

2018 **YEARBOOK** **OF POLISH**

FOREIGN POLICY

2018



PISM

POLSKI INSTYTUT SPRAW MIĘDZYNARODOWYCH
THE POLISH INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

YEARBOOK OF POLISH FOREIGN POLICY 2018



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THE POLISH INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

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Cover design and technical editor

Dorota Dołęgowska

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ul. Warecka 1a, 00-950 Warszawa

tel. (+48) 22 556 80 00

e-mail: publikacje@pism.pl; www.pism.pl

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Authors

—analysts at the Polish Institute of International Affairs

Przemysław Biskup—European Union Programme
Anna Maria Dyner—International Security Programme
Lidia Gibadło—West Europe Programme
Veronika Józwiak—Central Europe Programme
Łukasz Jurczyszyn—West Europe Programme
Artur Kacprzyk—International Security Programme
Patrik Kugiel—Eastern Europe Programme
Łukasz Kulesa—Deputy Head of Research
Agnieszka Legucka—Eastern Europe Programme
Wojciech Lorenz—International Security Programme
Łukasz Ogrodnik—Central Europe Programme
Mateusz M. Piotrowski—International Security Programme
Kinga Raś—Central Europe Programme
Justyna Szczudlik—Deputy Head of Research
Daniel Szeligowski—Coordinator of Eastern Europe Programme
Jolanta Szymańska—Coordinator of the European Union Programme
Marcin Terlikowski—Coordinator of the International Security Programme
Marek Wąsiński—Asia-Pacific Programme
Damian Wnukowski—Coordinator of the Asia-Pacific Programme

Abbreviations

BBN	– Biuro Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego [National Security Bureau] www.bbn.gov.pl
CIE	– Centrum Informatyczne Edukacji [Education IT Center] https://cie.gov.pl
GUS	– Główny Urząd Statystyczny [Statistics Poland] http://swaid.stat.gov.pl ; https://new.stat.gov.pl ; www.bip.new.stat.gov.pl
IPN	– Instytut Pamięci Narodowej [Institute of National Remembrance] www.ipn.gov.pl
KPRM	– Kancelaria Premiera Rady Ministrów [Chancellery of the Prime Minister Republic of Poland] www.gov.pl/web/premier
MAP	– Ministerstwo Aktywów Państwowych [Ministry of State Assets] www.gov.pl/web/aktywa-panstwowe
MC	– Ministerstwo Cyfryzacji [Ministry of Digitalisation] www.gov.pl/web/cyfryzacja
ME	– Ministerstwo Energii [Ministry of Energy] www.gov.pl/web/energia
MF	– Ministerstwo Finansów [Ministry of Finance] www.gov.pl/web/finanse
MKiŚ	– Ministerstwo Klimatu i Środowiska [Ministry of Climate and Environment] www.gov.pl/web/klimat
MKiDN	– Ministerstwo Kultury i Dziedzictwa Narodowego [Ministry of Culture and National Heritage] www.gov.pl/web/kultura
MNiSW	– Ministerstwo Nauki i Szkolnictwa Wyższego [Ministry of Science and Higher Education] www.gov.pl/web/nauka
MON	– Ministerstwo Obrony Narodowej [Ministry of National Defence] www.gov.pl/web/obrona-narodowa
MPiT	– Ministerstwo Przedsiębiorczości i Technologii [Ministry of Economic Development and Technology] www.gov.pl/web/rozwoj-technologie

- MRPiT – Ministerstwo Rozwoju, Pracy i Technologii [Ministry of Development, Labour and Technology]
www.gov.pl/web/rozwój-praca-technologie
- MSZ – Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych [Ministry of Foreign Affairs]
www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja
- MŚ – Ministerstwo Środowiska [Ministry of the Environment]
www.gov.pl/web/srodowisko
- NBP – Narodowy Bank Polski [National Bank of Poland]
www.nbp.pl
- PAIH – Polska Agencja Inwestycji i Handlu [Polish Investment Trade Agency]
www.paih.gov.pl
- PAK – Polska Agencja Kosmiczna [Polish Space Agency]
www.polsa.gov.pl
- PAP – Polska Agencja Prasowa [Polish Press Agency]
www.pap.pl
- PARP – Polska Agencja Rozwoju Przedsiębiorczości [Polish Agency for Enterprise Development]
www.parp.gov.pl
- KPMG – Globalna organizacja niezależnych firm świadczących usługi profesjonalne [Global organisation of independent professional services firms]
<https://assets.kpmg.com>.

From the Editor

We are pleased to present to our readers another volume of the *Yearbook of Polish Foreign Policy*. It is the only publication on the Polish publishing market that presents the views of analysts from the Polish Institute of International Affairs, who specialize in this area and continuously follow the shaping of Polish political activity in the international environment. They describe the process of implementing Polish foreign policy, using the same method, repeated every year, which allows them to monitor changes taking place within this sphere of state activity and to compare specific periods. The fact that PISM analysts seek to answer the same research questions year after year makes it possible to systematize the analysis of Polish foreign policy.

In each chapter, the authors start with the description of policy conditions and the government's policy goals, describe how they were achieved, and finally assess the effectiveness with which these goals were achieved. This approach enriches the Polish public debate on foreign policy with arguments based on systematic analytical observation and contributes to fulfilling one of PISM's statutory tasks: to disseminate knowledge about the state's external activities. In 2018, the importance of this process is reflected by exceptional circumstances – the 100th anniversary of Poland's independence. This occasion lends additional significance to publications such as the *Yearbook of Polish Foreign Policy*. After all, what today is an analysis of current events will, in decades to come, constitute a supplementary source for future scholars of Polish foreign policy working on successive volumes of *Polish Diplomatic Documents*.

Each year, the authors of the *Yearbook* choose the government's annual *Information on Polish Foreign Policy*, presented to the Sejm by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, as their starting point. It was presented in 2018 by Prof. Jacek Czaputowicz, who replaced Dr. Witold Waszczykowski at the beginning of January of this year as Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Mateusz Morawiecki government, which was sworn in at the end of 2017. Minister Czaputowicz also recognized the importance of the unique circumstances in which he had to present the *Information*. He used it to recall the fundamental principle that Poland follows in international relations. He said: "Thus, from the provisions of the Constitution comes the guiding principle of Polish foreign policy, the principle of subjectivity – reflected in the slogan 'nothing about us without us'. It rules out recognizing as binding any decisions made about us without our participation". This was clearly a reference to the speech given last year by Minister Waszczykowski, in which he

warned against the efforts of some countries to revise the international law-based international order.

Minister Czaputowicz also recalled that Poland's *raison d'état* includes to guarantee its independence and sovereignty, and also to ensure the civilizational development of the country. He then presented four theses about the challenges and goals facing Polish foreign policy. As part of the first thesis, he stated that "Poland's international position is based on its strong position in Europe". He linked this with Poland's obligation to "promote and defend those interests of our regional partners that coincide with Polish interests". The second thesis dealt with the institutional, axiological and security crisis in which the European Union found itself. In his third thesis, Czaputowicz spoke of the need to maintain strong transatlantic relations. As he stated: "The United States' military presence in Europe and its strong position within NATO is fundamental for Poland's military security and that of the entire region. It is in the interest of Poland and Central and Eastern Europe that the United States and the North Atlantic Alliance remain permanently involved in this part of the world". The final thesis, Thesis IV, addressed the main challenge to the consolidation of Poland's subjectivity in international relations: Russia's revisionist stance with regard to the post-1989 political order in Europe.

Poland's foreign policy in 2018 was focused on the tasks and goals mentioned by Minister Czaputowicz. Poland's election to the United Nations Security Council for 2018–2019 provided a unique opportunity to work for the preservation of the international order it desires. Polish diplomats at the UN forum sought, among other things, to harness support for Ukraine in its opposition to Russian aggression over Russia's occupation of Crimea and Russia's support for so-called separatists in the Donbass. Poland was persistent in this respect because it wanted to demonstrate its devotion to international law—this was in contrast to the "argument of force", which Russia and some other countries favor as a means to pursue their interests in international relations—but also wanted to underline its commitment to the principles of independence and sovereignty. Polish diplomacy also used its position in the European Union, among other things, to successfully lobby the EU Foreign Affairs Council to concern the illegal elections in the Donbass.

Other countries have also acknowledged the crisis facing the European Union. As a result, various prescriptions for its resolution – some of them unfavorable to Poland – were put forward and debates about them intensified as the prospect of Britain's withdrawal from the EU drew closer. In 2018, the differences in the positions of France and Germany, which limited the risks of differentiated integration and gave other countries the opportunity to present their reform

proposals, became clear. Poland had to strengthen its existing coalitions – led by the Visegrad countries, which the Polish government considers to be its most important partners – and build new ones. The Hanseatic Group became increasingly attractive for Poland. That group was clear in its opposition to the dominant role of the Franco-German tandem in Europe. This opposition made it more likely that far-reaching integration plans would be abandoned in favor of solutions that could satisfy the largest possible number of states and preserve the unity of the Union. For Poland's EU policy – and its ability to form coalitions – it was important to reduce the intensity of its dispute with the European Commission over the rule of law.

