

The European Union after Enlargement – a Polish View

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ABSTRACT

This paper analyses the Polish approach, as a new EU member, towards the integration process of the EU including the most recent debates about the future of the enlarged European Union of 27 member states. Within the Eastern enlargement process itself and those processes which followed, the Polish membership in the EU is of particular relevance. Poland was not only the biggest and economically most dynamic candidate in the first round of Eastern enlargement but, due to its early and revolutionary transformation to democracy and a market economy, it was also one of the most interesting candidates for a EU membership. Its political-geographic location between Germany and Russia, its history, its internal controversies concerning EU membership and its EU Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) give special significance to the Polish EU policies regarding the future of the European Union. Therefore, Poland's approach towards these matters deserves special attention pertaining to the further development within the EU after enlargement.

Key words: European Union, Poland, European integration

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Introduction

With the accession to the European Union on 1 May 2004, Polish foreign policy achieved its main strategic objective since the beginning of the political transformation in 1989. The beginning and the successful conclusion of Polish EU membership was and is indisputably an event of historical dimension both for Poland and Europe, especially if one considers that more than 20 years ago the perspective of a membership in the EU was for many Central and Eastern Europe Countries¹ (CEEC) not even a dream. But with the end of the East-West conflict and the transformation of Poland from a Socialist into a democratic political system the idea of becoming a member of the EU and NATO turned into reality. Although Poland's attempt to use the Visegrád cooperation for EU membership negotiations, and thus improve the bargaining position failed, the Polish leadership nevertheless gained membership together with the Czech Republic and Hungary in the first round of Eastern enlargement. Furthermore, Polish support to continue Eastern enlargement was equally successful in creating the second round of Eastern enlargement, continuing further Eastern enlargement negotiations, and in establishing special relations between the EU and the Ukraine – and at the same time worked to sever, restrain, and limit EU relations with the new Russia. This enlargement, including the last accession of Romania and Bulgaria in 2007, constitutes a major challenge not only for the European Union at the beginning of the 21st century, but for the 10 old respectively 12 new EU member countries as well.

The results of this accession and the common perspectives for the enlarged EU are currently the main issue of intensive discussion between the 27 member states with the main focus on the constitution and the related last treaty as well of on the future of CFSP/ESDP. The related so-called »debate about the future of the EU« or »finalité politique« of European integration not only includes key issues and problems of further institutional reforms, which are necessary for improving both decision-making efficiency and democratic legitimacy of the enlarged Union, but also regarding the political will and the political-economic-military ability to act as a global player in general and to take necessary political–military actions for peace-keeping, peace-building, and international crisis management in particular. These two issues are connected with the main

¹ The term of Central Eastern Europe (CEE) follows the list of the OECD which considers the Central Eastern Europe to consist of the following countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Yugoslavia;
http://www.oecd.org/document/45/0,3343,en_2649_34291_1963117_1_1_1_1,00.html
The definition of Eastern Europe (EE) included formerly all states of the East Block, but currently refers to European states of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

question of the European Union as a whole – i.e. the amount and intensity of a future deepening of the integration process and the improvement of the existing institutional framework.

Poland is from the geographical point of view the sixth largest and one of the most populous countries within the EU and, because of this, considers itself as one of the more powerful member states at the same time. After nearly four years of membership with several disputes between changing Polish governments and the European Union, notably on CSFP in general and EU-Russian relations in particular, it is necessary to analyse the Polish policies as well as its long-term visions of the future development of the European Union and also to deal with the question of how Poland defines this and finally to ask what the EU expects from its new Eastern member states. This means to describe and analyse such policies including their objectives and dynamics in a step-by-step and multi-dimensional approach in order to better understand the current as well as the future Polish policies within and towards the EU. This means in particular to answer the following questions:

- 1) What have been the most important goals of the Polish policies and politics after the accession,
- 2) are the Polish interests and norms/values compatible with those of the other EU members, and if yes or no where and why,
- 3) how influential is Poland's policy towards institutional change within of the European institutional structure and the EU integration process in general, and
- 4) how far is Poland willing to deepen and/or widen the EU integration?

Evaluating the past and present of the Polish views on the EU and its future development leads then to the final question: What is the perception and how is the acceptance of the Polish view within the EU and what does this mean for the future position and role of Poland as a member of the EU.

The theoretical framework for the analysis of Polish policies towards and within the EU

Following the concept of Reimund Seidelmann of politics as a matter of norms, interests, and power² means not only to understand the important role of the historical factor in Polish policies but also to analyse the Polish view on the consolidation and further development of the European Union after enlargement under three aspects:

² See: Seidelmann 2007, pp. 235-253.

1. First, in terms of norms and values, Poland considered the membership in the European Union not only as its legitimate historical place but also as a means for an outside-stimulated demand for democracy in support of the political transformation from a Socialist towards a Western democratic political system, i.e. giving the EU a role in the political transformation and West-orientation as a political demander, supporter and stabiliser.
2. Second, in terms of interests, membership in the European Union had major economic, political and military advantages. Both for the transformation towards a market economy as well as for the rapid growth and modernization of all sectors of the economy including the highly backward agriculture for which an EU membership was essential for trade, investment, and labour export. In security terms a NATO-membership promised fullest security against any Soviet/Russian military-political threat as well as direct access to U.S. policies and membership in the EU was considered as a political supplement or as a sort of political reassurance that European NATO-members would fully support Polish security needs and interests in general and towards Russia in particular.
3. Third, in terms of power, Poland understood that the political geography, situated between EU/Germany and Russia, would not only enable it to exploit its re-established national sovereignty but that seeking EU- and NATO-membership would allow Poland to use both EU and NATO power and influence to better pursue its national interests. In addition, Poland defined itself as the most important and influential Central Eastern European country both in the EU and NATO and as the promoter of the Eastern European interests. And finally, NATO membership was perceived as the best way to establish direct access to U.S. foreign and security policy decision-making.

Due to this, Poland saw and then understood both the EU and NATO as being a community of Western democratic values, of major economic and military benefits for Poland, and as an economic-political (EU) and a military-political (NATO) powerful actor, which could be instrumented for Polish interests and position and in which Poland could extend its absolute and relative influence in the new European power hierarchy towards the West as well as towards the East – i.e. Russia, Belorussia, and Ukraine.

