

## **Abstract**

This thesis examines the activity of the German media groups Axel Springer AG and Verlagsgruppe Passau on the Polish press market. These German publishers have taken advantage of the transformation and liberalization after 1990 and have massively invested in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. In Poland, dailies were published by both of the aforementioned groups. Axel Springer AG produces the tabloid daily *Fakt* and between 2006 and 2009 the group produced the semi-tabloid *Dziennik*. Verlagsgruppe Passau has owned a variety of regional dailies (now merged under one umbrella and published only a few times a week). With regard to the historical burden on the relationship between Poland and Germany, the position of a German publisher in the field of opinion-forming media is rather difficult. This thesis compares the operation of the two aforementioned publishers on the Polish press market, with the focus on how they entered the market and expanded their business, on the influence of the publisher on the editorial slant, on the controversies with the Anti-Monopoly Office, and on their attitude towards their competitors and the Polish political representation. Activities beyond publishing and standards imposed in the parent and subsidiary company will also be compared. Last, but not least, this thesis offers an insight into the public debate in Poland and in Germany on the possible influence of the "German capital" on Polish society, which has been fed by various agents (competitors, politicians, Catholic church, media experts) with various motivations.