive franchise opportunity featuring a distinctive Eat&Go concept, the popular AVIA GO mobile app – used by over 150,000 customers – and a range of proprietary oils and automotive fluids.

**Its own fleet of locomotives and railroad tank cars**

Through its subsidiary Olavion, the company provides rail transportation services in Poland, along with freight forwarding services in the country and abroad. It offers comprehensive rail transport services based on long-term contracts and short-term spot freight agreements. The company is continuously modernizing and expanding its fleet, ensuring reliability and efficiency in rail logistics. It has over 20 locomotives, employs close to 70 drivers, and uses rail tank cars with a total capacity of approximately 4.8 million gallons

**Active on a renewable energy market**

Under the AVIA Solar brand, the company manufactures photovoltaic modules and supplies electrical protection devices. The Group operates its own production line of Polish photovoltaic panels, providing reliable, locally manufactured solutions for the growing renewable energy market. The brand also offers inverters, energy storage systems, and a range of accessories for the renewable energy sector. AVIA Solar products are supplied throughout Europe, in cooperation with European business partners and a careful verification of raw material sources ensuring the highest quality standards. The company also runs its own online store, serving as a dedicated B2B platform for photovoltaic wholesalers and installers, offering easy access to high-quality products, technical support, and fast order processing.




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## A leading supplier of bitumen products

The company is one of the most modern bitumen manufacturers in Central and Eastern Europe, holding second position in Poland's bitumen production market, and operating two production plants. It offers high-quality road bitumen products renowned for their durability and resilience – ideal for constructing and maintaining roads, airports, and other paved surfaces. UNIMOT has introduced innovative bitumen products to the Polish market, including rubber-modified bitumen (MODBIT CR) and highly modified bitumen (MODBIT HiMA), delivering exceptional durability and superior quality.

## Electricity trading and thermal energy management

Over the course of a year, the UNIMOT Group trades between 2 and 3 TWh (2 million to 3 million MWh) of electricity on the wholesale market. The company is engaged in wholesale electricity trading, energy balancing services – primarily the RES producers, and managing electricity purchases for large industrial customers.

Through its subsidiary RCEkoenergia, the UNIMOT Group is involved in the production, transmission, and distribution of thermal energy in the form of hot water and steam. In addition to its energy-related services, the company manages the collection and treatment of industrial and municipal wastewater, oversees the distribution of industrial, deep-well, and potable water, and engages in the production and distribution of softened water and technical gases.

## Expanding natural gas supply and distribution

The UNIMOT Group trades natural gas on commodity exchanges and the wholesale market, supplying it directly to both business and retail customers. The Group is steadily growing its presence in the natural gas wholesale markets domestically and internationally. Currently, the annual turnover of natural gas amounts to 2.5 TWh (2.5 million MWh). Moreover, the company's in-house infrastructure includes over 60 miles of pipeline and 3 regasification stations.

## Strategic vision for sustainable growth and energy leadership

The company's strategy centers on innovation, diversification, and resilience, leveraging its broad multi-energy portfolio to capitalize on emerging opportunities while efficiently managing risks. This strategic approach is further strengthened by the Strategic Advisory Board – a panel of international experts who provide invaluable insights and actively guide business decisions amid the complexities of geopolitics, evolving global energy dynamics, and shifting economic trends. The Board comprises: Ambassador (ret.) Mark Brzezinski, PhD, Prof. Jim Mazurkiewicz, Prof. Boguslaw Pacek, Prof. Karl Rose and Isaac Querub, and is chaired by Andreas Golombek, chairman of UNIMOT's supervisory board. The initiator is Adam Sikorski, PhD, president of the UNIMOT's management board.

With this strong foundation, the Group is well-positioned to continue playing a pivotal role in the transformation of Poland's energy landscape for years to come.




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El Paso

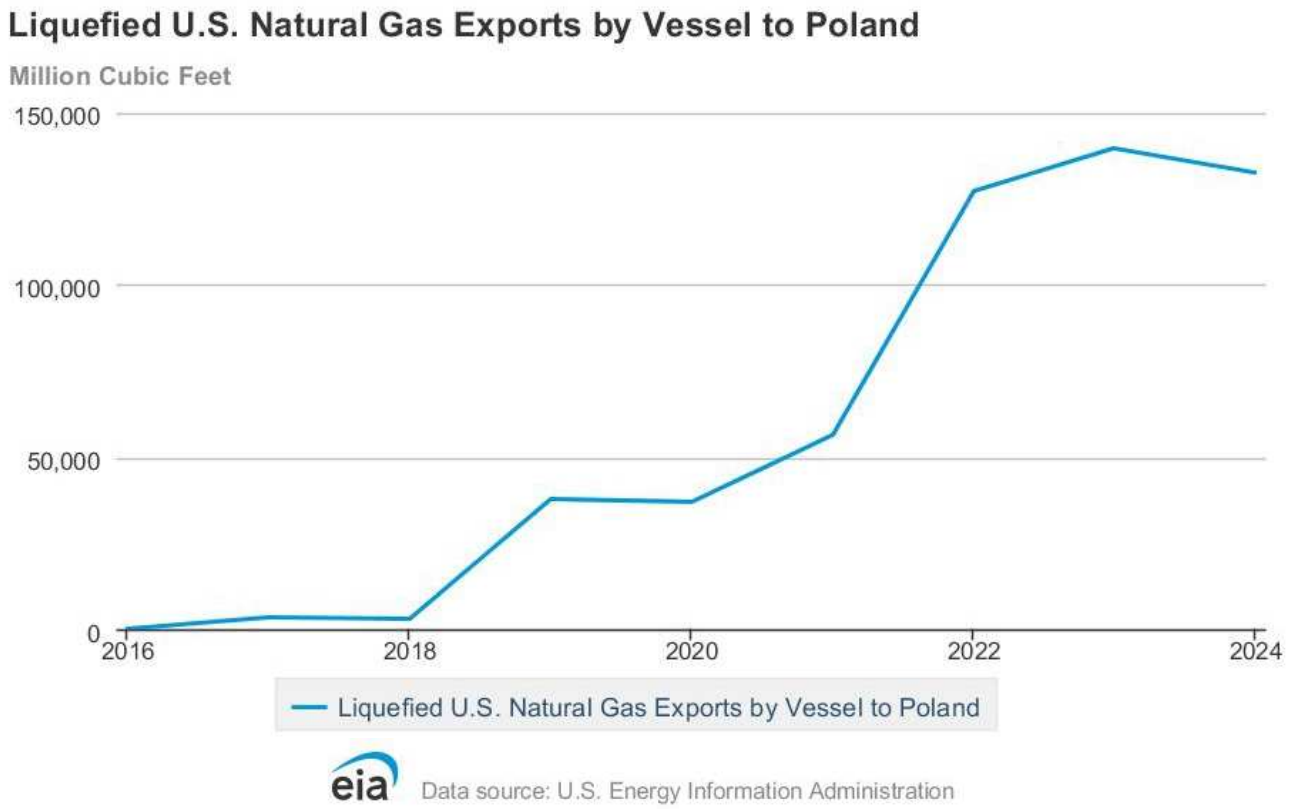
# 05 By Invitation – Polish Institute of International Affairs

*By invitation of the Polish-American Chamber of Commerce in Texas, Andrzej Dąbrowski and Mateusz M. Piotrowski, experts from the DC office of the Polish Institute of International Affairs, a leading European think tank specialized in public policy and diplomacy, have prepared this analysis to highlight the strategic drivers behind U.S.–Polish energy cooperation. As a global energy powerhouse, Texas forms the backbone of this relationship, supplying critical resources that support Poland's energy diversification efforts. With Poland emerging as a regional energy hub and a key actor on NATO's eastern flank, this partnership strengthens Europe's energy security while expanding American commercial influence and strategic reach across Central and Eastern Europe.*

## The Geopolitical Importance of Polish-American Energy Cooperation

Since the first Russian invasion of Ukraine and the illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014, Poland has intensified its policy of diversifying its suppliers of energy resources, aiming primarily to reduce dependence on Russia, a legacy of Soviet-era domination in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). This has involved increasing imports of U.S. liquefied natural gas (LNG) and crude oil, as well as exploring nuclear cooperation with the U.S., including the development of small modular reactor (SMR) technology. There has also been greater involvement of American capital and products in the renewables sector.