This rationale for Polish membership had and has the above-mentioned strong historical dimension. Poland considered itself traditionally as a European country – its political, economic, and cultural

elites always oriented themselves throughout its history towards the West. Russia was traditionally regarded as a threat and not as an ally – a view which was confirmed by Russia and the Soviet Unions policies towards Poland highlighted by the Ribbentrop-Molotov agreement before the outbreak of the Second World War, in which the Soviet Union not only took major territories from Poland's East but participated actively in the abolishment of the Polish state. Becoming part of or being forced into the Eastern bloc after 1945, Poland tried to reduce confrontation with the West through numerous initiatives³ and understood détente policy as a means to re-establish relations with Europe in order to reduce Soviet influence, control, and military threat.⁴ The special and influential role of the Catholic Church in Poland supplemented Poland's historical orientation towards the West, whereas Polish migration to the U.S. established additional links. Due to the importance of the historical factor in Poland's political and cultural identity, which goes far beyond the relevance of history for other Eastern European countries, EU-membership not only revitalized Polish traditional orientation towards the West but was considered to be historically necessary and a genuine and natural return to Poland's original place in Europe.

Due to the specific relevance of the historical factor for Polish policies as a whole, and for the EU-membership in particular, one has to go into further details to better understand the specifics of Polish policies towards and within the EU. Looking at West, Central- and Eastern Europe to search for compatibility in common values and interest and to understand the problems of the Europeans from a Polish perspective, one has to start with the fact that Poland, although until 1989 considered from political point of view as a part of the Soviet Bloc, is rich in political and cultural European tradition and always had close relations to the West. Due to its geographical location between the two largest European powers, Germany and Russia, an ambivalent common history was created⁵, in which cooperation changed into conflict and inversely during the last 1000 years of good and bad neighborhood with the Western and Southern (i.e. Austria) as well as the Eastern neighbours. Relations to Germany and the West included not only a very intensive cultural and scientific exchange, close cooperation and political innovation⁶, but at the same time several political and

³ Recall the so called Rapacki Plan (1956) and the idea of an area free of nuclear weapons in Central Eastern Europe. See: „Memorandum des polnischen Außenministeriums zum Rapacki-Plan (Schaffung einer atomwaffenfreien Zone in Mitteleuropa), Warschau, 14./15. Februar 1958“. In: Jacobsen/ Tomala (Hrsg.)1992, pp.89-92

⁴ Cf. Artur Hajnicz 2006, pp. 105-132.

⁵ Cf. Multan 1998, p. 181

⁶ Consider the Polish National Education Commission of 1772-3 – the earliest European educational project, consider also the Constitution of 3 May 1791, first constitution in Europe,

military conflicts, since Poland was often subject to foreign rule by the neighboring countries and object of their strategic-political interests. The Polish historical memory, which plays an important role in defining its foreign policies, was formed particularly through the three partitions of the Poland-Lithuania commonwealth in 1773, 1793, and 1795 between Prussia, Austria and Russia. This was followed by the tragic chapters of the First and the Second World War and after that of over 40 years of Soviet domination. Both the specific Polish historical factor as such, as well as the general political history of the 20th century explain the special importance of regaining sovereignty and democracy in 1989 and Poland's wish for independence – not only from the Soviet Union/Russian Federation, but also from a reunified Germany – in terms of identity, position, and foreign orientation.

Thus, the creation of a Polish external and internal *raison d'être*⁷ including the territorial integrity and political self-determination had highest priority in Polish foreign policy and the way to maintain it required various options for its political reorientation. The most important of these was the early participation in the political, economical, security and military structures of Western Europe. In 1990 – i.e. one year after independence and at the beginning of the political-economic transformation to the »New Poland«, the Polish foreign minister had already signaled in a major statement the country's wish to seek full membership in the European Community.⁸ With the political and economical transformation from an authoritarian regime to democracy Poland, together with other CEEC, opened in 1989 a qualitatively new chapter of European history, in which Poland played a special active role. The disintegration of the Soviet empire, the Polish Round Table, and the fall of the Berlin Wall together with German reunification then opened new perspectives and challenges for Poland's strategy to fully integrate into Western European political and security structures. And this included not only to reconfirm the Polish good-neighbourhood policy with the old Federal Republic of Germany towards the newly reunited Germany⁹ but also to redefine Polish-Russian relations to be supported by EU and NATO. Poland considered the

which established the Poland-Lithuanian commonwealth as a modern constitutional state. For a historical overview see: Norman Davis 1998. *Europe: a history*. New York, p. 608 and p. 699.

⁷ »Raison d'être refers to the category of higher (...) national interest«, quoted by Krzysztof Skubiszewski, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the RP. In: Skubiszewski 1997, p.300.

For a short insight into the classic perception of Stateness and Sovereignty see: Andreas Vasilache 2007, pp.126-129.

⁸ See: Skubiszewski 1997, p. 45.

⁹ See: „Vertrag zwischen der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und der Republik Polen über gute Nachbarschaft und freundschaftliche Zusammenarbeit von 17.Juni 1991“. In: Auswärtiges Amt (Hrsg.) 1995, pp.800-811

willingness to enlarge the EC/EU and to accept the new candidates as full members not only as a rational and interest-based political-strategic motive, but also as a historical and moral obligation. It was understandable that at that time Poland then made immediate use of this unique historical window of opportunity created by the end of the East-West conflict. The so called *Return to Europe* underlined the Polish attitude back to its historical basis, because »Poland was always in Europe. In the cultural and traditional point of view. Now, after the peaceful Revolution, it has joined it politically as well«. ¹⁰

Political dimension

Within the European enlargement process the question of the future political integration of the EU and its willingness and ability to act as a united body with one voice in the global perspective is currently of particular relevance both for the EU as such, as well as for the other regions which are cooperating with the EU. For Poland this is not only a question of the specifics of CFSP/ESDP but of the general institutional reform as well, which was an important element of the debate on the EU Charter. The starting point of the Polish view on the institutional reform was to save the institutionalised equal distribution of the power to all its member countries and to provide the sense of unity. ¹¹ With the partial or selected transfer of sovereignty towards the EU Poland expected more political influence in the decision-making within the EU, more financial benefits, accelerated economic modernization, and better market competition conditions within the EU and abroad. But such expectations and the related pursuit of economic, political, and security interests have to be understood against the above mentioned historical background, for which four factors play an important role:

1. Poland's general experience with the problem of loss of sovereignty throughout its history and the experience of double dependence from the more powerful Germany and Russia,
2. Poland's specific experience with dependency on the Soviet Union,
3. Poland's dilemma with EU membership, i.e. transferring newly reestablished and valuable sovereignty to the EU,
4. Poland's historical identity as a major European country and power.