Poland's subjectivity in international relations was also to be strengthened through efforts to bring about security guarantees. In 2018, these focused on three areas. The first was the increase of guarantees for Poland from its allies – both from NATO and bilaterally, from the United States. Following the positive note in Polish-American relations represented by President Donald Trump's visit to Warsaw in July 2017, Polish diplomats continued their efforts to maintain the U.S. administration's interest in the Three Seas Initiative. The "anchoring" of U.S. attention in Poland and Central Europe was also to be served by the purchase of arms or liquefied natural gas (LNG) – initiatives ultimately aimed at convincing the Americans to increase their military presence on Polish soil. The second area was that of growing transatlantic tensions, especially between the United States on the one hand, and France and Germany on the other. These tensions posed a formidable challenge to Poland's initial 1990s foreign relations premise that the pursuit of a strategic partnership with the U.S. was compatible with EU membership and the European integration process. Of course, this was not the first time that the transatlantic alliance had experienced similar turbulence. The 2003 Iraq war is a case in point. However, this time the potential strategic dilemma for Poland – having to choose its European partners or the U.S. – was greater. This was due to the accumulation of differences between the American and German or French approaches and their scale. In particular, it was deeply concerning that the disputes between Poland's main partners were beginning to affect not only specific issues, but also such fundamental questions as attitudes toward the international order. In such a situation, Poland had to be extremely sensitive in its foreign policy to avoid being seen as pushing for one strategic position over the other. The third area was seeking to shape European defense projects like PESCO so they would fit with principles to which Poland is firmly committed: coordinating EU initiatives with NATO.

In 2018, Polish diplomats also faced a significant organizational challenge in the form of the climate summit (COP24), which took place in Katowice in

December 2018. The stakes were high because the future of the Paris Agreement (symbolized by the slogan “No Paris without Katowice”), and thus the creation of a global climate regime, depended on the summit’s outcome. Poland had to ensure that the points of contention between its participants, who had different interests and often even different perspectives on climate issues, were resolved if it wanted COP24 to be a success. The Polish government also saw this extremely difficult task as an opportunity to improve Poland’s position within the European Union, and sought to achieve this by gaining additional influence in intra-EU negotiations on climate policy issues, while ensuring economic competitiveness. This was of key importance in order to achieve another goal Minister Czaputowicz mentioned in his speech: ensuring the country’s civilizational development.

Poland embarked on yet another century of its existence, faced with series of challenges that seemed to intensify with each passing month. The actions of Russia, which was violating principles established by the international community, were of particular concern. In 2018, it used chemical weapons on the territory of a European country. The attack on former GRU officer Sergei Skripal and his daughter in Salisbury in March was another clear example of Russia’s use of the “argument of force” and of its blatant disregard for international norms. Britain’s call for solidarity was met with recognition by its allies and further sanctions against Russia were imposed. However, they were not stringent enough to persuade the Russian authorities to alter their policies. For example, the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline project – a key Russian political tool used to weaken Ukraine’s international position and break the unity of European Union countries – remained in place. In this situation, Poland was facing two fundamental challenges. Firstly, it was concerned with the future of an international order based on international law. Secondly, it needed to ensure a concrete dimension of allied solidarity at a time when international relations were becoming increasingly strained.

Sławomir Dębski

I.

THE BASIS OF POLISH FOREIGN POLICY

Government Information on Polish foreign policy in 2018
(presented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland
Jacek Czaputowicz at a sitting of the Sejm on 21 March 2018)

Mr President, Mr Speaker, Mister Prime Minister, Colleagues Ministers, Members of the House, Your Excellencies Ambassadors, Ladies and Gentlemen! I stand before you today for the first time as foreign minister in the new reconstructed cabinet led by Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki to inform the House, its guests and the citizens of the Republic of Poland about Polish foreign policy tasks in 2018.

It is an honour for me to present our foreign policy programme for the year when Poland celebrates the centenary of its regained Independence.

I would like to thank the President who represents the Majesty of the Republic and who cooperates with the Prime Minister and the foreign minister in foreign policy, as provided for by the Constitution, for his presence here today.

Close cooperation between the President and the government, mutual support in serving the Republic strengthens Poland's position and is a condition of its effective foreign policy.

Members of the House! Pursuant to Art. 4 of the Polish Constitution "Supreme power in the Republic of Poland shall be vested in the People." Hence foreign policy is developed in accordance with the will of the citizens.

The foreign minister, like any other member of the Council of Ministers, is accountable to the Sejm. The Sejm reviews the work of ministers and holds them accountable for running Poland's affairs in a field the Sovereign, that is the people, entrusted to them, by giving a vote of confidence to the Council of Ministers.

At the same time, the Sejm as an assembly of the people's representatives, takes sovereign decisions. Some of these decisions concern foreign policy and set conditions for diplomacy's future actions.

The President of the Republic of Poland, who co-develops the State's foreign policy, is also elected directly by citizens.

The fundamental principle guiding Polish foreign policy, that of empowerment as reflected in the motto "Nothing About Us Without Us" is enshrined in the Polish Constitution. It does not allow us to recognise as binding any decisions that concern us that were taken without our participation.

Mr Speaker, Members of the House! Guaranteeing national independence and sovereign statehood is Poland's natural reason of State. Ensuring Poland's

civilisation development in empowered relations within the bosom of the international community is also its reason of State.

This leads me to presenting four arguments relating to the challenges, goals and nature of Polish foreign policy.

Argument I. Poland's international standing stems from its strong position in Europe. Poland's attractiveness and at the same time its ability to effectively impact decision-making processes as an ally in NATO or as a partner in European Union structures is determined by its ability to voice the interests of the states in our region and to act as their advocate. This can be realised with full respect for the political empowerment of our neighbour partners.

Poland as the largest state in the region shoulders the main burden of promoting and defending shared interests of all partners in the region.

Argument II. The European Union is in a crisis that affects its institutions, axiology and external security. Even though the economies have recovered from the 2008 financial crisis, its political and social consequences continue to affect the nature of relations between European Union Member States, the role played by the European Union and the future of the European project. The crisis of democratic procedures in Member States and the transfer of real decision-making processes to informal bodies have weakened the position of the European Union, have led to growing Euroscepticism and re-nationalisation of European states' policies.

Argument III. The military presence of the United States in Europe and its strong position in NATO has fundamental significance for military security of Poland and the region as a whole. Permanent engagement of the United States and the North Atlantic Alliance in this part of the globe is in the vital interest of Poland and East-Central Europe. Poland is vitally interested in sustaining strong transatlantic bonds. Continuing to strengthen and develop these bonds is a fundamental task of Polish security policy.

Argument IV. Russia's policy represents a threat to the building of Poland's empowerment in international relations. Russia seeks to revise the political order that has existed in Europe since 1989 and which restored Poland's independence. Instruments that are used to accomplish this objective include destabilisation of many regions in Poland's closer and more distant neighbourhood, attempts to widen political divisions inside and among states and efforts to break up the transatlantic unity and to deepen divisions inside the European Union.

Mr Speaker, Members of the House! Having provided a general outline of the conditions in which Polish foreign policy is conducted, I would now like to move on to discussing specific issues.

First I would like to speak about measures that we have adopted to strengthen our security in an unstable international environment and about our relations with the United States of America, our main ally. I will then present our vision of European policy and the state of relations with our key European partners.

In the next part of my address, I will speak about regional cooperation. I will then discuss Polish diplomacy goals with respect to the Polish community abroad and our development cooperation. I will also speak about the recent changes that are being made in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Members of the House! National security of the Republic of Poland is Polish foreign policy's top priority. Thus the old maxim of 'security first' embraced by every reasonable diplomacy is our signpost, too.

Poland's national security is founded on the North Atlantic Alliance's strength and cohesion, besides being evidently based on the Polish state's defence system.

The government with the President have been effectively seeking stronger NATO's military presence in our region since the autumn of 2015. Together with Romania, we were able to build solidarity of states as manifested by the creation of the "Bucharest 9" format. Its demands to strengthen NATO's military presence on the eastern flank were accepted at the Warsaw summit in 2016 and implemented last year.

Poland hosts on its territory allied forces from the United States, the United Kingdom, Romania, and Croatia.

Allow me to express my gratitude to all our allies for their show of solidarity.