Poland has also invested heavily in building additional infrastructure to import and export resources among neighbor-ing European Union states, as well as like-minded countries outside the EU, such as Norway. In 2017, the Polish government succeeded in securing U.S. political and financial support for the Three Seas Initiative — focused on increasing regional interconnectivity in CEE, particularly in the energy sector.



These activities coincided with the European Green Deal, approved by the European Commission in 2020 to make the EU "climate-neutral" by 2050. This included the implementation of the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS1) — a market-based mechanism designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from specific sectors by setting emission caps, allocating allowances to polluters, and allowing those allowances to be traded among operators.

To achieve the goals of the EU's ambitious climate policies, Poland must undergo an energy transformation — first and foremost by reducing its dependence on coal. One of the key pillars of this process will be cooperation with the United States.

## The Role of Hydrocarbons in the Energy Cooperation between Poland and the United States

Due to the above-mentioned geopolitical factors, Poland sought opportunities to diversify its energy portfolio. The United States' emergence as a major oil and gas exporter made energy cooperation the second strongest pillar of Polish-American relations — just after military partnership. Crude oil has played a significant role in this cooperation, particularly after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, when Poland had to immediately abandon imports of Russian oil. In 2024, crude oil imports from the United States totaled 2.2 million tons, making it Poland's third-largest supplier. U.S. oil has thus become an important component of Poland's energy diversification strategy, complementing supplies from Saudi Arabia and Norway.

Yet it is American LNG that has emerged as the cornerstone of Polish–U.S. energy cooperation. It became a key priority in discussions with U.S. authorities and energy sector enterprises following the launch of the Świnoujście LNG regasification terminal in 2015, which enabled Poland to receive natural gas shipments by sea. The first shipment of American LNG reached Poland in 2017, based on a spot contract, from the Sabine Pass terminal in Louisiana, the largest export facility in the U.S. Soon after, Polish authorities began seeking suppliers with whom long-term contracts could be signed. The aim was not only to diversify Poland's natural gas supply, but also to build potential for regional redistribution of American LNG. The first long-term agreement was signed in 2017, guaranteeing gas supplies from Sabine Pass for five years starting in 2018. Further contracts followed with Venture Global, Sempra Infrastructure, and Cheniere Energy, covering the periods 2024–2043 and 2027–2046. This expansion was made possible by the opening of new U.S. export terminals, including Corpus Christi and Freeport in Texas.

The need to diversify gas supply sources led to the expansion of the Świnoujście LNG terminal between 2019 and 2024. Today, the terminal includes two storage tanks with a capacity of 160,000 $m^3$ each, and a third tank with a capacity of 180,000 $m^3$, enabling the regasification of up to 8.3 billion cubic meters (BCM) of natural gas per year (approximately 0.8 billion cubic feet per day, Bcf/d). In parallel, long-term contracts allow Poland to import approximately 7 million tonnes of American LNG annually, which after regasification equals around 9.45 BCM of natural gas — roughly half of Poland's total annual natural gas demand. These volumes are expected to grow in the coming years as a result of already-signed agreements and continued development of Polish and regional infrastructure.

Ambitions for regional LNG redistribution are supported by the fact that there are currently only two regasification terminals in the Baltic Sea — the Świnoujście terminal in Poland and the Klaipėda terminal in Lithuania. Poland's potential in this area will be further strengthened by the planned investment in a floating LNG terminal in Gdańsk, scheduled for completion by 2028. The prospects for cooperation in the redistribution of American hydrocarbons may significantly impact both the Three Seas Initiative countries and Ukraine.

Polish activities related to the development of nuclear power generation were reinvigorated by the adoption of the Polish Nuclear Power Program in January 2020. Since then, government institutions and specialized state-owned entities have begun the process of site selection, securing funding, and making technological preparations to procure the necessary systems. The program stipulates that Poland intends to select external partners responsible for providing the required technology and know-how to develop 6–9 GW of capacity using large-scale, pressurized water Generation III and III+ nuclear reactors. The document also states that Poland is committed to building at least two power plants in separate geographical locations.

In 2022, Westinghouse Electric Company was selected to construct Poland's first commercial nuclear power plant in Pomerania. The facility, based on the AP1000 reactor design, is planned to consist of three reactors and is expected to begin operation in the early 2030s. The estimated cost of the project is around $20 billion, with financing anticipated to include a mix of Polish government funds, international loans, and private investment. The U.S. government has shown strong support, offering technical and financial assistance through institutions such as the U.S. Export-Import Bank and the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation.

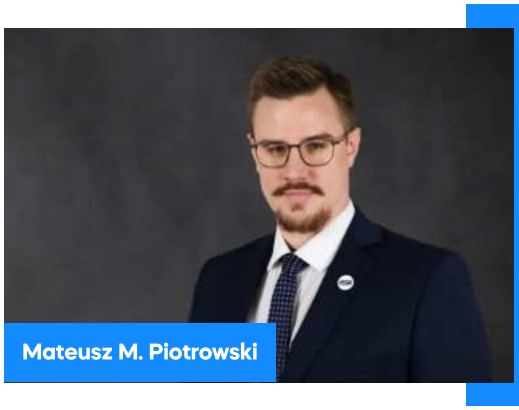
In April 2025, the state-owned company Polskie Elektrownie Jądrowe (Polish Nuclear Power Plants, PEJ) — established to finance and operate the first nuclear power plant — signed an agreement with the Westinghouse–Bechtel consortium. The EDA (Engineering Development Agreement) covers the continuation of specific design work, including obtaining the necessary administrative decisions, licenses, and permits, as well as a further stage of in-depth geological research at the investment site. Prior to that, PEJ and Westinghouse–Bechtel operated under an ESC (Engineering Service Contract), which expired at the beginning of April 2025.

At the same time, Poland is working on the deployment of SMRs, which are seen as a faster and more adaptable approach to decarbonizing the energy and industrial sectors. The Polish energy company Orlen Synthos Green Energy has teamed up with the American company GE Hitachi to implement BWRX-300 SMRs. The goal is to have the first SMR operational by the end of this decade, with additional units planned in the following years. These reactors are expected to be particularly beneficial for supplying power to industrial facilities and isolated regions. Each SMR is projected to cost between $1 billion and $2 billion, depending on factors such as location, infrastructure, and supply chain dynamics.

The outcome of Polish and U.S. collaboration is poised to significantly transform Poland's energy sector. If it proves successful, the large-scale deployment of nuclear power plants and small modular reactors will decrease Poland's reliance on coal — which currently accounts for about 70% of its electricity generation — reduce carbon emissions, and improve its energy security. Additionally, the partnership is expected to stimulate the development of a domestic nuclear supply chain and generate thousands of skilled jobs. For the U.S., this reinforces a strategic alliance in Central Europe — where other countries are also showing interest in nuclear energy — and creates prospects for the export of American nuclear technology, which is not yet common in the region.

**Andrzej Dąbrowski**

Analyst in the Americas Programme and Advisor to the PISM Director. He heads the PISM Strategic Ark — the Institute's annual flagship event. His research areas include transatlantic cooperation, American foreign policy, security challenges facing the transatlantic community, the political-technological nexus, and Japan's foreign and domestic politics. Prior to joining PISM, he worked as a journalist for the TVN24 BIS television station. He also took part in an election observation mission to Russia during the 2012 elections. He is an alumnus of the James S. Denton Transatlantic Fellowship. He graduated from the University of Warsaw and holds an M.A. in Political Science and History. Fluent in English.



**Mateusz M. Piotrowski**

Head of the Americas Programme at PISM. Before that, he was Chief Analyst for the United States and Transatlantic Relations at the International Security Programme. His research focuses on domestic issues and the foreign policy of the United States, in particular bilateral relations with allies, partners, and rivals in Europe and Asia, as well as transatlantic cooperation within NATO and with the European Union. He holds a PhD in Political Science from the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University (UKSW) in Warsaw. Before joining PISM in 2018, he completed internships at the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Washington, D.C., the Polish National Security Bureau, and the European Parliament. In 2023, Piotrowski participated in the 3rd edition of the Transatlantic Security Initiative organized by the International Republican Institute (IRI).