¹⁰ Lech Wałęsa, the President of the Republic of Poland at the Parliamentary Assembly of Council of Europe in Strassburg, on 4 February 1992. In: Wałęsa 1995, p. 4.

¹¹ Cf. Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland – The session of the Sejm on 30 June 2004 (4 kadencja, 78 posiedzenie, 1 dzień (30.06.2004) 1 punkt porządku dziennego: Informacja rządu w sprawie wyników Konferencji Międzyrządowej, która odbyła się w Brukseli w dniach 17 i 18 czerwca 2004 r.), <http://ks.sejm.gov.pl>

In contrast to old members of the EU this sort of political competition of national versus EU-identity is more intense because of Poland's history and specific national pride and self-esteem. Whereas compromises on concrete economic and military issues have been much easier to reach, political issues such as the formal distribution of power or shares in EU decision-making power have and will always revitalize the trauma of Polish national identity.

Therefore, it is quite understandable that Poland pursues neither an integrationistic nor an intergovernmental approach towards present and future integration, but prefers a pragmatic combination of both to ensure concrete benefits of integrationalism and to preserve as much national identity as possible through intergovernmentalism¹² expressed by a Polish Foreign Minister in the following way:

»Foreign policy shows that the rigid dividing line between intergovernmentalism and the community method should be demystified. The practice of the intergovernmental method is often a prelude to community-based integration«.¹³

This is not only a general but also a specific pattern of Polish views on CFSP as well. Poland is not a supporter of a fully integrated CSFP/ESDP and EU Crisis Intervention Force for three plausible reasons. Firstly, because of the above mentioned special sensitivity towards keeping its national sovereignty, particularly in the case of foreign relations. Secondly, because of its strong belief that integrating CFSP would contradict NATO, would damage U.S. interests in continuing as a European power, and therefore would reduce Polish access and leverage towards the U.S. Finally, understanding that CFSP is dominated by old EU members such as France or Germany and that Polish influence would always be marginal in a common approach, Poland traditionally does not support too much integration in this political field.

So far, the co-existence of the vision »New United Union« and pragmatism have been considered as an unrelated and sometimes even a contradictory parallelism.¹⁴ But if one goes beyond the specific issue of CFSP/ESDP, the theme of the political integration in general and issues like the governance

¹² For a basic overview about the theories of international cooperation see: Wichard Woyke (Hrsg.) 2000. *Handwörterbuch Internationale Politik*. Opladen.

¹³ Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland. In: "European Union the day after enlargement: the Polish perspective". London, 24 July 2002; <http://www.mfa.gov.pl/podstrona,3,1221.html>

¹⁴ Seidelmann 2008. "EU's Enlargement to the East-Pattern, Causes, and Problems." (Unpublished manuscript).

ability of the EU in particular revitalize this contradiction and have presented Poland with a difficult political choice. This places Poland in the camp of anti-integrationists and creates a major political difference between Poland and Germany as its most important neighbor and as that EU member country which supported Polish membership in the EU from the very beginning.

The Polish understanding of European integration, which is rooted in Polish general views on the nation-state-EU relations, has been manifested very clearly within the last five years during the negotiations for the European Constitution Treaty (CT), officially known as *Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe*¹⁵, where Poland has developed into one of the strongest opponents of the Charter approach. The set of fundamental institutional reforms of the EU was originally regarded by the 'old' EU members as so significant as to be able to improve the preconditions for better and more effective governance towards the inside as well as the outside, and thereby further limit national sovereignty of member states through a more common effective governance.

In the Polish view this threatened to limit Poland's freedom in pursuing national, foreign and security policies, which might reduce Poland to a secondary European power. Although the Treaty of Nice (2001) was a difficult but acceptable compromise, the *Draft Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe* in July 2003 constituted in the Polish view a less favorable basis for the institutional framework regarding the progress of integration in the EU including the modifications of the voting mechanisms, which were no longer based on weighted votes, but on the population criteria.¹⁶ According to this proposal the debate about the future of decision-making and its legitimacy in the enlarged EU revitalized old dilemmas and contradictions in Poland's approach towards the EU. Therefore, Poland strongly disagreed with and contested the proposed regulations concerning this issue, in particular those of the forthcoming Treaty. Thus Poland pursued a consequent and continued hard line position in the course of negotiations, which reflected Poland's fears of losing its newly regained sovereignty on a supranational level, especially with reference to Germany. Therefore, Poland concentrated its efforts on defending the voting system in the Council, which originally constituted the component of the Accession Treaty and additionally defined the

¹⁵ See: Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe, CONV850/03;
<http://register.consilium.eu.int/pdf/en/03/cv00/cv00850en03.pdf>

¹⁶ See: Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe, CONV850/03 Art. 24: Qualified voting. In: CONV850/03, p.18; <http://register.consilium.eu.int/pdf/en/03/cv00/cv00850en03.pdf>

proportions between the member states in a way that met Poland's preferences.¹⁷ The revision of this, for Poland, very substantial agreement caused a vehement reaction of the Polish side, which was underlined with the parole »Nice or Death«. As a result Poland, together with Spain, stopped the Draft for CT in 2003 but, after the breakup of the Warsaw-Madrid coalition, Poland's left-wing government finally accepted the proposal and signed the text of the new Constitutional Treaty on 29 October 2004.

Following this the debate about the European Treaty achieved a new dynamic after the failure of the referendum in France and the Netherlands in 2005. In Poland the planned referendum was still on hold. The Polish conservative coalition, elected in 2005, considered the re-negotiation concerning the voting system in the European Council, i.e. maintaining of the defined in Nice Treaty Polish position in the EU¹⁸, as its top priority in its internal and foreign policy agenda and as a sort of defense of Polish national interests. This 'radicalization' of the Polish attitude, especially during the German Presidency in 2007, damaged Poland's reputation in the EU and let others – in particular the oldest six EU members including Germany – regard Poland as an anti-integrationist and non-progressive force in European integration. The central topic of the Polish government was the continuous strict refusal to accept the voting proposal in order to maintain the political balance between Poland and Germany, considered as formally equal in spite of all differences. The fears of Poland to reduce its influence in decision-making power in favor of Germany and to establish a potential form of a hegemonial structure in Europe paralyzed any attempts for a political compromise. In addition, the exact opposite position of both of those countries regarding the questions of the voting system and the ratification of the CT revitalized old historical and political polemics as well as disputes on a bilateral level.¹⁹ While it was the major objective of the German Presidency in 2007 to come to terms with the EU Constitution Treaty project the Polish position vis-à-vis this priority issue finally turned into the stumbling stone in negotiations. Concerning the central question of the decision-making system towards double majority voting, Poland presented an alternative option based on square root²⁰, which would reduce the German power in the voting

¹⁷ See in more detail: Discussion about European Constitution – Arguments of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, 2003;
<http://www.msz.gov.pl/Discussion,about,European,Constitution,1602.html>

¹⁸ Cf. The PiS programme, 2005, p. 43

¹⁹ Consider the previous resentment between Germany and Poland for example about the controversial Center of Remembrance for so called Expelled Germans in Berlin.