Poland and some other NATO members have spent an average of 2% of their GDP on their own defences for a number of years now. Even though strong economic growth and a change in the calculation method were responsible for making this share fall below this level by one hundredth of a percent, we continue to adhere to the principle that the credibility of NATO's deterrence and defence policy depends on the size of defence expenditures.

The Polish Armed Forces take part in NATO missions in Latvia and Romania. In line with NATO's timetable, a Polish military contingent is on an air policing mission in the Baltic States of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia.

We continue to cooperate with Germany and Denmark as part of the Multinational Corps Northeast, which is headquartered in Szczecin, and with Lithuania and Ukraine as part of the Polish-Lithuanian-Ukrainian Brigade that was reactivated in 2016.

We have become a provider of common security, not only its recipient.

Poland will seek to increase NATO's military presence and infrastructure in the region, knowing that only credible deterrence, one that is based on real strength can secure our peace and security.

One of the aims of Polish foreign policy is to make the Alliance's operations more effective, especially as regards its collective defence. We shall seek to ensure assistance force, to strengthen allied mobility and realistic planning and to accelerate decision-making processes. Our respective proposals are now being consulted with our allies.

Poland advocates maintaining an "open door policy" by the North Atlantic Alliance. We want to develop cooperation with NATO partners, mainly those in its immediate neighbourhood: Finland, Sweden, Ukraine, Moldova, and Georgia whose opinions about the nature of threats to international security are very close to ours.

Members of the House! Details of military cooperation, both in the North Atlantic Alliance and in the European Union, are the responsibility of the Ministry of National Defence. Speaking about the political dimension of Polish military activity, I would only like to emphasize that the Polish Armed Forces protect the security of Poland. They also build our country's credibility as a reliable ally in missions outside the territory of NATO and European Union Member States.

In 2017, the Polish Armed Forces took part in 13 foreign missions, of which seven were led by NATO (in Afghanistan, Kosovo, Latvia, Romania, and other Baltic states, a training mission in Ukraine and a mission of commanding a Standing NATO Group), three led by the European Union (in Georgia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the Central African Republic), two coalition missions (in Kuwait and Iraq) and one bilateral training mission in Ukraine.

Since the beginning of this year, the mandate of the Polish contingent in Romania also extends to Bulgaria. In February this year, a Polish Armed Forces contingent joined the European Union Sophia mission in the Mediterranean, which began in 2015. Polish officers and law enforcement agents are also participating in EU-led missions in Ukraine, Moldova and in a sea operation off the costs of Somalia.

I would like to take this opportunity and thank the Polish Armed Force's servicemen and servicewomen, officers and civilian workers for their dedicated service for the Homeland outside our borders. Their commitment builds Poland's credibility as an ally in NATO and the European Union.

Mr Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen! Our goal is to further deepen our security ties with the United States. We will continue to develop our bilateral cooperation

and will work together on different multilateral fora, primarily in NATO. We are against any steps that could provoke transatlantic divisions.

We will seek to anchor more permanently elements of US armed forces in Poland's territory. This political line regarding NATO's whole eastern flank is shared by our allies from the Bucharest "9".

The US base in Redzikowo is an important element of defence of NATO territory against a potential attack. We take note of technical delays in its construction that the US has been signalling since mid-January this year. We await detailed information regarding this matter.

The United States is participating in the modernisation of the Polish armed forces. Our partnership in the economic sphere grows steadily and now extends to the promising area of innovations and development of high technologies.

We hope that the Polish-US economic summit in April will provide a stronger impulse for our cooperation in this field.

Cooperation to make the Central European natural gas market less dependent on Russian deliveries has strategic significance. The year 2018 will be the first year in a five-year contract for the supplies of US gas.

Ladies and Gentlemen! Our seat on the UN Security Council means more influence and greater responsibility for global issues.

We focus our activities on strengthening the principles of international law, preventing conflicts and fighting emerging threats to peace and security.

Poland advocates full respect for the fundamental principles of international law: inviolability of borders, respect for sovereignty, observance of human rights and renouncement of military force.

On the issue of resolving the conflict in Syria, we support the Geneva declaration and negotiations held under UN auspices. We will support resolutions of conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo and in South Sudan. As the chair of sanctions committees we turn our special attention to the situation in Sudan and South Sudan.

As a UN Security Council member we demand a stop to Russia's destabilising actions against Ukraine and stress the need for a peaceful settlement of the conflict in Donbass.

We attach great importance to humanitarian issues, including protection of the rights of religious communities.

When President Andrzej Duda inaugurated Poland's membership of the Security Council in January this year, he took an active part in a debate on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. I participated in a debate on

security in Afghanistan and Central Asia and on the role of the United Nations Charter in ensuring peace and security.

In May, Poland will assume the rotating presidency of the UN Security Council during which President Duda will chair a debate on strengthening trust in international law in today's world.

Poland will chair the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference to mark the 50th anniversary of its entry into force.

Mr Speaker, Members of the House! Poland's membership of the European Union strengthens its international standing. It brings our country many economic, political, and social benefits. Our businesses grow faster thanks to the single market. Polish citizens can travel, work, and study abroad freely. So, it comes as no surprise that the European Union continues to enjoy strong support. According to a Public Opinion Research Centre survey in January 2018, 87% Poles declared their support for EU membership, the highest rate in Europe.

One of the key tasks of the Polish government is to ensure equal and empowered participation of our country in shaping the process of European integration.

It is crucial to determine the nature of European integration and the model of the Union that we want to build in the future.

We also need to address specific issues relating to the concept of a multi-speed Union, the four European freedoms, the migration crisis, Permanent Structured Cooperation on security and defence, and structural funds in the context of the debate on the new multiannual financial framework (2021–2027).

Poland's goal is a strong European Union. This is a goal that I believe a decisive majority of this House would subscribe to. This is also a policy goal of Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki's cabinet.

Let us consider the meaning of a "strong and effective" European Union and why adopting a specific model of the European integration process will make it strong and effective.

In order for the European Union to be effective it must be able to obtain a real democratic mandate to act. A strong Union is a Union that has the support of its Member States and peoples. An effective Union is a Union that has a democratic mandate which enables it to use the resources generated by EU citizens to attain democratically set goals.

The first task of the Union is to win political support of its citizens for its actions. Such consent in the form of a real mandate can only be obtained at the level of national parliaments. Further deepening of European integration is

possible insofar as it is accepted by the States and peoples that participate in the process.

The European Commission is not a supra-government, and the European Parliament is not a supra-parliament empowered to instruct national governments and parliaments. Let us recall Art. 5(2) of the Treaty on European Union which stipulates that: “the Union shall act only within the limits of the competences conferred upon it by the Member States,” and “Competences not conferred upon the Union in the Treaties remain with the Member States.”

The EU’s democratic deficit is not a figure of speech. It is a reality with far-reaching political consequences. The Republic of Poland takes the position that the European Union can be strong only thanks to the real support of its citizens, who are able to confer a democratic mandate on their elected governments.

Citizens want their voices to be heard. The rising tide of protest against integration on the European continent is not the cause of the EU’s democratic weakness, but its consequence. Nothing is more harmful to the idea of European integration than the actual inequality of its Member States before the law, the use of double-standards and the European Commission walking away from the role of objective guardian of the Treaties to act as an instrument in the hands of the largest States.

Poland is an old democracy, it has one of the longest parliamentary traditions in Europe. This year we are celebrating the 550th anniversary of the Polish parliamentary system. One of the makers of the Constitution of 3 May, Hugo Kołłątaj, wrote:

“Peoples are unjustly accused of rising against those who rule, because they rise against those who misrule.”

This quote is still relevant today after two hundred or so years. It reveals the real cause of protests against European integration in many countries.

We place our trust in the common sense of voters and we reject usurpation by anyone of the right to lecture his fellow citizens about what they should believe in.

Members of the House! We strongly oppose the idea of a two-speed European Union.

The creation of a European nucleus, or a first-speed Europe, would obviously result in moving every real decision-making process from Treaty-based EU institutions, which represent all Member States, to newly created Eurozone institutions and informal bodies.

This would lead to a marginalization of Central Europe, Scandinavia, and Member States from the south of the Eurozone which are struggling with the

consequences of the financial crisis. The establishment of a “Directorate” of selected superpowers would run counter to Europe’s fundamental principles.

In an efficient and functional democracy there is no room for protectionism. The proposed revision of the Posted Workers Directive is one of its expressions.

We cannot accept rules of the game which suggest that we should lose our existing competitive advantages while stronger partners will keep theirs according to the rules they imposed. We believe in an integrated, single European market and in the four freedoms. Let me say it once more: we believe in all four freedoms: the free movement of goods, capital, services and people, not just some of them.

We advocate a social market economy based on free competition and economic freedoms. Protectionism limits competitiveness and economic growth and so diminishes the EU’s international standing.