## Summary

Poland, with its decades-long track record of supporting American foreign policy interests, engaging in initiatives proposed and led by the U.S., and standing out as a key economic and military player on NATO's Eastern Flank, has become a key European ally to the United States in terms of political, defense, and economic cooperation. In recent years, the energy component has become an increasingly important source of mutual interest between the two countries. With Poland's growing role as an energy hub and leader in this field for other Central European states — including within the framework of the Three Seas Initiative — a strong partnership with the United States will be an even more significant factor in building Poland's regional position. For the United States, this partnership not only strengthens a trusted alliance in a geopolitically critical region, but also supports American commercial interests — from LNG exports and nuclear technology to broader infrastructure and energy investment opportunities. The development of further cooperation with Poland — especially in the energy sector — should remain a focal point in securing long-term U.S. influence and competitiveness in Europe, particularly in the context of future efforts to support the reconstruction of Ukraine. With a strong and value-based relationship between Poland and the United States, the Polish energy sector can soon approach the desired level of technological prowess and resilience — beneficial not only to Poland and its neighboring allies, but also to the United States, whose reliability as an energy and technology provider will once again prove vital to regional stability and its economic growth.

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Gdańsk


# 06 Rzeczpospolita Feature Interview: Dr. Władysław T. Bartoszewski

*"Rzeczpospolita" is the Polish word for "republic," a direct translation from the Latin phrase "res publica." In this section, we feature interviews with representatives of the Republic of Poland active in Texas. In this edition, we are honored to speak with Dr. Władysław T. Bartoszewski, Secretary of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland. A Cambridge-trained anthropologist, academic, and experienced executive in international finance and diplomacy, Dr. Bartoszewski has served as a Member of Parliament since 2019 and was appointed Secretary of State in 2023. His portfolio spans cooperation with the Polish Parliament, coordination of Asian affairs, and relations with the Jewish diaspora. In January 2025, Dr. Bartoszewski visited Texas A&M University to deliver a keynote lecture on transatlantic relations, Polish–American strategic cooperation, and the global implications of the war in Ukraine. We sat down with Dr. Bartoszewski to reflect on that visit and explore how Poland and the United States can deepen their partnership in these turbulent times.*

**Jakub Bartoszewski (JB): Your speech at Texas A&M earlier this year made a strong case for Western unity amid shifting geopolitical fault lines. With global challenges intensifying each day, why is close transatlantic cooperation more important than ever?**

**Dr. Władysław T. Bartoszewski (WTB):** It's because of global insecurity and the very serious challenges that are intensifying in Europe, in Ukraine, in the Middle East, in the South China Sea, and in a number of other places. We've just witnessed a short war between Israel and Iran, recent military exchanges between Pakistan and India, and even a conflict between Cambodia and Thailand. These crises emerge suddenly, across different regions, and they must be addressed by actors who share common values and a similar approach to international politics.

That's why coordination among transatlantic partners is so important, but it also goes beyond the Atlantic. We need a broader coalition of like-minded democracies, including partners in the Indo-Pacific, to respond to these challenges together. I oversee Poland's relations with the Asia-Pacific, and I can assure you that our partners in the region closely follow what's happening with Russia, Belarus, and the war in Ukraine. And I, in turn, follow developments in the South China Sea and around Taiwan.

These issues are deeply interconnected — and so is the dialogue between our like-minded allies across the Atlantic and the Indo-Pacific.

**JB: As a country increasingly seen as a bridge between the United States and the European Union, how can Poland help align strategic priorities across the Atlantic to reinforce the strength and cohesion of the Western world?**

**WTB:** Yes, we're definitely turning that idea into real policy coordination. Poland recently completed its six-month rotating presidency of the Council of the European Union, and our theme was "Security, Europe!" One of the first components we emphasized was military security. We said: we have to spend more on defense. All but a few EU countries are also members of NATO — so the overlap is significant. We called for greater investment in defense industries, building resilience, and strengthening Europe's energy security. This agenda aligned fully with long-standing U.S. priorities. President Trump, in particular, called for it very clearly — and now we've collectively embraced it.

Poland has long exceeded NATO's 2% defense spending benchmark. This year we're spending just under 5%, and we'll go above that next year. And we persuaded many other EU members that this level of spending is essential for our collective security.

That's what President Trump wanted, and it's also what we heard reaffirmed at the recent NATO summit in The Hague in June. The first foreign trip of U.S. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth under the current administration was to Warsaw. That's significant.

On top of that, we are purchasing American arms and munitions worth about $60 billion. These are manufactured across 15 U.S. states, which gets the attention of senators and congressmen whose constituents benefit directly from this cooperation. This cooperation creates jobs, boosts local economies, and builds goodwill — and it's one reason why the U.S. increasingly sees Poland as a model ally, a view echoed by leaders like President Trump and Vice-President Vance. We believe in strong transatlantic ties and we're demonstrating that it can be done with a bit of strategic vision and commitment.

**JB: Poland's longstanding push for increased NATO spending is finally becoming a norm?**

**WTB:** Exactly. Poland's position is no longer an outlier - it's becoming the standard. And as defense spending increases across the alliance, it opens the door to deeper industrial cooperation as well. While we're buying a lot of American-made arms, we've also agreed that American defense companies will now establish joint ventures in Poland to produce the equipment locally with us. These will still be American systems, but the manufacturing will be done in partnership. That opens the door for us to purchase more and potentially to re-export to other markets. It's good business for both sides and it strengthens our bilateral relationship: creates value for U.S. taxpayers, since those companies pay taxes in the States, and it reinforces Poland's defense capabilities. Everyone wins.

**JB: So, Poland might become a manufacturing base for American defense equipment. On top of that, Poland is also often described as an emerging energy hub in Europe, particularly in the context of purchasing and distributing American liquefied natural gas?**

**WTB:** Yes, and I'd add that the energy dimension is just as critical as defense cooperation and it's also linked to security. We're already one of the largest buyers of American LNG in the European Union. And we've proposed to the American side that we import even more of it. The reason we can do this is because we have the necessary infrastructure. LNG arrives by sea, but from there, we can transport it via natural gas pipelines across Central and Eastern Europe. So we can increase the overall sales of American natural gas, serving as both a customer and a regional distributor.

There's another layer to this. NATO currently uses a North and Central European pipeline system, but it hasn't been extended eastward. We're proposing a new Eastern European pipeline system that would carry American oil and gas to NATO's eastern flank. We're ready to build the necessary storage and pipeline infrastructure for this, namely dual-use systems that can serve both civilian needs and military logistics. This would be American fuel moving through infrastructure built jointly by the U.S. and Poland.

**JB: Apart from LNG, nuclear energy is clearly another key pillar of Polish–American energy cooperation - one that also brings advanced technological capabilities into the picture. What can you share about the Westinghouse project and what might follow?**

**WTB:** Yes. We're currently working with Westinghouse and Bechtel to build Poland's first nuclear power plant. The goal is to complete the first unit by 2035, but we're also discussing the construction of a second one. The United States is very supportive, and our vision is to be deeply integrated with both the American energy system and the American defense industry.
There's a lot of business in this relationship, and it's mutually beneficial. President Trump has supported this approach enthusiastically. And it's not just about conventional energy or arms — we're also deeply interested in advanced technologies. Unfortunately, under President Biden, export restrictions limited Poland's access to the most advanced chips. Thankfully, that policy was reversed under President Trump's administration.

We want to collaborate with the U.S. on artificial intelligence and other digital technologies. And we bring a lot to the table. For example, in the Microsoft global programmers' challenge, Poland consistently finishes in the top three worldwide. These are brilliant programmers — but too often, they're recruited straight to Seattle.

**JB: ...instead of staying in Warsaw!**

**WTB:** Or anywhere else in Poland. We're clearly good in this space, and we want to continue working closely with American partners in ICT, AI, and especially cybersecurity.