²⁰ Poland's proposal on decision making is not based on the population, but on its square root; the so called »Penrose square root law« would give Warsaw more balance compared to Germany.

system. Although this proposal would have reduced Polish power as well, the main point seemed to be to reduce the German power by the sheer weight of numbers. However, giving the preference to the pro-integration principle the European Council meeting on 21 June 2007 decided to act - if necessary - without Poland and in this way threatened Poland's negotiators into a compromise concerning this key issue within the new EU Treaty and made Poland agree to convene an IGC to finalize a Reform Treaty²¹ for the European Union. Thus, Polish pragmatism, power ambitions, and national identity problems lead not to an increase but to a decline in political influence and position within the EU.

Security dimension

ESDP vs. NATO

As was mentioned above, the enhanced discussions about the further and future role and nature of the second pillar of the European Union reflect Poland's ambivalent position to the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP). Since the early 1990s, Poland's political and security grand strategy is clearly based on a combination as well as the division of labour between European and Atlantic orientation, i.e. between the EU and NATO.²²

But although at the time of the beginning of the Polish transformation process the Western European Union (WEU) seemed both to be developing into the European security actor, later to be fully absorbed in the post-Maastricht EU, and to constitute an option for Polish membership, which the Soviet Union would eventually tolerate, Poland gave priority to NATO membership despite heavy Soviet opposition and despite the early lack of support for the widening of NATO within the U.S. In the Polish view,

- NATO had proven that it was the most effective military alliance to provide maximum security guaranties,²³
- NATO structures allowed a high degree of retaining national sovereignty in its political dimension,
- NATO would positively control the Polish military through military integration,

²¹ Presidency conclusions-Brussels, 21/22 June, Draft IGC Mandate, 11177/07, ANNEX I; http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/94932.pdf

²² See: Statement of the 5th Congress on European Defense. "Poland as a reliable Partner for the Implementation of the European Security and Defense Policy", 2006-10-25; <http://www.mon.gov.pl/en/artykul/2349>

²³ Cf. Humrich/ Pradetto 2001, p. 336.

- NATO promised major military advantages for the Polish military in terms of the supply of modern weaponry,²⁴
- NATO membership would create positive spill-over effects for EU membership because of nearly-equal membership of major European nations in NATO²⁵ and the EU, and
- NATO membership would allow direct and unrestricted access to the U.S. foreign and security decision-making structures.

Upcoming Soviet opposition to the Polish membership in NATO was an additional factor, because forcing the Soviet Union into accepting Polish membership against its will was considered to be a major political victory, ready to be exploited for national consumption because of the long-standing anti-Soviet feelings in Poland.

Although the Polish foreign policy efforts to join the NATO had already begun in 1990 with the presidency of Lech Wałęsa, who was a very strong supporter of this Alliance and made a first major step in this issue hoping to get quick and full membership²⁶, NATO's final decision on Poland's membership needed much more time. First, the general political constellation after the breakthrough of 1989 i.e. the presence of the Soviet troops stationed in Poland and in the other CEEC, still left open the negotiations about their withdrawal from the territory of the Polish state.²⁷ Second, while Germany in the very beginning supported the idea of Polish EU- and NATO membership, the political reluctance of other NATO members including the U.S. vis-à-vis full Polish membership with the consequent related burdens delayed Polish-NATO pre-negotiation talks. Third, at that time a number of NATO members and NATO itself hoped that in a gradual but lengthy political dialogue the USSR could be persuaded to accept Polish membership.

Therefore in the case of Poland and with all other Central Eastern European countries NATO decided to offer membership in a new additional but non-binding-NATO supplement, i.e. the Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme, which did not offer direct security guaranties, but provided

²⁴ Ibid. p. 336.

²⁵ Cf. Multan 1998, p.196.

²⁶ Recall the famous speech of Lech Wałęsa 1991 in Brussels about the eventually membership of Poland in NATO. See more details in: Prezydentura Lecha Wałęsy 1990-1995. Kancelaria Prezydenta RP. Biuro Obsługi Prezydenta, Warszawa 1995, p.96.

²⁷ Cf. Skubiszewski 1997, p.105.

a strong cooperation in different security and defense fields.²⁸ Poland signed its first PfP agreement on 02 February 1994 and defined it as the beginning of their entrance into Euro-Atlantic security cooperation. With increased German support for Polish full membership in NATO and, at the same time, shifting the US attitude on the European security architecture, the political conditions finally changed and the doctrine of widening of NATO towards the East was introduced. The formal assessment regarding the Accession in the North Atlantic Alliance followed in 1997 during the NATO summit in Madrid, which was officially signed on 16 December 1997 in Brussels.²⁹ Two years later, on 12 March 1999, Poland's early goal of becoming a full member of the North Atlantic Alliance turned into reality.