Mr Speaker, Members of the House! Structural funds are part of a mechanism that makes the European market beneficial for all of its entities. Weaker partners regard them as compensation that more economically developed states pay for lifting import duties and protectionist quotas and for opening up less competitive economies to free competition from stronger players.

Therefore, these funds are not charity handed out by the richer to the poorer and most of them return to net payers. The Polish market and the markets of other countries in our region remain open to all European partners. In return, we expect the other side to meet its obligations until we narrow the development gap with old EU states. When we catch up with the EU-15 development level, we will naturally become net payers and will also benefit from this fact.

We advocate sustaining a high level of funding for the EU cohesion policy in the 2021–2027 financial framework. Poland is a leader in effective and transparent use of EU funds.

We realize that funds will be smaller. The United Kingdom, which was a net payer, is leaving the Union. Some Polish regions have achieved such income level that they will lose their right to receive structural policy funds. We also realize that some states expect the EU budget to fund new areas, such as combatting migration, innovation, security, and defence cooperation.

We opt for an ambitious budget, for supplementing shortages by scrapping rebates and raising contributions. We declare our readiness to increase Poland’s contribution accordingly.

We do not agree with suggestions that access to EU funds should be linked to an assessment of compliance with the rule of law. The rule of law is a value that we treasure, however, we are concerned that unclear criteria could lead to arbitrary limitation of Member States’ rights.

The European Union should be founded on universal rules that are equally applied to all, but the application of excessive deficit procedures shows that such instruments are not binding for all members.

We regret to note the Commission's decision to launch the procedure set forth in Art. 7 TEU. We defend our right to carry out reforms of the judiciary that respond to the expectations of the Poles voiced in the latest elections. They do not violate the principles of a democratic rule of law. On the contrary, they strengthen them.

We outlined our position in the White Paper, which we communicated to the EU institutions and Member States. It contains arguments explaining why the reform of the judiciary was necessary. We are open to dialogue and a merit-based discussion with the European Commission and Member States.

Members of the House! We want to participate in resolving the migration crisis. But we are against imposing a scheme of obligatory quotas for taking in refugees. Past experiences prove that they go to those countries that can provide better living conditions to them.

We are assisting societies in the Middle East in solving crises where they erupt. Poland and its Visegrad Group partners appropriated 35 million euros to protecting Libya's border. Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki paid a visit to Lebanon in February to launch the construction of houses for Syrian refugees.

We respect our obligation relating to asylum procedures. In 2015–2017 we took in 3 700 people from European Union Member States, and we examined favourably 21 000 applications. Doesn't Poland contribute substantially to solving the migration crisis?

Members of the House! Enhanced cooperation in defence and security—PESCO—addresses three important issues: the development of a national defence industry, the structure of a national defence budget and the effectiveness and speed of cross-border transfer of allied troops.

The aim of the European Defence Fund is to finance research into new defence technologies and to support Member States that want to develop their combat capabilities. It will naturally affect the structures of national military budgets and the defence industries of EU states. We advocate equal opportunities of access to the European Defence Fund for all the Member States' defence industries to ensure growth, innovation and jobs in each one of them.

We want to avoid a situation in which the Commission's proposals will mostly benefit the largest countries with robust defence industries, whereas the smaller Member States will face a reduction of their potentials. We should also develop technologies and capabilities which are key to defending the Union's own

territory. We strongly advocate the principle of avoiding duplication of NATO's activities and expenditure.

When talking about enhanced European defence capabilities, we cannot forget about our British allies. Let us emphasize that the European Union will still need the UK once it leaves the bloc. The relationship between both entities should be as close as possible, but based on a balance of rights and obligations. We seek to protect the acquired rights of Polish nationals who live in the UK. We are satisfied with the progress made by the first stage of negotiations, and we hope for a good deal on the final framework of EU-UK cooperation.

Members of the House! To sum up this part of my address: we want a European Union of citizens, which involves recognizing the fundamental role of Member States as hosts of the European integration process. Each government is answerable to its citizens, who are represented in parliaments. You cannot extend the EU's powers laid down in the treaties adopted by the Member States without their consent expressed in a treaty.

A multi-speed Union would be a step towards its inevitable breakup. We need to respect all four fundamental freedoms of the single European market.

Structural funds are an effective instrument of building the Union's cohesion. Their reduction would undermine this cohesion. EU policies, including migration and security policies, cannot be imposed on any country against their will.

The aim of the European integration process cannot be to reduce the US engagement in Europe. After all, European solidarity is part of transatlantic solidarity, which is to say solidarity of the whole West.

Ladies and Gentlemen! In a world where countries play the lead role in international politics, bilateral relations lie at the heart of diplomacy.

Germany is our main political and economic partner in the European Union, and our important ally in NATO. We welcome the fact that the programme of the new government places high value on the Polish-German partnership. It was further confirmed by Chancellor Angela Merkel's visit to Warsaw on Monday. We declare our willingness to fill it with substance.

The success of any positive projects put forward at the EU forum depends on friendly relations with Germany. We concur on many items on the EU agenda, such as defence policy, fiscal policy, and the ramifications of Brexit. We appreciate Germany's role in maintaining sanctions which were imposed on Russia in the wake of its aggression in Crimea and Donbass.

We would like to begin work on resolving matters on which both our countries differ. We consider the Nord Stream 2 project to be a threat to the whole region's energy security, and to the common EU energy market. We will be also discussing

the need to compensate Poles for the losses suffered during World War Two. We will be looking for legal and financial ways of redressing the injustice that was done.

Members of the House! France continues to be our important partner. We have special historical ties linking us with that country. We look back with gratitude at French support for Poland's freedom and independence; for the Great Emigration, the *Kultura* magazine in Paris, and Solidarity. Poles highly value French culture.

Prime Minister Beata Szydło met with President Macron in Paris last November to discuss the future shape of the European Union. We will continue these discussions.

Acknowledging the strong need to stabilize our European neighbourhood, we view France as our key partner of military cooperation, both in bilateral relations and within NATO and the Union.

Our economic relationship is strong, with France being the fourth biggest investor in Poland.

We want to unlock the potential of the Weimar Triangle to solve our common problems, and enhance the Union's unity and cohesion.

The United Kingdom is one of our closest partners. Our foreign and defence ministers regularly discuss security matters in the Quadriga format. Our consultations in December saw the signing of a treaty on cooperation in these fields. London has recently hosted the second Belvedere Forum, which helps to deepen the dialogue between the civil societies of Poland and the UK. This year marks the Polish-UK Year of Entrepreneurship, Science and Innovation. A business forum is scheduled for May. We are working on a new mechanism of regular economic consultations.

The group of Poland's major European partners will traditionally include Italy and Spain, countries with which we plan to hold political consultations. We want to build on our close cooperation with those countries, representing different regions of Europe, so as to look for constructive solutions for the entire Union, and enhance its cohesion. The Utrecht Conference is an important forum for dialogue in our relationship with the Netherlands.

Mr Speaker, Members of the House! Fostering regional cooperation is one of our overarching priorities. We have a shared network of interests with many of our neighbours on security, infrastructure, approach to the EU budget, and our region's representation in the EU decision-making bodies.

We can feel a growing willingness within the Visegrad Group to advance our common interests. We are grateful to Hungary for its solidarity in the dispute with the European Commission. The Visegrad Group is very much on the same

page when it comes to the migrant crisis and European integration process. We set out our common vision of the Union during the Rome summit marking the 60th anniversary of the adoption of the Treaties.

The Three Seas Initiative comprises 12 EU Member States that sit between the Baltic, Adriatic, and Black Seas. In 2017, Warsaw hosted a Three Seas Initiative Summit, which was organized on the initiative of President Andrzej Duda. Attended by US President Donald Trump, the meeting injected the project with new energy.

The Initiative aims to translate legal and treaty rules of the Single European Market into tangible infrastructural results. The exchange of goods, services and labour mobility remain far below our region's potential. It is impeded by the lack of infrastructure such as roads, railway lines, or energy links in the north-south direction. We look forward to deepening and fleshing out our collaboration, notably by establishing a Three Seas Fund.

We value trilateral Polish-Romanian-Turkish consultations on foreign and defence policy. Romania is an important ally on the eastern flank of NATO, with its economy developing at the fastest pace in the EU. With Bucharest, we share a common outlook on the international situation, and a tradition of an alliance dating back to the interwar period. The country will hold the EU presidency next year. We appreciate Turkey's pivotal role as an important member of the North Atlantic Alliance.

We are developing cooperation with our neighbours in the north, especially on security policy, defence industry, European agenda, and sectoral collaboration. An opening to Scandinavia – Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland – would be a natural direction of development for Three Seas infrastructural investments. We set great store by the format of dialogue that brings together Central Europe and Scandinavia.