Cyber defense is another area where Poland excels and where we already cooperate closely with the U.S. military. Our NATO cyber team consistently ranks among the best in global competitions. This year we finished second. Last year we were first. The year before that, second again and third the year before that. We're always on the podium, and the American side recognizes that. We want to keep pushing forward in this area. The potential for U.S.–Poland technological cooperation is enormous.

**JB: You mentioned in your speech that infrastructure is now as critical for Europe's defense as building up armies and purchasing arms. Based on what you're describing, that seems especially true for Poland's position. Arms procurement is one pillar, but energy cooperation - and the infrastructure to support it - is just as central. Given the scale of these efforts, where do you see room for American companies and investors to get involved, particularly in Poland and the Three Seas region?**

**WTB:** Following the recent NATO summit in The Hague, it was agreed that countries can allocate part of their 5% GDP defense spending to infrastructure. Up to 1.5% can be used on dual-use projects - those that serve both military and civilian purposes. That opens up significant opportunities. We're talking about roads, railways, fuel and energy storage facilities, and expanded pipeline systems. Soldiers may move quickly, but heavy military equipment does not. It's usually transported by ships, which are slow. So having storage and staging infrastructure already in place in Poland is essential. Pipelines are especially strategic. They're underground, hard to damage, and easier to protect. We want to expand these systems from west to east, because NATO didn't invest in this after the Cold War, thinking it wouldn't be needed. Now we know otherwise. This is where American construction firms can get involved. There's a major role for U.S. companies to play in Poland and in the wider Central and Eastern Europe region.

The Three Seas Initiative is a good example. Historically, we've focused on east–west infrastructure. But the Three Seas idea is about building strong north–south connections in Central and Eastern Europe. Two key projects underway are Rail Baltica and Via Baltica, linking Finland through Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, and down to Croatia by road and rail. Beyond transport, we're working on energy integration. We've already connected the Baltic States' electricity grids - Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia - to Poland's grid, cutting their dependency on Russia. We're also building interconnectors with Slovakia and other countries to transmit electricity north to south. This is a massive undertaking. It requires major investment, and it needs experienced companies to build it. The U.S. is part of this vision. President Trump strongly supported the Three Seas Initiative, and we want to encourage our neighbors to deepen their involvement.

And let me say this clearly: the war in Ukraine is still ongoing, three and a half years now, and one of the reasons Ukraine has survived is infrastructure. Specifically, southeastern Poland had the roads, rail lines, and an airfield near the town of Rzeszów that became a critical logistics hub. That one hub now handles 95% of all supplies going to Ukraine. Without it, the war could have turned out very differently. Infrastructure pays dividends. And yes, we're now also working on building a high-speed rail system. We want to be able to move at 200 miles per hour across the country.

The advantage we have in Poland is that we're not building on outdated foundations. In 1990, Poland was essentially bankrupt. We had to leap forward, not walk. So we've been adopting cutting-edge technologies from the start. As a former banker, I can say this without hesitation: our banking system today is more modern than the American one. Our access to the digital economy is more advanced than in Germany as well.

So we want more of this. We want Westinghouse to build not just one, but potentially two large nuclear power stations. We're also seriously exploring the development of small modular reactors (SMRs), in close cooperation with American companies. The point is, we're planning massive investments in infrastructure that will support civilian life, but can also serve strategic, military purposes if needed. The opportunities are real and American companies are very welcome to participate!

**JB: Through its infrastructure investments and regional partnerships, Poland has clearly taken the lead in advancing the goals of the Three Seas Initiative. While economic integration is a key part of that effort, is the long-term vision also about enhancing strategic resilience in NATO's eastern flank?**

**WTB:** It absolutely is. The Three Seas Initiative isn't just about economic connectivity - it's also a response to the shifting security landscape in our region. It reinforces NATO's eastern flank and brings us into even closer cooperation with partners like Sweden, Finland, the Baltic states, as well as the United Kingdom, Norway and Denmark. We're also deepening ties with countries like the Czech Republic, Romania, and Croatia. We bring a unique perspective to international politics, because we've lived through Russian imperialism. We understand the threat — and we intend to be robust in the face of it.

We also cooperate extensively with Sweden on energy. We've connected our electricity grids via underwater cables. When we face supply challenges, they send electricity to us. When their hydropower production drops during droughts, we send electricity to them. It's a close and effective partnership.

Our view of Russia is understandably different from that of some Western European countries. That difference shapes our approach to infrastructure — and the Three Seas Initiative is a critical part of that strategy.

**JB: Great. Last question - you've worked across academia, international business, and now diplomacy. That's a uniquely diverse background. What have you learned from these experiences, and how does it shape your current role?**

**WTB:** It's been incredibly useful to see the world from so many angles. I worked in finance for many years, so I understand how global banking and capital flows work. Then, as a management consultant, I advised top American and European companies on strategic expansions into markets in Eastern Europe. That required learning how different industries succeed, or fail, when they try to grow internationally.

I also spent years in the energy sector, which is now at the heart of so many security discussions. That practical background gives me credibility and the know-how when I meet with energy executives or defense contractors. We speak the same language. If I sit across from the CEO of a bank, I can talk to them fluently because I've been in that world, including time at JPMorgan.

Too often, people go straight into politics without ever having touched the real economy. That creates blind spots. Diplomacy isn't just about protocol - it's about understanding what's actually at stake, and being able to talk to foreign partners about it with clarity and depth.

In my view, the more sectors you've worked in, the better your instincts as a policymaker. People quickly notice whether you really know what you're talking about - or whether you're just reciting what someone else told you to say.

**JB: I appreciate you sharing that! Thank you so much for this conversation.**



# Big Bend


# 07 Special Interview - Joel Eacker

*We are honored to feature a Special Interview with Joel Eacker, Vice President of New Plant Projects at Westinghouse Electric Company. Mr. Eacker brings extensive global experience in the energy and industrial sectors, currently leading the development of three AP1000 nuclear reactors at the Lubiatowo-Kopalino site in Northern Poland, as well as supporting projects in Ukraine and across Europe. His pivotal role in advancing Poland's nuclear energy program underscores the deep connections and expertise within the international energy landscape. Join us as we delve into Mr. Eacker's insights on these critical projects and the future of nuclear power in the region.*

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**Jakub Bartoszewski (JB): Mr. Eacker, thank you very much for making the time to speak with us. Could you briefly introduce Westinghouse Electric Company to our readers?**

**Joel Eacker (JE):** Sure. Westinghouse was founded in the 1880s by George Westinghouse. For many years, it was a large conglomerate that even owned television and radio stations, and manufactured appliances. Now, we focus solely on energy, particularly nuclear energy, providing support to clients worldwide. Two-thirds of our company supports the existing global nuclear reactor fleet, while the remaining third focuses on building new nuclear reactors for clients internationally.
We fabricate nuclear fuel for reactors, not just our own designs, but other technologies as well. About half of the world's reactors are based on Westinghouse technology. We even helped the French build their nuclear program in the 1970s and 80s. We are an American-based global company - we have a footprint everywhere, from the Far East to Europe, the Middle East, and the Americas.

**JB: Great. Could you tell us more about Westinghouse's nuclear reactor types?**

**JE:** We currently have three reactor types. Our current generation is the AP1000®, a 1200-megawatt large modular reactor. We also have the AP300™, which is a 300-megawatt small modular reactor. And we're developing the eVinci® microreactor, which provides 5 megawatts of electrical power and 15 megawatts of thermal power. The eVinci actually fits in three standard shipping containers, so you can transport it to remote locations like a mine or a military base to provide power and industrial heat for processes like desalination or other production needs. Additionally, we have a long-duration energy storage product.

This technology is designed to store energy from intermittent renewable sources, such as solar panels or wind turbines, when they are running at high capacity. This stored energy can then be pulled back out when the sun isn't shining or the wind isn't blowing.