It has to be underlined, that Poland's particular interest in a double strategy of seeking both NATO and EU membership was an essential part of the Polish foreign policy re-orientation since the early 1990s, which considered its EU and NATO membership as equivalent i.e. as basically complementary and not as contradictory. The Polish Prime Minister J. Buzek underlined this as follows:

»We do not perceive these two issues separately. (...) our Membership in the EU is a logical consequence of our NATO membership. Without participation in the EU our presence in the Alliance would make sense only partially.«³⁰

The reasons for the Polish double security and defense strategy were motivated by its historical and political-military-geographical context, namely the geographical location between Germany and the USSR/Russian Federation. Leaving the Soviet controlled Warsaw Treaty Organisation (WTO), substituting East-orientation through an uncompromised West-orientation, and finally by replacing Soviet security guaranties through NATO ones on the one side, and still-existing Soviet military power and proximity of its best conventional forces near the Polish Eastern borders on the other side, a new threat scenario of Soviet military blackmail or even intervention was created, which Poland alone could not adequately deter. The historical factor intensified and deepened this threat perception and made it survive even after the significant decline of Soviet/Russian conventional military power projection capability towards Poland. Thus in 1991, the Polish foreign minister

²⁸ See more in detail: <http://www.nato.int/issues/pfp/index.html>, especially Appendix A - Political-Military Framework for NATO-led PfP Operations; <http://www.nato.int/pfp/docu/d990615b.htm>

²⁹ See the Protocol to the North Atlantic Treaty on the Accession of the Republic of Poland, <http://www.nato.int/docu/basicxt/b971216c.htm>

³⁰ Jerzy Buzek, Prime Minister of the Republic of Poland. "Poland's Future in a united Europe". In: *ZEI Discussion Papers*. 1998/C 6.

already contended that, from the security point of view, Central Europe in particular cannot be turned into a kind of grey, buffer or neutral zone. Because of its location this area would become an object of rivalry among stronger states.³¹

The relation with the United States as the proven guarantor of political and military stability for Western Europe, its successful stand in the end of the East-West-conflict and as the traditionally most willing and able power to preserve peace, security, and stability in this region, earned special attention in this context.³² Understanding that the EU at that time did not have any adequate military dimension and the WEU was militarily by far too weak to counter even a minor Soviet threat or border conflict, NATO in general and U.S. conventional military presence in European NATO countries in particular played an enormous role during Poland's transformation period. As the foremost central Eastern country of NATO Poland should be – and is – interested in maintaining the presence of the United States in Europe and its role as a peculiar European power. Since the presence of America in Europe introduces an unquestionable value added,³³ this priority regarding NATO as the stability factor for the Polish security agenda has been maintained continually up to the present.

In the beginning of Polish EU membership policies as part of its double membership policy – i.e. the pre-Maastricht period – the former EC had neither political will nor military capability to project hard security guarantees for its members or towards its borders and WEU could not be considered as a major military actor, willing and able to serve security needs of the Europeans.³⁴ Traditionally - and conditioned by the East-West conflict - military security services were left to NATO in general and to the U.S. as a traditional European power in particular. Thus, in this early period, Poland understood membership in the EC/EU to be primarily in its political-economic interests and less in its concrete security needs. Given the overlapping membership between NATO and the EU, Poland calculated supplementary and indirect security-building effects of EC/EU membership. It understood that the EC/EU would not allow a direct military threat to one of its

³¹ Cf. Skubiszewski 1997, pp.144-145.

³² Cf. Ibid, p.151.

³³ Cf. Adam Daniel Rotfeld, Foreign Minister of the Republic of Poland - The session of the Sejm on 21 January 2005. (4 kadencja, 96 posiedzenie, 3 dzień (21.01.2005), 28 punkt porządku dziennego: Informacja Ministra Spraw Zagranicznych o zadaniach polskiej polityki zagranicznej w 2005 roku), <http://ks.sejm.gov.pl:8009/search97cgi/vtopic>

³⁴ Cf. 5 Congress on European Defence “Poland as a reliable Partner for the Implementation of the European Security and Defence Policy”, 2006-10-25; <http://www.mon.gov.pl/en/arttykul/2349>

members and would press NATO to take necessary actions and that Germany in particular would do its utmost to prevent any Soviet/Russian security threat against its new EC/EU and NATO-neighbour.

With the end of the East-West conflict and, in addition, the new Maastricht-EU such considerations fundamentally changed and presented an unforeseen challenge to Poland's grand security strategy in which NATO was the main and only military security agent and in which the EC played only a marginal and indirect role for such services. With the creation of CSFP, ESDP, and later the European Crises Intervention Force as well as the debate about a future common European armament market, the EU turned not only into a political-military actor, but into an indirect competitor to NATO in providing security, peace, and peace-keeping services. Given the early strong opposition of the U.S. towards a EU military dimension as a threat to NATO's role in Europe and beyond, this meant for Poland in concrete terms that it had to choose between an orientation towards U.S.-led and militarily effective NATO and a militarily very weak and divided intergovernmental CSFP. In making such a choice, Poland's political-military cost-risk-benefit calculations and its traditional reservations on transferring too many sensitive national sovereignties to Brussels and a common European decision, Poland continued its traditional support for U.S./NATO, while accepting CSFP/ESDP intergovernmentalism but not actively seeking its political and military strength, including introducing better and more effective common policies through the European Charter.

Torn between conflicting consequences of NATO and EU membership, Poland actively supported the development of a much deeper integration in the field of European security concept as far as the ESDP is not duplicating nor competing with NATO³⁵. According to the official Polish Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland for 2007³⁶, Poland advocates the complementarity of the NATO and the European Security Strategies (Art. 25)³⁷. In the global point of view Poland recognizes the key role of the US as the guarantor of the international security capable of stabilizing the political and military relations on the continent. In sum a major Polish vital interest is that the NATO

³⁵ Cf. Longhurst/Zaborowski (2006), p. 57. Additional see: Washington Summit Communiqué Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Washington, D.C. on 24 April 1999 (Art. 9c).

³⁶ See: The National Security Strategy of the RP. Warsaw 2007. In: The Ministry of National Defense the Republic of Poland;
http://www.mon.gov.pl/pliki/File/zalaczniki_do_stron/SBN_RP.pdf

³⁷ Ibid.

remains as the common and politically and militarily effective defense instrument of the member states (Art. 25)³⁸. At the same time Poland accepts the crucial role of the European Defense Agency, but underlines the simultaneousness of the institutional cooperation concerning the security issues between the EU and the NATO (Art. 46).³⁹ And as a potential danger for the external security of the Republic of Poland, Poland views the potential ambitions of EU's CSFP/ESDP not as an alternative but a complementary counterbalance (Art. 32).⁴⁰ Thus, Poland regards itself as the supporter of U.S. objectives in keeping NATO as the main security agent for Europe and eventually limiting and restraining progress in CSFP/ESDP political will-building and military power-building.