With the Baltic States – Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia – we share a similar view on the nature of threats, as well as common interests in such domains as the European Union, energy, and infrastructure. Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki's meeting with leaders of the Baltic States on 9 February confirmed the solidarity between our countries.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Members of the House! Eastern policy is among the key dimensions of Poland's foreign policy. This is due to the current pace of developments in the East, the scale of challenges to Poland's and Europe's security coming from this direction, and our historical experience.

It is in Poland's interest that nations of our eastern neighbourhood should enjoy independence and security. That their right to the sovereign choice of a

path of development, political system and alliances should be respected according to the spirit and letter of the Charter of the United Nations, and the principles of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. Those that decide to opt for Europe and the West can count on Poland's unwavering assistance in achieving this aim. We welcomed the outcome of last year's Eastern Partnership summit in Brussels.

We will continue to support our partners, using the potential of the European Union, NATO and bilateral relations.

Members of the House! Pragmatic relations with the Russian Federation are in the interest of Poland and Europe alike. Polish diplomacy works towards a joint and consistent Russia policy of NATO and the EU. Our coherent position should respond to Russia's conduct towards the Union, NATO, their individual Member States, and our strategic partners. It should also address Russia's compliance with international law.

We believe that it is imperative to maintain political dialogue with Russia. However, it cannot boil down to ignoring Russia's aggressive policy towards the West. In recent years, Russia has violated many treaties that were adopted at solemn ceremonies.

We believe that when solving problems in relations with the Russian Federation, we must be clear-eyed about military security, and issues related to transport, communications and energy. Looking for solutions by making legal and treaty arrangements only will not do. We will develop our position on Russia together with our allies from NATO and the European Union.

We have repeatedly highlighted the lack of basis for withholding wreckage of the Tu-154 aircraft and its black boxes, which are Polish property. Their return is a legal and moral obligation. We will also seek to recover archives which are of key historical importance to Poland from the Russians.

An example of successful cooperation was a set of educational materials for history teachers, prepared jointly by a team of Polish and Russian researchers.

Members of the House! From the Polish perspective, an independent, democratic and stable Ukraine is a keystone of Europe's order and security. The importance of bilateral relations was highlighted by President Andrzej Duda's visit to Kharkiv last year. We are confident that the Polish-Ukrainian partnership is strong and should continue to be so.

In Poland, the dramatic and historic trial which Ukraine has been undergoing amid Russia's military aggression has inspired a natural feeling of affinity and solidarity with a nation fighting for "freedom, integrity, and independence."

We have established intensive training and military cooperation; our defence industries are also working closer together. We are expanding railway and air transport links, with Poland's national carrier LOT opening a service to a sixth airport in Ukraine as we speak.

We showed our energy solidarity when faced with Gazprom's decision to cut off gas supplies to Ukraine, providing this fuel through the Hermanowice hub.

We are forging closer ties between our societies. Last year, Polish consuls issued Ukrainian citizens with 1.2 million visas. Thirty-five thousand Ukrainians study at Polish universities.

This year marks the centenary of independence in both Poland and Ukraine. It has also been 75 years since the massacres of Poles in Volhynia. These anniversaries carry a strong emotional charge; we should write a common script for commemorating these epochal events.

The ban on exhuming the remains of Polish victims of wars and conflicts introduced by Ukraine is difficult to understand and hampers dialogue.

An independent Belarus is in Poland's vital interest. Last year marked the 25th anniversary of establishing our diplomatic relations. Today, they focus on solving practical problems. We hope to be able to invigorate cooperation in infrastructure, notably by increasing the capacity of border crossings and fully implementing the local border traffic agreement. Starting from 1 January this year, visa-free travel regime was introduced in the regions of the Augustów Canal, Hrodna, and Brest.

In January 2018, Polish and Belarusian government officials met to discuss the development of harbour infrastructure for the purposes of the waterway linking the Baltic and Black Seas through Poland, Belarus, and Ukraine.

We endorse the European and Atlantic ambitions of Georgia, which was included in the EU's visa-free travel programme. Poland will continue to support Georgia's efforts to implement its association agreement with the European Union, and to foster cooperation with NATO.

We support Moldova's reforms and pro-European orientation. We will be advocating for EU's continued commitment to political dialogue, aimed at reintegrating Transnistria with Moldova.

We will be also working to further the dialogue with Armenia and Azerbaijan. South Caucasian countries are along a strategic transport route of energy resources. We were satisfied to note the launch last year of the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway service, which opens new opportunities for economic contacts with the European Union.

Mr Speaker, Members of the House! The expansion of Polish companies is an important source of our economic growth. We have been consistently supporting

Polish businesses abroad, with nearly 6,500 Polish companies receiving the MFA's assistance over the past year.

Our principal partner in Asia is the People's Republic of China. In 2017, our trade was worth close to USD 30 billion. Poland plays an increasingly prominent role in the goods transport between China and Europe. As much as 90 percent of rail transport between China and the European Union passes through the Małaszewicze terminal. Last year, Poland welcomed 140,000 Chinese tourists. We hope that this trend will translate into more mutual investments. This year will see another Poland-China Regional Forum in Chengdu. Narrowing our large deficit will be a challenge in cooperation with China.

We attach special importance to strengthening cooperation with the countries we have strategic partnerships with, namely Japan and the Republic of Korea. Investments from these countries will help us deliver on such objectives of the Strategy for Responsible Development as reindustrialization and development of electric mobility.

We are building up our relationship with India and ASEAN countries. To that end, President Andrzej Duda travelled to Vietnam last November. A new direct service with Singapore to be launched in mid-May by LOT Polish Airlines will help to forge closer cooperation with the regional partners. Poland is the only founding member from Central Europe to participate in the work of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank.

We look to intensifying cooperation with Australia and New Zealand. We are hopeful that the first-ever visit to these countries by a Polish President will help us achieve this aim.

We are developing relations with Israel. We look forward to a visit by Israel's President, who will come to Poland to take part in the March of the Living together with President Andrzej Duda. We build our relations on the foundation of centuries-old coexistence of Poles and Jews within a shared Polish home. We focus on economic and technological cooperation.

Poland supports its entrepreneurs in Africa and the Middle East.

We will develop political and economic cooperation with Latin American and Caribbean countries. A stable economic and social situation in the region's leading countries and the growing liberalisation of trade with the European Union are reasons for optimism.

Ladies and Gentlemen! Together with the President, the Ministry of Investment and Development, the Ministry of Agriculture and other central agencies, we are working to streamline the instruments of economic diplomacy. We provide training for Polish entrepreneurs on how to participate in tenders and projects

announced by international organisations. We support technological cooperation between Polish companies and research and development institutions with their counterparts abroad. Through such tools as the Poland Prize programme, we seek to attract intellectual capital, which is the driving force of innovation.

This year, Poland will for the third time host COP24, the world's largest climate conference. We have taken up this task in the spirit of joint responsibility for finding solutions to Earth's climate troubles. Katowice will play host to 20,000 delegates. It will come as an opportunity to showcase Silesia and Poland as an open and modern country that cherishes its historical and natural heritage, and to promote Poland's solutions and state-of-the-art technologies in the field of energy consumption and emissions.

Members of the House! The Polish diaspora is an extremely important part of the national community. Our thoughts go out to them, particularly in the year that marks the centenary of independence. There are 20 million Poles or people of Polish descent living abroad. Some of them stayed behind in the East after the borders were redrawn, some others are emigrants who form today's Polish diaspora in the West.

The rights of the Polish minority in Lithuania have always been on the government's agenda. We are noting significant progress; this May five Polish TV channels will start to be relayed to the Vilnius region, which will help our compatriots to maintain close ties with vibrant Polish culture. Other issues will be addressed by joint work of our governments.

We expect Belarus to observe standards towards the Polish minority as prescribed by international law and organisations.

Poles in Germany look forward to the implementation of treaty obligations, in particular in education.

We have been seeking to ensure that Poles living abroad enjoy all rights under bilateral agreements and international standards. Our special effort will be to make the teaching of Polish more available, particularly for school-age children.

Last year, this House passed the amended Law on Repatriation. It will facilitate return to all eligible Poles and people of Polish origin who are willing to repatriate.

The Polish State's care of Poles in the East was manifested by the Law on the Card of the Pole adopted ten years ago. In this period, 230,000 Cards were issued, with nearly 30,000 last year. On the President's initiative, students of Polish diaspora schools are receiving Polish school IDs; 31,000 of them were issued last year.

The large Polish diaspora in the West offers a chance to actively advance Poland's interests. We will develop the network of Advisory Councils for the

Polish Community Abroad at Polish overseas missions, and support diaspora organisations and education. We would like our compatriots, through close cooperation with Polish diplomatic and consular posts, to become strong allies of the government in furthering Poland's *raison d'état*.