**JB: Focusing on Poland, could you tell us more about the projects Westinghouse is currently developing in Poland and Central and Eastern Europe in general? Which specific power plants are we talking about, and what are their capacities and timelines?**

**JE:** Our client in Poland is Polskie Elektrownie Jądrowe (PEJ), a Polish state-owned enterprise tasked with developing Poland's nuclear power plants within the Polish Nuclear Power Program. We've teamed with Bechtel as the constructor. The three of us will be building Poland's first nuclear plant in the Lubiatowo-Kopalino site and it will be made of three AP1000 units. According to the current schedule, the first nuclear concrete within the framework of construction of the first power plant in Pomerania is expected to be poured in 2028, which will mark the beginning of the actual construction work. The first unit is expected to start commercial operation in 2036, with one-year spacings between the units. Each unit will be roughly 1200 megawatts of power, so the power station in total will deliver about 3600 megawatts. We hope to have the first unit operational in 2036 and the last unit by 2038.

**JB: Why does it take so long to develop these types of power plants?**

**JE:** The first part is licensing. It's a complicated process whose objective is to ensure that the reactor is safe and suitable for the site. We hope to have the license in place by 2028. Then, it's about a seven-year construction period from when we receive the license to when we're ready to load the nuclear fuel. After that, it's roughly six months from loading the nuclear fuel to startup, completion, commissioning, and full power operation.

**JB: Is it possible to speed up these processes?**

**JE:** For licensing — no, not really. The world as a whole is working to harmonize licensing regulations. Back in the 1980s, when many American reactors were built, each one was designed and licensed individually. Today, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) licenses an entire technology, which makes it easier to deploy at a given site — you just need to demonstrate that the site meets the boundary conditions approved by the NRC. That change was specifically aimed at streamlining the process. Other countries are pursuing similar approaches, looking for ways to accept information from other trusted regulators they consider credible and safe. The Polish government, for example, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the NRC. Poland's regulator, Państwowa Agencja Atomistyki (PAA), has even visited one of our client's plants in the U.S. — a plant that began operating within the past 18 months. They sent inspectors to work alongside the NRC to understand the licensing process and the oversight during construction, installation, and testing.
On the construction side, we're trying to learn as much as possible from other projects. China, for instance, has four operating AP1000 reactors and 12 more under construction. In the U.S., two are operating at Southern Nuclear's Vogtle site. The Polish units will essentially be the 19th, 20th, and 21st of their kind. Our hope is that with all these lessons learned, we'll reach what the industry calls "nth-of-a-kind" — meaning the technology has been built enough times that the process becomes as efficient as possible.
To give you a sense of the potential: the Chinese are now achieving construction periods of around 54 months, compared to our current estimate of 71 months. So, while we're conservatively planning for six years, we're optimistic that we can beat that timeline. Better to under-promise and over-deliver than to commit to something we can't achieve.

**JB: What would you say are the main challenges in the Lubiatowo-Kopalino project?**

**JE:** First, you have a country, Poland, that has never operated a nuclear power plant before. So they are in the process of establishing a regulator capable of overseeing such a project. While Poland does have experience in regulating research nuclear reactors, they have never been responsible for licensing and supervising the construction and operation of full-scale nuclear power plants. They've been consulting closely with both the U.S. NRC and other European regulators to build that capability. Naturally, that's a significant challenge.
Second, because Poland hasn't been a nuclear country until now, it doesn't yet have the established ecosystem of engineers, technicians, and other professionals with hands-on nuclear experience. There is a great deal of strong technical expertise in Poland but not specifically in the field of nuclear energy. So, part of the challenge is bringing in and introducing everything needed: from training and integrating people to work on the project itself, to developing a robust supply chain capable of providing the full range of goods, services, and specialized manufactured equipment. In effect, the whole new industry in Poland is being built.

**JB: Since Poland doesn't yet have the trained personnel to operate a nuclear power plant, will Westinghouse or another company be responsible for managing the plant once it's built?**

**JE:** Poland is in the process of building its own utility to operate the plant, and in reality, it takes about seven years to develop such an organization — so they are right on track. Of course, we're supporting them throughout this process. We provide training systems, procedures, maintenance protocols, and we help them set up their utility to meet international standards. They've also partnered with experienced utilities — one in the United States (Southern Nuclear) and two in Finland (TVO and Fortum) — to help build their organizational and operational capabilities.
In the nuclear industry, only the owner can operate a nuclear plant, because it is the owner who is licensed to both build and operate the facility. So while we'll have our people on the ground during startup to help commission, test, and operate the plant in its early phases — and continue to support maintenance in the long term — Poland's utility must demonstrate to its regulator that it is what the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) calls an "intelligent customer." That means proving they have the technical competence, organizational readiness, and financial capacity to take full responsibility as the owner-operator of the plant.


**JB: Given that Poland is essentially building an entirely new industry, and has about seven years to prepare, do you see opportunities for further cooperation between Poland and the U.S., particularly in training engineers to operate and maintain the plant? Are there specific programs or universities involved?**

**JE:** Yes, Poland has already started putting the right foundations in place. Several Polish universities have launched nuclear engineering programs, including Gdańsk University of Technology and AGH University of Science and Technology in Kraków. These programs are aimed at preparing a new generation of Polish engineers for careers in the nuclear sector.

On our side, we effectively operate our own training "university," with facilities in two main locations. In Madrid, Spain, we run an operations support center called Tecnatom, which hosts seven simulators for our clients across Europe and we're building an AP1000 simulator there as well. In Pittsburgh, at our U.S. headquarters, we have two full-scale control room simulators. Workers from projects in China and the Vogtle site in Georgia have trained both on their own simulators and at our Pittsburgh facilities. Going forward, training will take place in Pittsburgh, Madrid, and on our clients' own simulators.

Beyond workforce training, we've also been deeply engaged in developing the Polish supply chain. For the past four years, we've been identifying suppliers, assessing their manufacturing capabilities, conducting gap analyses, and helping them meet nuclear industry standards.

We've already signed contracts with six Polish suppliers to build structural modules for the plant, and we're now in the demonstration phase, where these suppliers produce mock-ups to prove they can meet our material, welding, and quality requirements.

We're also moving into procurement of long-lead items, which can take 36 to 51 months to manufacture. These include highly specialized components like the reactor pressure vessel and steam generators, which require very precise metallurgy and specifications. Some of these cannot yet be localized, simply because the volume of just three plants isn't enough to justify creating domestic production capacity. But a great deal of equipment can be sourced locally, and we are working closely with the Polish government and PEJ to localize as much as possible.

It's a mutually beneficial effort: Poland has a strong industrial base and competitive manufacturing costs, which makes it attractive to localize production. At the same time, it strengthens the project economically and socially by creating jobs and building expertise within Poland.

We also continue to engage the broader manufacturing sector. About a month ago, we hosted our latest supplier conference in Kraków, bringing together 100 representatives from 70 companies.

We outlined upcoming procurement needs and requirements, and the Polish Office of Technical Inspection (UDT) gave a presentation on national standards for manufacturing nuclear components. UDT, which oversees pressurized systems, cranes, elevators, and more, acts as the implementation arm for PAA, ensuring all equipment and installations comply with the licensing documents approved by the nuclear regulator.

**JB: Got it. Now, moving to the technology itself — could you walk us through, in simple and general terms, what the AP1000 design is, how it stands out from other reactor technologies, and why it was selected for Poland?**

**JE:** The AP1000 is the only Western passive safety pressurized water reactor. What that means for passive safety is, if we have a loss of power accident where the grid blacks out, the reactor can protect itself with the operators doing nothing for three days. After that, they only need to fill a water tank using fire hoses and a portable pump, and the reactor can continue to protect itself indefinitely.

In past reactors, you typically have injection systems that inject water into the reactor core area to remove decay heat. When you shut a reactor down, it still has about 4% power, which, for a 1200-megawatt reactor, is quite a bit of thermal power. In our system, instead of injecting water and cooling it down, the water boils, goes against the shell of our containment building, and then the Earth's atmosphere removes the heat by condensing the steam on the inside of the containment vessel. The water then drains back down and the process repeats itself. So, we essentially turn the reactor into a "tea kettle" where it just boils the water and the Earth's atmosphere removes the heat.