Poland further regarded the September-11-case as the proof-stone of the Transatlantic Alliance and a major possibility to demonstrate unrestricted political support to the U.S. But while in this case Poland's position was in full consensus with the other EU-members, the question of European involvement in the Iraq War divided not only the Europeans⁴¹ but revitalized the debate about general engagement and support of ESDP in view of the regional and global security challenges.⁴² Poland's evoking of Art. 5 of the NATO treaty and its absolute solidarity with the U.S. during this period, as well as its participation in the Iraq military missions and the ISAF mission in Afghanistan, demonstrated and illustrated the Polish foreign and security concept for the near future. The Polish pro-American attitude, reflected recently in the Polish-American discussions about the MDI defense programme and the location of antimissile shields on Polish territory, provokes once again a controversial discussion within the EU states about the Polish involvement in European security. The question of the implementation of this project as a joint NATO endeavor or as a separate Polish-U.S. bilateral cooperation, does not contribute constructively to the current discussion reflecting the EU's disappointment with Poland's political choice in this matter. But in spite of this, the newly elected Polish government will continue the strategic policy of its

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Refer to the contradictory positions of Germany, France and Belgium against the American approach in Iraq on the one side, and the so called "Letter of Eight", a joint declaration of support for the United States in its efforts to disarm Iraq (signed by Jose Maria Aznar, Spain/Jose Manuel Durao Barroso, Portugal/Silvio Berlusconi, Italy/Tony Blair, United Kingdom/Vaclav Havel, Czech Republic/Peter Medgyessy, Hungary/Leszek Miller, Poland/Anders Fogh Rasmussen, Denmark) on the other side.

⁴² See the Joint Declaration of the Heads of State and Government of Germany, France, Luxembourg and Belgium on European defense, Brussels 29.04.2003.

predecessors⁴³ and maintain Poland's strong relations with the U.S., but with some modification concerning the mode of its acting towards the EU:

»If we decide jointly, in talks with our partners in the European Union and NATO partners, that this isn't an unambiguous project, then we are definitely going to think it over«.⁴⁴

Supporting the continuation of the policy of a conditional but constructive engagement towards the ECSP/ESDP could be a step towards solving the Polish strategic dilemma – i.e. between Europeanism and Atlanticism - because Poland on the one side pleads for more European integration, but on the other side it has until now shown only limited interest in considering the European project solely as a European one.

European Eastern dimension - the case of Ukraine

The enlargement of the EU built a new political-security-related imperative to establish a closer and deeper cooperation between the new EU and its neighboring countries in Eastern Europe, the Southern Mediterranean as well as the countries in the Southern Caucasus, whose accession to the EU is not anticipated. Despite the perspective of the external effects of a further widening to the East, the EU started to develop a new strategy towards its neighbors and to constitute the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) at the beginning of 2000.⁴⁵ It is understandable that Poland strongly supports such a policy and the idea of sub-regional cooperation towards the East. From the Polish point of view, one of the main EU security goals of the enlarged Union has to be the 'Eastern Dimension', in particular towards the so called *Western Newly Independent States* (WNIS) like Ukraine, Belarus and Moldavia. Apart from the relative success in adaptation and implementation of the ENP towards the cooperation with the new partners⁴⁶, Poland is attempting to create additional new tasks and arrangements within the framework of the Action Plan (AP).⁴⁷ Reflecting the individual interests of the EU countries, Poland's objectives to guide and to strengthen the EU

⁴³ Governments of: L. Walesa/T. Mazowiecki /J. Bielecki /J. Olszewski /W. Pawlak /H. Suchocka/W. Pawlak; A. Kwasniewski/J. Oleksy/ W. Cimoszewicz /J. Buzek/L. Miller; L. Kaczynski/J. Kaczynski, D. Tusk.

⁴⁴ Donald Tusk, Prime Minister of Republic of Poland. In: *Herald Tribune* "Poland's Tusk open to missile defense, reiterates plan to end military mission in Iraq", published: November 6, 2007; <http://www.iht.com/articles/ap/2007/11/06/europe/EU-GEN-Poland-Tusk.php>

⁴⁵ Please see the files: http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/documents_en.htm,
http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/com03_104_en.pdf

⁴⁶ See: Communication from the commission. A Strong European Neighborhood Policy, Brussels 05.12.2007; http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/com07_774_en.pdf

⁴⁷ See: http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/action_plans/ukraine_enp_ap_jls-rev_en.pdf

attention towards the Eastern part of Europe are related on one hand to the Polish bilateral, geopolitical, strategic and historical basis, and on the other hand are associated with the new conditions for common political activities within the EU framework. In terms of security strategy, such a good neighbourhood policy together with creating economic-political dependencies turns neighbours into cooperative but dependent friends, enhances economic-political advantages and extends security towards the East.

The creation of good and friendly relations with the new Eastern neighbors after the turning point of 1989 constituted one of the highest priorities on the Polish foreign policy agenda. Considering the vacant political and security situation in Central and Eastern Europe in the early 90s, Poland's attitude towards the East was more reserved and guided by a double foreign strategy.⁴⁸ These relationships developed a new dynamic with the start of Polish EU accession negotiations and gained a new quality and intensity with Poland's membership in the EU in 2004. Poland signaled its support for the Eastern Countries and declared its willingness »to be a good advocate of their integration with Europe«⁴⁹ – again counting those policies would enhance Poland's role within the EU as well as towards the further East. Since the last two rounds of enlargement in 2004 and 2007 the political and geographical reach of EU influence has been widened towards Eastern and Southern Europe. Due to the fact that the Polish Eastern border equals - with the exception of Lithuania - the EU and NATO border as well, Poland advocates rightly that more attention is demanded on stability and economic interests in this region per se.⁵⁰ Taking into account that the situation of Eastern Europe has been changing significantly in the last few years to the very positive⁵¹, the Polish government emphasizes the fundamental necessity of more assistance and a more active policy of the EU in the Eastern part of Europe, especially in Ukraine.

⁴⁸ Cf. Sejm Exposé by the Polish Prime Minister Krzysztof Skubiszewski, 1 kadencja, 14 posiedzenie, 3 dzień (08.05.1992) 9 punkt porządku dziennego: Informacja ministra spraw zagranicznych o polityce zagranicznej Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej; www.ks.sejm.gov.pl:8009

⁴⁹ Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs. In: "EU Eastern Policy - the Polish perspective". Lecture by Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs. Prague, 21 February 2003.

⁵⁰ With the full membership in the Schengen-agreement (21.12.2007), Poland got much more obligations and responsibility to safe the east border of the EU.