We also do hope that Poland's economic growth, rising prosperity of its citizens, and declining unemployment will persuade many Poles to return. We look forward to and strongly encourage that.

Members of the House! In the year of the centenary of our independence, we are planning a number of measures to promote Poland's culture and political traditions, with a special focus on the civilizational heritage of the Republic of Poland as one of Europe's oldest parliamentary democracies. 550 years of Poland's parliamentary system will be celebrated in July during an event that will bring together the presidents of parliaments from Central and Eastern Europe.

At this time, Poland will be showing its solidarity and awareness of shared history with other peoples in the region, who together with us won independence a hundred years ago.

Operating in 24 countries, the Polish Institutes are adapting their activities for the needs and priorities of Polish foreign policy.

We will be developing the civic and local government dimension of Polish foreign policy by drawing on the network of Regional Centres for International Debate. Local governments' engagement in such projects as Silk Road or Three Seas is an important complement to intergovernmental agreements.

The local government dimension takes on special importance in the light of the COP24 climate summit in Katowice I spoke about earlier.

The debate surrounding the amended law on the Institute of National Remembrance brought differences between Polish and Jewish memories of history into relief. Cherishing historical truth also means preserving Holocaust memorials.

We have been calling attention to the fact that in order for the Holocaust to be carried out, it was necessary to destroy the Polish State. As long as it existed, it defended the life, security, and freedom of all Polish citizens.

Poland did not collaborate with the occupier in any organized form. Poland relentlessly fought the occupier in the underground and in exile; it alerted the Allies to the fate of the Jews who were being exterminated by the Third Reich; it punished with death incidents of complicity of Polish citizens in this crime. One of important tasks of Polish diplomacy will be to raise global awareness of these issues.

Members of the House! Development aid is an investment in the world's stability and security, and thus in the stability and security of Poland. Under the Multiannual Development Cooperation Programme 2016–2020, principal recipients of Polish aid include Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine, Ethiopia, Kenya, Myanmar, Palestine, Senegal, and Tanzania.

In 2017, Poland spent PLN 2.5 billion on development assistance. Much of this amount—PLN 167 million—was earmarked for humanitarian aid, which benefits people affected by crises in the Middle East, including Syrian refugees.

In 2017, we provided medical care to over 25,000 refugees in Lebanon, Jordan and Iraqi Kurdistan, and we helped to deliver education to nearly a thousand children in Lebanon.

Members of the House! In order to be effective, foreign policy needs a legal framework, the right staff, and a network of diplomatic missions. Today, our headquarters and foreign posts employ 4,700 people, 900 of whom have permanent diplomatic ranks.

To reverse that proportion, we will be taking on young, well-educated people. There are more than ten candidates applying for one place at the Diplomatic Academy. By introducing two rounds of admission, we will be able to educate 60 trainees each year. The Academy students are in the Sejm today, listening to our debate about Poland's foreign policy.

We are working to improve the quality of consular protection and make it more accessible. In 2017, the Consular Information Centre answered 65,000 phone calls from our citizens in the United Kingdom and Ireland. This year we will extend its scope to cover Germany, France, and the Netherlands.

We are expanding Polish diplomatic presence across the globe. In 2017, we opened the Polish Embassy in the Republic of Panama with accreditations in eight countries of the region, and the Embassy in the United Republic of Tanzania, which is also accredited in the neighbouring countries. This January saw the inauguration of the Polish Embassy in the Republic of the Philippines. We have opened Consulates General in Houston and Belfast, and the consular post in Montreal was raised to the rank of Consulate General.

We are building a new embassy in Berlin, which will house all institutions representing Poland's political and economic interests under one roof. We are building new embassy offices in Minsk. Adaptation of the Pac Palace to accommodate the Polish Embassy in Vilnius is near completion; it will open in the second half of the year.

Mr Speaker, Members of the House! International situation in Europe and around the world is dynamic; we face many challenges and tasks. For this reason,

my information to the House about the tasks facing Polish diplomacy this year has been quite extensive. This was also due to the need to clearly set out grounds for the Polish position, especially in the ongoing debate about the future of the European Union.

The salt of democracy is an open and responsible political debate that aims to work out the best solutions. It is my hope that this address will prompt the House to hold such a debate, underpinned by the belief that foreign policy is a national, not party affair, and that as such it should be excluded from the competition of factions, which is otherwise so natural in other spheres of political life.

I ask the Sejm of the Republic of Poland to accept the Government's information on Polish foreign policy tasks in 2018.

Thank you very much.

Security Policy of the Republic of Poland

ARTUR KACPRZYK, WOJCIECH LORENZ, MARCIN TERLIKOWSKI

Background

In 2018, the negative trends in Russian foreign policy continued and remained the main threat to Polish security. Russia continued to be involved in the conflict with Ukraine on the side of Russian-speaking separatists. After building a bridge over the Kerch Strait, connecting Russian territory with the annexed Crimea, Russia strengthened its control over the Sea of Azov. It also exerted pressure on the EU and NATO countries through propaganda, cyberattacks, and demonstrations of readiness to use force on their territory, among other things. In March 2018, Russian military intelligence attempted to poison a former agent, Sergei Skripal, in the UK with chemical weapons. Furthermore, Russia was consistently enhancing its forces present in the proximity of Alliance states.¹ Its armed forces held exercises in the Far East with the participation of about 300,000 troops (*East 2018*). Although the exercises took place far from NATO borders, they indicated the ability to conduct large-scale operations.²

Faced with the threat from Russia and the instability in Europe's southern neighbourhood, NATO continued its military and institutional adaptation as agreed at the Warsaw Summit in 2016. Yet, at the same time, there were growing tensions in transatlantic relations, which created risks for further adjustment of the Alliance and its political coherence and credibility. Preparations for the NATO summit in Brussels on 11–12 July, which included further changes in the structure of Alliance forces and commands, were accompanied by an escalation of disputes over increasing defence budgets to at least 2% of GDP. In 2018, this objective was to be achieved by eight NATO countries.³ President Donald Trump was increasing pressure on U.S. allies deemed not spending enough by suggesting

¹ A.M. Dyner, "Russia Beefs Up Its Western Flank," *PISM Bulletin*, no. 173 (1244), 19 December 2018, www.pism.pl.

² D. Johnson, "VOSTOK 2018: Ten years of Russian strategic exercises and warfare preparation," *NATO Review*, 20 December 2018, www.nato.int.

³ "Defence Expenditure of NATO Countries (2011–2018)," NATO Press Release, 10 July 2018, www.nato.int. Nevertheless, this was the fourth consecutive year of an increase in defence spending by European NATO countries and Canada, which Trump considered a personal success.

the possibility of reducing American military support for NATO.⁴ However, there was discord between Trump's harsh rhetoric and the actual policy of his administration. With the strong support of Congress, the United States raised the funding to increase the American military presence and activity in Europe under the European Deterrence Initiative (EDI)⁵ from \$3.4 billion in 2017 to \$4.8 billion in 2018.

Further tensions within NATO were caused by Trump's announcement of the United States' withdrawal from the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty in October. This was a response to Russia's violation of the INF by deploying an SSC-8 ground-launched cruise missile with a range of 500-5,500 km. The Trump administration also argued that the treaty makes it difficult for the U.S. to deter China, which is not a signatory and not bound to limit its missile arsenal. Several NATO countries (including France and Germany) openly criticised Trump's decision as not consulted with allies beforehand and premature. For many of them, the INF Treaty signed by the U.S. and the USSR in 1987 symbolised the end of the Cold War and the nuclear missile arms race in Europe that had been accompanied by mass protests in many countries of the Alliance.

Relations between the U.S. and many NATO countries were also adversely affected by disputes on issues that went beyond the area of activity of the Alliance, in particular, the withdrawal by the Trump administration from the nuclear agreement with Iran (JCPOA) in May 2018 and initiation of the restoration of sanctions against that country. The U.S. also tried to encourage other signatories to take similar steps, especially EU states.

There was a debate on European strategic autonomy in the European Union. The core of the dispute was to define the scope and main areas of autonomy and, above all, the consequences of pursuing it for NATO and transatlantic ties. The question of creating a "European army", proposed by French President Emmanuel Macron in November, returned as an alternative to the uncertain security guarantees provided by the U.S. Germany distanced itself from such reasoning—German Chancellor Angela Merkel stressed that a real "European army" should be a reinforcement and not in competition with NATO. The increasingly frequent concepts of building strategic autonomy for Europe in opposition to NATO were a significant challenge for Poland because they were in conflict with the basic assumptions of the country's security policy.

⁴ See, e.g.: J. Hirschfeld Davis, "Trump Warns NATO Allies to Spend More on Defense, or Else," *The New York Times*, 2 July 2018, www.nytimes.com.