It's an extremely safe design with significantly fewer parts. It has less than half the pumps of our previous design, and a third of the valves and pipes. It's smaller, more compact, and has less equipment that can break. The Polish government looked at the available technologies and decided this was the best choice. Also, we have the highest availability factor. According to IAEA data, the fleet of AP1000 reactors has run 93% of the time to date. Competing technologies typically run between 80% and 85%, and so did our last technology. But because of the reduced equipment with these passive safety systems, we have much higher availability. We simply have fewer things to maintain that can break, and we have shorter maintenance and refueling cycles than other plants.

**JB: Understood! I have a question about the site choice. Growing up in Gdynia, I remember spending summers at Lake Żarnowiec and later learning that a nuclear plant was once planned there, but never completed. Since Lubiatowo-Kopalino is very close to Żarnowiec, it seems intuitive that the project might simply continue at Żarnowiec. Why did the government choose Lubiatowo-Kopalino instead? What makes it a better site for a plant like this?**

**JE:** PEJ conducted an environmental impact assessment, studying both the Żarnowiec and Lubiatowo-Kopalino sites. Their environmental impact analysis, which spanned over five years, involved extensive drilling, ecosystem reviews, and water condition and temperature assessments. The Lubiatowo-Kopalino site has been chosen on the basis of detailed site investigation and environmental surveys conducted since 2017, proving that the site meets all the environmental requirements set out for such facilities, and is safe for residents.

We conducted a study, and the Lubiatowo-Kopalino site meets or exceeds all the standards we need for construction. A significant advantage here is that with Baltic seawater, you'll get about 50 megawatts more power out of the reactor compared to a closed-loop cooling system on a lake. Unless you have a very large, uninhabited lake specifically constructed for a power plant, you face challenges with maintaining temperature differentials, and you typically end up using cooling towers. With closed-circuit cooling and cooling towers, we lose between 30 and 50 megawatts depending on water conditions.

So, a big advantage of the Baltic seaside site is the once-through cooling. This isn't once through the reactor; it's once through the condenser of the turbine. There are two separate loops in a nuclear pressurized water reactor: the primary and the secondary. The interface is the steam generator I mentioned, and they are kept separate. So, the cooling water goes through the condenser to condense the steam after it's passed through the turbine to produce power. This once-through cooling water gives you more energy output.

**JB: That makes sense, thanks for explaining that. To wrap up — looking ahead, which markets do you think hold the most potential for new nuclear development?**

**JE:** Europe is extremely promising because of their carbon commitments and their net-zero by 2050 targets. America is starting to show a lot more interest, and we're hoping there will be more announcements for new nuclear projects in America this year. And then the Far East, China, and India are both building quite a bit. But for us, the biggest two are Europe and America, just based on the combination of the economics and the carbon-free power growth ambition.

**JB: Thank you for sharing your insights with us!**



Austin

08

# Polonia Feature Interview - Thalía Krüger

*In the "Polonia Feature" section, we showcase the achievements and contributions of prominent members of the Polish-Texan business community. In this edition, we are pleased to introduce Thalía Krüger, an accomplished naval architect and marine engineer, energy executive, and founding board member of the Polish-American Chamber of Commerce in Texas (PolChamTX). A native of Ecuador, Thalía came to Poland in the 1980s on a government scholarship to study at the Gdańsk University of Technology, where she earned her MSc in Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering. Poland became her second home — and the starting point of a remarkable international career that has taken her through Latin America, Europe, and the United States. She currently serves as President of NextBlue Industry and previously held leadership roles at Neko Energy, Principle Power, and the American Bureau of Shipping. A Fellow of the Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers (SNAME), Thalía has been a renowned leader in the offshore and renewables sectors, organizing high-level technical forums and advocating for innovation, education, and women in STEM. Her contributions to PolChamTX as a founding member and Secretary were instrumental in building the organization's early foundations.*

**Jakub Bartoszewski (JB): Ms. Krüger, thank you so much for taking the time to speak with us today. You were born in Ecuador and pursued your engineering degree in Poland at the Gdańsk University of Technology in the 1980s. That's an extraordinary path — what led you to Poland, and how did those years shape your personal and professional identity?**

**Thalía Krüger (TK):** My journey from Ecuador to Poland in the 1980s was shaped by opportunity, curiosity, and a bit of serendipity. My fascination with ships began when I was about 7 or 8, inspired by stories of Odysseus and other sea explorers. But the defining moment came at 11, when I saw a newspaper ad for the Ecuadorian Navy and discovered the term "naval architecture." After digging into the encyclopedia, I realized this was the path I wanted to follow. However, growing up in Quito — high in the Andes, where the profession was virtually unknown — made the journey far from straightforward. Although I excelled in math and physics, there were no local programs in this field, and I initially enrolled in a general polytechnic without much enthusiasm. That changed when my mother, my biggest supporter, found a scholarship opportunity offered by the Ecuadorian Institute for Educational Loans and Scholarships to study naval architecture in Poland.

A visit to the Polish embassy and further research confirmed Poland's strong reputation in shipbuilding — then ranked seventh in the world — and its rising visibility due to Pope John Paul II. I passed the necessary exams and began a journey that would shape my life.

In the 1970s and 80s, Poland, like other countries in the Soviet bloc, offered respected technical education at a cost more accessible to students from developing countries than Western alternatives. For a young engineer eager to contribute to Ecuador's development, this was a compelling option. Despite the complex political environment, Polish universities were known for their academic rigor, especially in engineering.

My years at the Gdańsk University of Technology were truly formative. Living in Poland as a young Ecuadorian meant full immersion in a new world — learning a different language (which has become my second mother tongue), adapting to a different culture, and navigating daily life far from home. The 1980s were a time of major social and political change in Poland, marked by the rise of the Solidarity movement. Witnessing these events gave me a deep appreciation for freedom, democracy, and the Polish people's peaceful struggle for self-determination.

It broadened my perspective and taught me resilience, adaptability, and a greater understanding of global complexity. The friendships I built with Polish and international students enriched my life and opened my mind to diverse perspectives.

Academically, the university provided a strong foundation. The engineering curriculum was demanding and thorough, pushing me to develop critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and a meticulous work ethic. I gained not just theoretical knowledge but also hands-on experience. The Polish emphasis on innovation and excellence shaped my professional values and taught me the importance of lifelong learning and ethical responsibility as an engineer. I graduated not only with a degree but with a global perspective on engineering and a strong desire to make a meaningful impact. Beyond academics, I was a member of the swimming team and accepted into the elite Scalar Diving club.

My time in Poland shaped both my character and my career. It equipped me to face complex engineering challenges and gave me a sense of belonging — I became a Polish citizen at heart. It was a transformative journey for which I'll always be deeply grateful.

**JB: After graduating in Gdańsk, you built an international career, spanning from Latin America and Europe to the United States. What eventually brought you to Houston, and what made you choose to stay and build your professional life in Texas?**

**TK:** My career after graduation began right where it had started — at the Gdańsk University of Technology. I joined the deepwater technology department under the leadership of Professor Jerzy Doerffer and worked directly with Dr. Lech Rowiński. It was the perfect opportunity to apply and deepen the specialized training I had received during my studies. During that time, I also got married and had my first daughter. Shortly afterward, we moved to Ecuador, where my Polish education in naval architecture and marine engineering was highly respected and in strong demand. This led to a series of roles in which I gained valuable experience across diverse projects, from ship design and construction to broader maritime infrastructure development.

Our eventual move to Houston was a deliberate family decision that aligned closely with the next stage of my career. It was driven by the city's unique role as a global hub for the energy sector — and it all began thanks to the support of my first employer in the U.S., Mark Treder, a respected member of the Polish community.

As my career evolved in Houston, I became increasingly focused on offshore engineering. The city is arguably the global capital of this field, with an unmatched concentration of energy companies, engineering firms, technology providers, and specialized service companies. It offered a chance to contribute to high-impact international projects, innovate in marine and offshore structures, and collaborate with some of the best minds in the industry. Houston enabled me to further specialize and take on roles of greater responsibility. The scale and complexity of offshore work managed from this city — particularly in the US Gulf Coast — created leadership and growth opportunities that would be difficult to find elsewhere.