⁵¹ Remember the "orange Revolution" in the Ukraine and the political changes as well as the return to oppressive policy in Belarus after the reelection of president Lukaszenko in 2006.

Although Ukraine has already been declaring its willingness for integration into the EU for a long time, the visible results of progress have been relatively limited in the last years.⁵² Therefore, Poland is actively supporting the transformation process and the democratic reforms, even with the option of an EU membership within the near future, although this objective is not on the EU agenda at the moment. Instead, the EU neighbourhood concept is offering a *third option* between partnership and integration, but without any perspective of the accession. For the Ukraine, the absence of the membership option and the equal positioning with the countries in the Mediterranean area is unacceptable - from a political and historical perspective.⁵³ To gain more efficiency in developing and strengthening the Eastern Policy, Poland is again cooperating with its partners from the Visegrád Group concerning the definition of common positions with the new Eastern neighbors, as well as in regard to the effective realization of joint projects.

Although Polish policies vis-à-vis the European Charter and CSFP/ESDP have damaged Polish influence and its role in European decision-making bodies, as well as the Polish image in major pro-integration-oriented EU member states, nevertheless Poland acts in the case of further Eastern enlargement, neighbourhood, and cooperation policies, not only in Polish but in EU long-term interests as well. Acting bilaterally and regionally, the new members of the EU can and want to share their accumulative experiences in consolidation of the common values of the democratic transformation and thereby help to accelerate the Ukrainians aspirations towards the EU. And it is logical that in addition Poland believes that the successful future development of this country is dependent on its timely integration in the Euro-Atlantic structures. Therefore Poland promotes not only EU but NATO enlargement as well.

Poland, Russia and the European Union

As it has been mentioned several times above, Polish-Soviet/Russian relations are conditioned by both objective historical and geographic factors and subjective perceptions of political and geographical history. In addition, Polish national identity as European and Russian identity as Russian add a further dimension to the Polish-Russian relations.

Looking at recent EU – Russian relations one can begin with the political, security and economical interests, which are very different for the members of the EU, especially after the Eastern

⁵² Cf. Vergun/ Kuznestov 2002, p. 301.

⁵³ Cf. Skevas 2006, p. 68.

Enlargement in 2004 and 2007. The strong national interests as well as the resulting bilateral approaches towards Russia of certain member states of the EU, such as Germany's traditional bilateral policy of constructive engagement, illustrate the limitations for a common EU strategy and policy towards Russia. The basis of the EU relations with Russia is *The Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA)* of 1997 which has intensified its institutional form in the last 10 years and consists currently of several levels of political dialogs including »promotion of international peace and security, support for democratic norms as well as for political and economic freedoms.⁵⁴ It creates a spirit of equality and partnership aimed at strengthening political, commercial, economic and cultural ties, and envisages the eventual establishment of an EU-Russia free trade area«⁵⁵. In addition, Russia as the most important partner in the ENP constitutes the other power counterweight in Europe resulting from its role as energy and resources supplier. This underlines the special status of Russia within the ENP and explicitly the EU-Russian relations, visible in several agreements between both actors. Finally, the EU and Russia adopted the so called »road maps«⁵⁶ at the Moscow Summit in May 2005 as their common agenda for removing the common spaces and improving the implementation of the different aspects with an ongoing cooperation. However, until now the links between objectives and the results in some of the issues mentioned, in particular those concerning democratic values, are very vague.⁵⁷ In addition to that, this relatively close network illustrates that the established concept of the EU-Russia co-operation has become more or less important depending on the constellation between the participating actors, but is not adequate as a standard co-operation platform for each member of the EU. The internal incoherence of the EU regarding this issue can affect further efficiency of the EU on the international level, because on the one side the current framework model allows the extension of the co-operation in certain sectors at the regional level but on the other side disregards support for a dialog between Russia and the - in this aspect - disadvantaged EU member states.

Poland is a prominent example. Because of the political dictate, the historical ties between Poland and Russia were very close in the past and caused a heritage of fear and distrust as well as,

⁵⁴ See more details: http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/ceeca/pca/pca_russia.pdf

⁵⁵ See link: http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/russia/intro/index.htm

⁵⁶ See link: http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/russia/russia_docs/road_map_ces.pdf

⁵⁷ For more details see: Kirsten Westphal/Larisa Deriglazova 2007. "Behind common words: what does coincide and what does mismatch in EU-Russia approaches to mutual cooperation?". In: Larisa Deriglazova, Anselm Skuhra (Ed.), Stefan Fritsch. *EU and Russia. Face to face*. Materials of the International conference. Tomsk, pp. 34-67.

especially in the 90s, problems in the matter of political dialogs between these countries.⁵⁸ To understand Polish perceptions of Russia further, one can refer to the view that the introduction of military dictatorship in Poland in the early 1980s was forced by the threat of a Soviet military intervention to repress early political reforms. The collapse of the Soviet Empire, Poland's West-oriented political course, its membership in EU and in particular in NATO, and its further ambitions towards the *Westernisation* of Eastern Europe has enhanced hackles in neighboring Russia, motivated by unresolved historical grievances and current political-security challenges from the regional and global point of view. The Polish foreign and security policy with its strong support of NATO and the U.S. together with its ongoing support for the further enlargement of the EU - and eventually NATO - provide further conflict potential with Russia. By fully supporting the Ukrainian's efforts concerning political, security and economical transformation, Poland and Lithuania adopted a course in open contrast to Russian interests and policies vis-à-vis those countries.⁵⁹ Poland's support for Viktor Yuschenko during his election and the attempts towards a Western orientation and democratization in Ukraine in 2004 as well as the official critical line towards Russia worsened the relationship and created a major issue of dispute in bilateral relations. However, such conflicts in Polish-Russian relations became overshadowed by EU policies which adopted a position equal to that of Poland and critical towards Russian attempts to influence the political developments in Ukraine and thus prevented the bilateral relations of Poland and Lithuania with Russia from further worsening.

A further main conflict between Poland and Russia is the energy policy which caused a serious security problem in Poland within the last two years. Considering Poland's high dependency on energy imports from Russia – and related Russian pricing policies -⁶⁰ and the increasing Russian tendency to exploit the energy policy for its political purposes at the same time, Poland raised this aspect to the primary issue of its foreign and security policy and will encourage the EU in strengthening its competence in energy matters as well as promoting a multilateral solution in this

⁵⁸ See in more detail: Elżbieta Stadmüller 2003. *Pożegnanie z nieufnością? Rozszerzenie NATO i UE a stosunki polsko-rosyjskie w kontekście bezpieczeństwa europejskiego*. Wrocław.