⁵ Known as the European Reassurance Initiative (ERI) until 2017.

Simultaneously, the EU continued to develop the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), mainly through the implementation of the Permanent Structured Cooperation Mechanism (PESCO), which was to be filled with the first set of projects. The works on the second pillar of the European Defence Fund, the defence industry development programme (EDIDP), was also being finalised. Its aim was to allow co-financing of the development of the military capabilities of the Member States from the EU budget. On the one hand, the development of EU defence initiatives provided Poland with an opportunity to expand military and scientific-research cooperation with EU partners and to promote the concept of synergy of the EU and NATO activities. On the other hand, it was a challenge, as the countries could propose projects that duplicated or openly undermined NATO activities.

In this context, a significant event was the launch of the European Intervention Initiative (E2I) on 25 July with the participation of France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Spain, Portugal, Estonia, Denmark, and the United Kingdom. France's presentation of this format of cooperation as an alternative to transatlantic relations and the low level of aspiration in PESCO and the EDF raised concerns about duplication and undermining NATO.

Risks to Poland's security also were posed by growing disputes over the functioning of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). In the long term, these disputes could weaken the cooperation of members in this regime in preventing and responding to proliferation crises. One of the main points of contention in the preparations for the NPT Review Conference scheduled for 2020 concerns disarmament. Dissatisfaction with its pace was increasingly expressed by a large group of non-nuclear-weapon states, as well as by NGOs. The instrument of influence in this regard was to be the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), the text of which was adopted by 122 states and opened for signatures in September 2017. The nuclear-weapon states and the U.S. allies relying on American security guarantees did not intend to join. However, some of the supporters of TPNW wanted to use its adoption to increase anti-nuclear sentiment in some NATO countries, thus undermining the Allied policy of nuclear deterrence.

Goals and Assumptions

Security was recognised as the highest priority of Polish foreign policy in 2018. Of key importance was the need to increase the Alliance's ability to carry out collective defence missions, particularly by enhancing NATO's military presence and infrastructure in the Baltic Sea region. Furthermore, Poland sought

to persuade the U.S. to deploy larger forces on Polish territory on a bilateral basis. It was also in favour of maintaining an open-door policy indicating that NATO did not accept Russian policy based on a spheres of influence logic.

With regard to EU defence initiatives, Poland consistently stressed the need to coordinate the EU's actions with NATO and not to duplicate the Alliance's structures and capabilities. It also called for further strengthening of the EU's cooperation with NATO in line with the Joint Declaration of 2016. In the negotiations on the shape of the EDIDP, however, it sought to grant special preferences in the criteria for the co-financing of projects to medium-sized defence companies (*mid-caps*), which describes most Polish companies. Strengthening the principles of international law, conflict prevention, and combating new threats to peace and security were considered Poland's priorities for the two-year term at the UN Security Council, which began in January.⁶

Poland's Policy within NATO

Poland pushed for decisions to be taken at the July NATO summit in Brussels that would increase the Alliance's ability for rapid reinforcement of the Eastern Flank states and augment the allied battlegroups stationed there with forces of the appropriate size and armaments. As part of the NATO Command Structure Review (NCS), Poland made efforts to create a land component command on its territory, capable of conducting operations involving several corps-size units.⁷ Representatives of the Polish authorities also stressed the need to improve military mobility through cooperation between NATO and the EU. They argued that this objective will also be achieved through the implementation of infrastructure projects promoted under the Three Seas Initiative (TSI). Attention was also drawn to the need to further improve NATO's ability to counter hybrid and cyber threats.

Poland's representatives stressed that tensions in transatlantic relations should be diffused. They supported President Trump's efforts to increase the defence budgets of NATO countries.⁸ At the same time, they tried to present Poland as a credible ally that fulfils its obligations, for example, by spending at least 2% of GDP on defence. A law adopted in 2017 also assumed an increase in the defence

⁶ "Priorities of Polish Foreign Policy 2018," MSZ, March 2018, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja.

⁷ J. Graf, "MON przedstawia wielopoziomową ofertę. Szatkowski dla Defence24.pl o negocjacjach z Waszyngtonem: Dywizja z jednostkami bojowymi," *Defence24*, 23 May 2018, www.defence24.pl. One of the options presented by the Polish authorities was to expand the Command of the North-eastern Corps Multinational Command in Szczecin.

⁸ See, e.g.: "Wystąpienie Prezydenta RP Andrzeja Dudy na posiedzeniu Zgromadzenia Parlamentarnego NATO," BBN, 28 May 2018, www.bbn.gov.pl.

budget up to 2.5% of GDP by 2030, while President Andrzej Duda repeatedly called for this level to be reached much earlier, by 2024.⁹ The purchase of two batteries of the Patriot air defence system and other types of armament by Poland and the decision to form a fourth division of ground forces were mentioned as contributions to NATO's deterrence and defence capabilities on the Eastern Flank.¹⁰

Before the NATO Brussels summit, Poland tried to build support for its proposals among the countries of the region and to work out a common position on the Eastern Flank. The meeting of presidents of the Bucharest Nine (B9), held on 8 June in Warsaw, served this purpose. The leaders adopted a declaration that supported, among other things, further adaptation of the Alliance both on the Eastern Flank and to all other threats, strengthening cooperation with NATO partners and between NATO and the EU.¹¹ One of the topics of discussion was the strengthening of the allied forward presence with sea and air components.¹² The session of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, held on 25–28 May in Warsaw, was also an opportunity to promote the Polish priorities.¹³ The consultations prior to the Brussels summit comprised one of the main topics of the meetings in the so-called Quadriga formats—the deputy foreign and defence ministers of Poland and Norway met on 8 March,¹⁴ followed on 21 June by the corresponding ministers of Poland and the United Kingdom.

Although the Brussels summit was dominated by disputes over the level of defence spending, and President Trump mentioned the possibility of the U.S. withdrawing from the Alliance, it approved a number of decisions.¹⁵ Poland

⁹ “Prezydent: powinniśmy wydawać 2,5 proc. PKB na obronność już w 2024 r.,” *Defence24*, 15 August 2018, www.defence24.pl.

¹⁰ J. Graf, “Najważniejsze decyzje nie są zagrożone. M. Błaszczak dla Defence24.pl o szczycie NATO, negocjacjach z USA i specustawach modernizacyjnych,” *Defence24*, 10 July 2018, www.defence24.pl.

¹¹ “Wspólna deklaracja głów państw Bukareszteńskiej Dziewiątki,” *Prezydent.pl*, 8 June 2018, www.prezydent.pl.

¹² “Morskie i lotnicze wsparcie dla wschodniej flanki? Duda: Taka forma wzmocnienia potrzebna,” *Defence24*, 8 June 2018, www.defence24.pl. Also, see: M. Terlikowski, V. Jóźwiak, Ł. Ogrodnik, J. Pieńkowski, K. Raś “The Bucharest Delivering on the Promise to Become the Voice of the Eastern Flank,” *PISM Policy Paper*, no. 8 (164), June 2018, www.pism.pl.

¹³ Speeches were delivered by the President of the Republic of Poland Andrzej Duda, Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki, Minister of Foreign Affairs Jacek Czaputowicz and Minister of National Defence Mariusz Błaszczak. The session was also attended by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, who visited Poland in March.

¹⁴ Also, see: “Nordic-Baltic Security in Times of Uncertainty: The Defence-Energy Nexus,” *PISM Report*, March 2018, www.pism.pl.

¹⁵ “Trump Confirms He Threatened to Withdraw from NATO,” *NATOSource*, 22 August 2018, www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/natosource.

considered them to be positive.¹⁶ It stressed the importance of the NATO Readiness Initiative promoted by the U.S. (NRI, the so-called “4x30”), according to which, by 2020 at the latest, the allies should have 30 large warships, 30 armoured and mechanised battalions, and 30 combat air squadrons that can be ready within 30 days or less for NATO missions.¹⁷ Poland announced its contribution to this initiative. The decisions to create a Joint Force Command in the U.S. (Norfolk) to support, among other things, the transfer of U.S. forces across the Atlantic to Europe, and a combined logistics command in Germany (Ulm) to support the transfer of troops across Europe, were also considered very important. The provisions on further strengthening cooperation between NATO and the EU were also in line with Polish expectations and with regard to reducing physical and procedural barriers to military mobility. In the summit declaration, NATO also expressed its readiness to use the “full spectrum of measures” to deter and defend against cyberattacks. As a result, the Alliance would no longer rely only on securing its own networks but also could retaliate against enemy systems with the allies’ cyber capabilities. A Cyber Operations Centre was established in Belgium to provide better risk assessment and to facilitate coordination between the allies.