While professional reasons initially brought us to Houston, what made us stay was the ability to build a home. The warm and welcoming Polish community embraced our family from the very beginning, and the supportive environment allowed us to establish strong roots and raise our children here.


**JB: You've held leadership roles across the marine, offshore, and renewables sectors — from shipyards to strategic business development in offshore wind. Looking back, what do you consider the most defining chapter of your career so far?**

**TK:** My career has been a journey of diverse challenges and invaluable learning across the maritime, offshore, and renewables sectors. Each chapter, from the hands-on environment of shipyards to the strategic frontier of offshore wind, has profoundly shaped my perspective and growth. Active participation in professional societies like SNAME (where I chair the Offshore T&R Committee) and ASME (where I serve on the DTOG conference committee) has been pivotal allowing me to expand my expertise, publish technical papers and earn awards at prominent global conferences such as such as OTC, SNAME Maritime Convention, CERAWeek, and IPF. While each role has been meaningful, I would consider my time in strategic business development within the emerging offshore wind industry as the most defining chapter of my career so far.

Coming from the established worlds of shipbuilding and traditional offshore oil & gas, stepping into offshore wind felt both familiar and entirely new. It wasn't just about applying known engineering principles; it was about adapting them, innovating, and often creating new approaches for a fast-evolving industry. My experience in shipyards gave me a strong foundation in marine operations, fabrication, and project execution, while my offshore background brought insights into complex engineering and large-scale integration. In offshore wind, I had to constantly translate that accumulated knowledge to a new context — proving how decades of maritime expertise were not only relevant but essential to the success of wind farm development.

What made this chapter truly transformative was that it wasn't just about engineering — it was about shaping the future of energy. The pace of innovation in offshore wind is breathtaking. Each day brought new challenges, from optimizing foundation designs to improving installation methods and integrating renewables into existing grids. This constant demand for learning, agility, and forward-thinking pushed my intellectual boundaries more than any other role I've held.

**JB: You've also worked at the intersection of technical expertise and business strategy. How has this multidisciplinary experience shaped your leadership style and your approach to decision-making?**

**TK:** Working at the intersection of technical expertise and business strategy has been the most formative influence on how I lead and make decisions. I would describe my leadership style as translational and highly collaborative. Years of navigating the distinct languages of engineers, project managers, financial analysts, and strategists taught me how to translate complex technical concepts into business value — and vice versa. I prioritize making sure everyone, regardless of discipline, understands the "why" behind the "what."

When teams see how their technical work drives outcomes like profitability or market growth, they're more motivated to innovate and take initiative. I've found the most effective solutions come from genuine cross-disciplinary collaboration, so I actively break down silos, promote interdepartmental dialogue, and create spaces where ideas are shared early, assumptions are challenged, and strategy is built together.

This multidisciplinary lens also drives a more holistic, risk-aware approach to decision-making. I simultaneously consider technical feasibility, economic viability, and strategic alignment — asking not just "Can we build it?" but also "Is it needed?" "What's the ROI?" and "Does it support our long-term vision?" Experience across both mature and emerging sectors has taught me the value of calculated risk and the importance of grounding bold ideas in solid technical due diligence and business case development. While I value data and analytics, I also rely on market intelligence, qualitative insight, and an understanding of organizational dynamics. My decision-making is adaptive and iterative: we define clear goals, execute, learn, and pivot as needed. That agile mindset is essential, especially in the innovative environments where NextBlue Industry operates.

**JB: You now serve as President of NextBlue Industry. What is the company's focus and what drew you to lead it?**

**TK:** NextBlue Industry is the culmination of my experiences and passions, bringing together the many threads of my diverse career into a cohesive vision. Our core focus is catalyzing innovation and fostering collaboration to drive a more sustainable, greener world. We believe that real progress comes from integrating diverse knowledge and expertise, and we thrive on connecting people, ideas, and industries. By bridging gaps between startups and established companies, across cultures and markets, we help organizations expand their reach and pursue new ventures — particularly in the sustainable and green sectors. At NextBlue, we go beyond consulting; we actively participate in shaping a future where economic growth and environmental responsibility go hand in hand.

**JB: You're known for championing women in STEM and mentoring young professionals. What advice do you most often give to young women entering technical fields?**

**TK:** That is a topic incredibly close to my heart, and indeed, championing women in STEM and mentoring young professionals has been a consistent passion throughout my career. I truly believe in nurturing the next generation of talent, and there's both urgency and deep reward in guiding young women entering technical fields. When I speak to those embarking on their STEM journeys, my advice often revolves around three core pillars I've learned from Polish women: confidence, continuous learning, and community.

Building unshakable confidence and owning your voice is perhaps the most crucial. Technical fields — despite progress — can still present subtle (or not-so-subtle) biases, and imposter syndrome remains a very real challenge. Women must trust in their capabilities, speak up to be heard, and embrace their unique perspectives. Never stop learning and see challenges as opportunities for growth. At the same time, cultivate a strong network and seek out mentors. And always pay it forward, as you advance in your career, remember to lift others as you climb. Mentoring those who come after you is not only meaningful, it's a way to light the path for others and give back to the community that supported you.

**JB: Now let's focus again on your connection to Poland. The country became your second home, and you've remained deeply engaged with the Polish professional and business community ever since. What does that connection mean to you personally?**

**TK:** My connection to Poland — and especially with the Polish professional and business community — is more than a network; it's part of who I am. Poland isn't just where I earned my engineering degree — it truly became my second home. The years I spent there shaped my worldview, resilience, and intellectual curiosity. It's where I started a family, formed lifelong friendships, and developed a deep appreciation for the country's culture, history, and people. Learning a new language and adapting to a different environment taught me self-reliance and empathy. When my family and I later moved to Houston, the Polish community immediately welcomed us, providing a vital sense of belonging as we built our new life. My children attended the Polish School, where they deepened their understanding of Poland's rich culture. This led to my involvement with the Parents Committee and later the Parish Council, further strengthening these connections. The Polish professional and business community is built on trust, shared values, and a strong work ethic — and it feels like an extended family. Staying involved is also a way for me to give back. I'm passionate about fostering opportunities between Poland and Texas, especially in innovation and sustainable development, which aligns closely with NextBlue Industry's mission. It's about building bridges, sharing knowledge, and helping others chart their own extraordinary paths.

**JB: You were one of the founding members and Secretary of the Polish-American Chamber of Commerce in Texas. What motivated you to take on that role, and what do you consider your most meaningful contributions to the Chamber's early development?**

**TK:** Being one of the founding members and Secretary of the Polish-American Chamber of Commerce in Texas was a natural extension of my deep connection to Poland and my professional journey. My motivation stemmed from a confluence of factors: gratitude and the desire to give back, recognizing the need to strengthen the community, and the belief in cross-cultural collaboration. Having settled in Houston, I saw immense potential for greater economic exchange between Texas and Poland. There was a clear need for an organized entity that could facilitate business opportunities within the vibrant Texas landscape. I believed my international experience and understanding of both cultures could be particularly valuable in building such a bridge. My entire career has been built on the premise that diverse perspectives and international collaboration lead to the best outcomes. The Chamber was a perfect vehicle to put this belief into practice, fostering relationships that could benefit both sides of the Atlantic.


My role as Secretary was crucial in establishing the Chamber's administrative and operational backbone. This involved drafting bylaws, setting up early communication channels, organizing meetings, and meticulously docu-menting our initial strategies and decisions. I advocated strongly for early initiatives that would deliver tangible value to our members and demonstrate the Chamber's potential. Being part of the Polish-American Chamber of Commerce's genesis was an incredibly rewarding experience. It allowed me to apply my skills and passion to build an institution that continues to strengthen the bonds between the two nations that have shaped my life so profoundly, all of which was possible with the unconditional support of my family.

**JB: Looking ahead, where do you see the strongest synergies for collaboration between Poland and Texas — particularly in energy, maritime technologies, or sustainability?**

**TK:** The synergy between Poland and Texas lies in their complementary strengths: Poland's established industrial base, engineering talent, and determined energy transition paired with Texas's vast energy resources, entrepreneurial spirit, and leadership in both conventional and renewable energy technologies. By fostering collaboration, we can unlock new markets, drive innovation, and contribute to a more sustainable and secure global future.