⁵⁹ Cf. Westphal 2007, pp.46-47.

⁶⁰ Poland depended for example in 2005 on 97,5% of the Russian oil supply and on 65,4% of Russian gas supply. For more details see: Kai-Olaf Lang 2007. "Polens Energiepolitik. Interessen und Konfliktpotentiale in der EU und im Verhältnis zu Deutschland". *SWP Studie*, Berlin, p. 13.

issue.⁶¹ Despite several advances in selected areas of the EU-Russia relation, there have not been major improvements yet – neither quantitative nor qualitative⁶² – and this reconfirms Polish political reservations when it comes to EU-Russian cooperation. Poland's problem, however, is that up to the present the energy policies in the EU are neither integrated nor intergovernmental but still national. This means that in the case of energy imports from Russia, Poland depends mainly on itself and on its bilateral relations with Russia.

As a result, it is one of Poland's vital interests to develop new instruments for the realization of a common strategy in regard to energy policy including the active support of the entire EU for Polish energy needs. But the problem for Polish efforts towards a stronger common strategy is that the Polish interests in the energy sector are not always in conformity with the objectives of other EU members⁶³ and thus this issue has not gained a very high degree of effective enforcement so far. Poland's regards as main objectives to reduce the dependency on Russian gas and to search for new alternatives as well as to promote the idea of a strong integration of the EU regarding the energy sector. Furthermore, the Polish prime minister proposes an "Energy-NATO"⁶⁴, committing the EU and NATO to join forces if their energy supplies are threatened. However, the political test for EU-Russian-Polish relations was the clash between Poland and Russia during the Summit of Helsinki on 24 November 2006, originally planned to focus on the EU's energy partnership with Russia⁶⁵. Retaliating to the Russian embargo on Polish meat exports of 2005 and the increasing problem of energy supplies from Russia, Poland decided to use its EU membership position to veto against a re-negotiation of the Agreement for Partnership and Cooperation (PCA)⁶⁶ between the EU and Russia, since Russia would not fully incorporate the *Energy Charta Treaty* and its Transit protocol, which grants mutual access to energy markets according to these regulations.⁶⁷

⁶¹ See: EU Foreign Policy 2006-2010. Key points of the speech by the Polish Foreign Minister Anna Fotyga, at the conference of the European Union Institute for Security Studies and European Center Natolin: European as a Global Power, Warsaw-Natolin 19-May 2006, p. 3.

⁶² For more details see: Kirsten Westphal (ed.) 2005. *A Focus on EU-Russian Relation*. Frankfurt am Main, Berlin, Bern, Bruxelles, New York, Oxford, Wien.

⁶³ Consider the German-Russian Baltic pipeline project, which underline, in Polish point of view, the principle of independence between Poland, the Baltic States and Russia.

⁶⁴ Cf. „Das polnisch-russische Verhältnis und EU-Ostpolitik“. *Polen-Analysen*. Nr. 5, 16.01.2007.

⁶⁵ For more details see: "EU-Russia Energy Dialog". *Seventh Progress Report*;
http://ec.europa.eu/energy/russia/joint_progress/doc/progress7_en.pdf

⁶⁶ For more details see: http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2003/november/tradoc_114138.pdf

⁶⁷ See: The EU Council supported Polish proposals for principals of energy policy;
http://www.premier.gov.pl/archiwum/english/402_8150.htm

In summary, the Polish veto demonstrated not only the Polish will to pursue national interests within and through the EU but at the same time the EU's lack of willingness and ability to develop a common stand in energy policy issues, which was in Polish eyes a significant demonstration of a lack of EU solidarity for its Polish member. At the same time, Poland's opposition created a major acceptance problem for the EU policy through the Polish government in opening and focussing the political discussion on the instruments which a single member of the EU has for pursuing its national aims and how far this affects the common EU position on the international level.

To finally understand the Polish position towards EU-Russian relations, one has to put this into the broader framework of Polish-Russian/Soviet/Russian relations as well as Polish hopes that both NATO and EU would do its utmost to support Poland against dependency from Russia in general and secure Poland against any political-economic-military threat from Russia. If it comes to EU-Russian relations, Poland tried and will try to convince the EU that the most effective way to prevent Russian dominance, to control and limit Russian influence in the Eastern neighbourhood of the EU, and to introduce positive change to Russia including not only its foreign and security but its energy policies as well is primarily both to take Polish reservations towards Russia adequately into account and to *act* in consensus.

Conclusion

The open-end character of the integration process has enabled all member states of the EU, with their different national policies towards integration, not only to share its experiences within the European bodies but also to express their interests and ideas, as to how to contribute to the European integration project in the future. Especially after Eastern enlargement of the EU there are many varied political coalitions with diverse projects and different modes and political instruments to realize them. Evaluating Poland's past and present ways of acting within the EU and its efforts in regard to the future of the EU, this analysis has shown that Poland's objectives concerning the future integration process of the EU are divided and could be summarized by four imperatives:

1. forwarding intergovernmentalism in substantial questions like the reform of the Union's constitutional architecture and legal system, especially the mode of decision-making in the EU,
2. limited and sometimes ambivalent support of pro-integrationism in key questions of the foreign and security policy of the EU and in particular how far Poland is willing to deepen the EU integration -,
3. continued support for an uncompromised widening to the East - particular concerning the Ukraine and Moldavia - as a major responsibility for both Poland and the EU in the coming years, and
4. to accept the role, influence and interests of Poland as a major European power.

Given the Polish self-perception as an EU member who legitimately co-defines, delays, and if necessary blocks the further integration process, was of minor political relevance as long as Polish interests, sensibilities and historical missions were accepted by the European Union in general and by Germany as a major power in EU policies and politics in particular. Poland's final acceptance of the Reform Treaty, which substitutes the European Charter, has demonstrated that despite all problems Poland is willing and able to pursue common and effective political will-building within the EU.

In summary, the membership in the European Union was a crucial historical success for Poland's identity, its economic and military interests and its power. Transferring sovereignty towards the EU was regarded as a small price, limited by Poland's consent of subscription towards intergovernmentalism and compensated by many advantages – including compliance with concrete benefits as well as in rehabilitating and legitimizing Poland as a major power in a Central Eastern Europe, which had become part of a greater Europe and the EU.

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