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*The European Union in the experience of local journalists  
on a day-to-day basis and on special occasions*

This article presents the professional experience of local journalists in the context of celebration of Poland's accession to the European Union at the local level. It discusses the following topics: how journalists remember 1 May 2004 (the day of Poland's EU accession) and how they celebrated the fourth anniversary of this significant event. (The contents of selected press titles in the peri-anniversary period are also analyzed.)

The empirical material suggests that the day of Poland's accession to the European Union does not feature permanently in the calendar of locally celebrated holidays. Both in interviews with the journalists themselves and in the analyzed publications, the EU is definitely an everyday albeit not in a strictly European or Brussels sense but in the form of utilization of European funds and infrastructural investment. On the other hand, however, the relevant prominence of these

topics in the local media does not automatically imply that journalists attribute great importance to them. Coverage is more likely to be the consequence of signed contracts on the one hand and the expression of powerful connections between local self-governments and the local media on the other hand.

One important difference stands out, however, against the backdrop of the overall similarities between the different sites of study. The inhabitants of Bielsk Podlaski interpreted the expansion of the European Union quite differently compared with the interpretations identified along Poland's southern border. They viewed the expansion of EU borders as closure of the external EU border and a serious limitation of their contact network. Surely this observation merits further systematic study.