The energy sector offers perhaps the most immediate opportunities. Poland is diversifying its mix, moving from coal toward renewables and nuclear power. With large-scale nuclear projects underway — including U.S. firm Westinghouse as a key partner — and growing interest in Small Modular Reactors (SMRs), Texas's deep expertise in energy infrastructure, project management, and engineering can provide essential support. Texas also leads the U.S. in wind energy and is rapidly scaling solar and battery storage, though grid integration remains a challenge. Poland, with its own offshore wind expansion and energy transition experience, can collaborate with Texas on grid modernization, smart grid technologies, and storage solutions. Their existing trade in Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) is another clear synergy: Texas is a major exporter, and Poland has significantly increased its LNG imports to boost energy security. This trade can continue to grow, strengthening transatlantic ties. The maritime sector presents another natural fit. Poland's shipbuilding legacy and growing offshore wind sector — including projects like "Baltic Power" — require specialized fleets and port logistics.

Texas's experience in offshore operations and vessel design from the oil & gas industry can directly support Poland's renewable ambitions. There's strong potential for joint ventures in specialized vessel construction, port development, and operational best practices. Poland's shipyards excel in technical vessels like cable layers and jack-up units, while Texas's marine activity could benefit from Polish expertise in new builds, repairs, and conversions. With Poland's ongoing naval modernization, including new submarines and rescue capabilities, there's room for collaboration with Texas-based defense and maritime technology firms.

Beyond energy, the broader sustainability agenda opens promising avenues in green hydrogen and e-methanol. Poland has a national hydrogen strategy, and Texas is investing heavily in e-methanol facilities powered by renewable energy. This is an ideal area for joint research, technology transfer, and co-investment in infrastructure. Carbon Capture, Utilization, and Storage (CCUS) is also crucial as both regions tackle industrial emissions. Texas has the geological capacity and experience for storage, while Poland is actively exploring CCUS in its decarbonization efforts. Collaboration here could significantly accelerate deployment.

Finally, both Poland and Texas have much to share on the circular economy — from waste reduction and recycling innovation to sustainable manufacturing practices — helping industry evolve toward more efficient, environmentally responsible models.

**JB: Thank you so much!**




Poznań

09

# Young Professional Feature
# Brad Mushinski

*In the "Young Professional Feature" section, we highlight the careers of rising Polish-American professionals making an impact in Texas. In this edition, we are pleased to introduce Bradley Mushinski — a Polish-American, civic leader, and the current 1st Vice President of the Polish-American Chamber of Commerce in Texas (PolChamTX). Bradley serves as Director of Constituent Services in the office of City of Houston Council Member Mary Nan Huffman, where he works closely with residents and community stakeholders across Houston's Westside. A graduate of American University and the University of Houston, Bradley has also studied at Jagiellonian University in Kraków and Peking University in Beijing. Through his public service, leadership in the Polish-American community, and passion for international affairs, Bradley exemplifies a generation of globally minded professionals committed to building stronger ties between Texas and Poland.*

**Jakub Bartoszewski (JB): Let's start with your background. You grew up in New Jersey and later studied at American University in Washington, D.C. How did these experiences spark your interest in politics and public service?**

**Bradley Mushinski (BM):** I grew up in New Jersey in a family where politics were definitely part of the conversation—but it wasn't about party lines or headlines. It was more about values. My parents believed in respect, personal responsibility, and looking out for others. They taught me that you don't wait around for the government to fix things, you step up and do your part. That kind of thinking shaped how I see public service.

When I got to American University in D.C., it all started to click. I was surrounded by people passionate about making change, and I realized politics wasn't just about debates on TV—it was about real people and real communities. That's when I knew I wanted to get involved, not just talk about the problems, but actually help fix them.

**JB: From there, what brought you to Texas — and what made you stay?**

**BM:** At first, it was my education that brought me to Texas. I came down thinking it might just be a temporary move, but pretty quickly, it started to feel like home. There's something about the mindset here that really resonated with me. People take pride in their work, they believe in personal freedom, and they don't wait around for someone else to solve their problems. That's the kind of environment I wanted to be part of.

Over time, I got more involved in the community, built relationships, and started seeing where I could make a real impact. It wasn't just about planting roots, it was about contributing to a community that welcomed me with open arms.

**JB: You recently earned your Master's in Public Policy from the University of Houston. What drew you to the program, and what issues are you most passionate about when it comes to public policy?**

**BM:** I chose the Master's in Public Policy program at the University of Houston mainly because of the value the program offers at a very reasonable price tag. What really drives me is cutting through the red tape. I'm passionate about making local government more efficient, holding it accountable, and getting resources where they're actually needed—whether that's fixing streets, improving public safety, or making it easier for small businesses to operate. We've got too much bureaucracy and not enough common sense, and I think policy should be about getting things done, not just checking boxes.

**JB: You've also studied abroad at the Jagiellonian University in Poland and Peking University in China. How did those international experiences shape your worldview?**

**BM:** Studying abroad at the Jagiellonian University in Poland and Peking University in China gave me a much broader perspective on how governments operate, and how culture shapes everything from policy to daily life. In Poland, I connected with my heritage and saw a country that's still balancing tradition with rapid change. In China, I saw how a top-down system can move fast but often at the expense of individual freedoms. Those experiences really reinforced what I value here at home: personal liberty, local control, and accountable government. It also made me appreciate how lucky we are to have a voice in how we're governed, and how important it is to use that voice to make sure the government stays focused on serving the people, not itself.

I recommend that any young person who has the opportunity to study abroad absolutely should!

**JB: You've held roles at both the city and county levels in the Texas government. What have those experiences taught you about how local leadership works — and what does your day-to-day look like now as Director of Constituent Services?**

**BM:** Working at both the city and county levels has really shown me how the gears of local government turn. Sometimes smoothly, sometimes not. What I've learned is that local leadership isn't about making speeches or making headlines on the national news. It's about solving problems. It's about returning phone calls, fixing what's broken, and making sure people don't fall through the cracks.

As Director of Constituent Services, my day-to-day is all about helping people navigate the system, whether that's getting a pothole filled, resolving permitting issues, or just making sure someone's voice is heard. A big part of the job is listening. You learn quickly that most people aren't asking for the world, they just simply want things to work. And when the government is responsive and accountable, trust builds. That's the part I care most about.

**JB: As a Polish-American, how has your heritage influenced your values or your perspective on public life?**

**BM:** Being Polish-American has really shaped who I am, especially when it comes to faith, respect, and a strong work ethic. Growing up, my family passed down those values, not just as words, but as a way of life. They taught me that faith grounds you, respect is earned and given, and hard work is the path to any kind of success. These values drive everything I do.

**JB: You currently serve as the 1st Vice President of the Polish-American Chamber of Commerce in Texas. What inspired you to take on that leadership role, and what are your goals for strengthening the Chamber's impact?**

**BM:** What inspired me to take on the role of 1st Vice President of the Polish-American Chamber of Commerce in Texas is really the people around me. Specifically, the board and our members. It's a community built on helping each other succeed. It's not just about business; it's about relationships, support, and lifting one another up.

My focus is on strengthening that sense of community. I want to make sure we continue to create opportunities, share resources, and build connections that help everyone grow. At the end of the day, it's about people supporting people, and that's what makes this PolChamTX so special.

**JB: What advice would you give to other young Polish-Americans who want to get involved in public service?**

**BM:** My advice would be to start small and stay consistent. Public service isn't about grand gestures. It's about showing up, listening, and doing the work that needs to be done, even if it's behind the scenes. Also, don't be afraid to voice your opinions–you might find that you have the most compelling opinion in the room!

**JB: And finally - what do you enjoy doing when you're not working or volunteering?**

**BM:** I really enjoy spending time with my family, fishing, and hanging out on the water. Traveling someplace you would never think to go is also something I enjoy doing. It's a great way to learn, experience new cultures, and come back with fresh perspectives!

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