However, no decision was taken at the summit to establish the command of the land component as requested by Poland. NATO only declared that it would try to set up two such commands “as soon as possible”. The postponement of the decision on this matter may have been due to budgetary and personnel restrictions in NATO and the growing need for such resources in the whole Alliance. Simultaneously, there were favourable developments in the tactical level commands, which perform tasks within the Alliance but are not financed from the common budget. The Brussels summit approved the formation of the Multinational Division North command by Denmark, Estonia, and Latvia. Romania applied for corps level command, but no decision was made in this respect.

At the summit, the allies invited Macedonia to start accession negotiations, since it had settled the dispute with Greece over its name.¹⁸ An increase in support for NATO partners in the southern European neighbourhood, including Iraq, was also agreed. Poland announced an increase in its contingent in that country from 150 to a maximum of 350 troops. It also joined the multinational programmes to develop unmanned naval systems and to purchase ammunition for land-based systems.

¹⁶ “Wszystko, co udało się ustalić, potwierdza jedność NATO,” *Prezydent.pl*, 12 July 2018, www.prezydent.pl.

¹⁷ J. Graf, “Szatkowski: Postanowienia szczytu NATO w Brukseli kluczowe dla strategii wzmocnienia [WYWIAD],” *Defence24*, 17 July 2018, www.defence24.pl.

¹⁸ The name “Northern Macedonia” was adopted, replacing the former “Republic of Macedonia” and the former “Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”.

The implementation of the decisions of the Brussels summit was one of the main topics of the NATO Military Committee session held in Warsaw on 28-30 September. From 25 October to 7 November, the *Trident Juncture 18* exercises were held on Norwegian territory and in the North Atlantic and Baltic Sea, with the participation of about 50,000 troops. It was the largest NATO exercise in several decades designed to test the ability to conduct collective defence operations. More than 400 Polish soldiers participated, including a mechanised company from the 21st Podhale Rifle Brigade and the frigate *ORP Kazimierz Pułaski*. The NATO manoeuvres were followed by the Polish exercises *Anaconda 18* (7–16 November and 26 November–6 December), which brought together troops from 10 NATO countries and representatives of the Alliance's multinational structures. About 12,500 troops exercised in Poland and on the Baltic Sea. For the first time, these manoeuvres were also held on the territory of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, where an additional 5,000 troops were exercising. One of the aims of the exercises was to certify the Headquarters of the Multinational Division North East (MND-NE) in Elbląg, which achieved full readiness and can be used for NATO missions.

The Polish authorities expressed their understanding of the U.S. decision to withdraw from the INF Treaty in the face of its violation by Russia. Minister of Foreign Affairs Jacek Czaputowicz pointed out that Poland would have liked the treaty to remain valid, but on the condition that it was respected by all parties.¹⁹ President Andrzej Duda criticised Russia for its violation of the Treaty.²⁰ Poland sought a NATO military response to Russia's breach of the agreement. In November, Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki publicly urged the Alliance to do so, while also supporting the negotiation of a new treaty that would include both Russia and China.²¹ Consensus at NATO was achieved on 4 December at a meeting of defence ministers.²² For the first time, all the allies unequivocally agreed with the assessment of the U.S. intelligence services that Russia was in breach of the INF Treaty (this was not explicitly stated by NATO at the July summit in Brussels). NATO also pledged to conduct a review of the impact of new Russian missiles on the security of the Alliance. As a result of the efforts of some European members to give Russia additional time to return to compliance

¹⁹ "Czaputowicz: Polska wyraża zrozumienie dla działań USA ws. INF," PAP, 22 October 2018, www.pap.pl.

²⁰ "Konferencja prasowa Prezydenta w Berlinie," Prezydent RP Andrzej Duda, *Youtube*, 24 October 2018, 14:30–16:35, www.youtube.com.

²¹ "Morawiecki: Polska jest jednocześnie proamerykańska i proeuropejska," PAP, 17 December 2018, www.pap.pl.

²² A. Kacprzyk, "NATO's Stance in the INF Treaty Crisis" *PISM Bulletin*, no. 164 (1235), 6 December 2018, www.pism.pl.

with the treaty, the U.S. delayed the formal suspension and withdrawal from the treaty. The Americans warned that they would implement it if Russia did not eliminate all SSC-8 missiles and their launchers by 2 February 2019.

In 2018, Poland was involved in NATO missions proportional to its size and military potential. As part of the eFP (enhanced forward presence), it maintained a mechanised company (about 170 troops) in Latvia equipped with, among other things, PT-91 Twardy tanks. Another mechanised company (about 200 troops), equipped with Rosomak armoured fighting vehicles and other equipment, was deployed in Romania as a part of the multinational brigade within NATO's Tailored Forward Presence (TFP).²³ Involvement in the KFOR mission in Kosovo was maintained at the level of about 250 troops, making Poland's the seventh-largest contingent among the 29 participating countries. In Afghanistan, Poland declared an increase in its contingent from 250 to 300 troops in response to U.S. calls for the Alliance to offer some additional support for the *Resolute Support Mission*. In June, Polish F-16 fighters, which supported the activities of the international coalition against ISIS, completed a two-year mission. Only a small contingent remained in Kuwait with a C-295M transport plane, and in Iraq with about 150 troops conducting training and advisory activities.

Bilateral Cooperation with the U.S.

The American military presence in Poland did not change fundamentally in 2018. Based on bilateral agreements with the United States, a U.S. Army armoured brigade (ABCT, 3,300–4,000 troops) exercised along the entire Eastern Flank of NATO and rotated to western Poland every nine months. In Powidz, regular training rotations of crews flying C-130 transport aircraft and F-16 fighters continued. The elements of the U.S. Army combat aviation brigade (4-8 UH-60 Black Hawk and 4 AH-64 Apache helicopters) and a logistic support battalion (about 750 troops) were constantly present on a rotational basis. The American land exercises on the Eastern Flank of NATO were coordinated by the Mission Command Element located in Poznań. A detachment of American special forces operated from the vicinity of Kraków. Some 800-900 U.S. troops still form the core of the multinational NATO battlegroup in Orzysz (it also included about 70 Croatian, 120 Romanian, and 130 British troops). The novelty, however, was the beginning of flights from the air base in Mirosławiec in May of American MQ-9 Reaper unmanned aircraft. However, delays in the construction of the U.S. Aegis Ashore missile defence site in Redzikowo postponed its upgrade to initial readiness from 2018 to 2020.

²³ The Polish units were maintained at six-month rotations.

In 2018, Poland intensified political efforts to increase the American military presence on Polish territory and make it more permanent. The most important meeting took place between presidents Duda and Trump at the White House on 18 September.²⁴ Increasing the U.S. presence in Poland was also the main topic of consultations during numerous visits of Minister of National Defence Mariusz Błaszczak, as well as in Polish-American discussions at other levels.²⁵

Poland sought the stationing of a U.S. Army division on its territory (about 15,000 troops)²⁶ and declared its readiness to invest up to \$2 billion in the infrastructure necessary for the permanent deployment of such a unit (together with the families of the soldiers). The declaration was included in the document “Proposal for a U.S. Permanent Presence in Poland”, developed by the Ministry of Defence and forwarded to the U.S. administration, the members of Congress, and American think tanks. Bydgoszcz and Toruń were mentioned as possible places for potential dislocation.²⁷ Poland argued that a permanent deployment of U.S. units would strengthen deterrence of Russia by indicating that U.S. military engagement on the Eastern Flank would be long-term.²⁸ The Polish side also pointed out that, in the event of a conflict, a greater presence of U.S. forces in Poland would allow the allies to halt Russian aggression, including an attack on the section of the Polish-Lithuanian border called the Suwałki Gap—a strip of land that connects the Baltic States with the rest of NATO—until the Alliance deploys larger reinforcements. Furthermore, the representatives of the Ministry of Defence emphasised Poland’s flexibility in negotiations. They signalled greatest interest in the deployment of additional support units, both of a direct combat (e.g., air defence, rocket artillery) and indirect or non-combat nature (e.g.,

²⁴ See: M.M. Piotrowski, “Poland’s Policy Towards the United States,” in this volume.

²⁵ The first meeting of the High Level Defence Group (HLDG) since 2014 was held on 14 March in Warsaw under the chairmanship of Undersecretary of State at the Ministry of Defence Tomasz Szatkowski and Assistant Secretary of Defence for International Security Robert Karem. On 7 September, the 12th Session of the Strategic Dialogue was held in Washington, DC. It was chaired by Under-Secretary of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Bartosz Cichocki and Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Wess Mitchell. Furthermore, on 5 November, the Strategic Cooperation Consultative Group (SCCG) met in Warsaw for the first time in two years, and the parties were chaired by Minister Cichocki and Undersecretary of State Andrea L. Thompson.

²⁶ “Szatkowski: dywizja US Army w Polsce to przyrost nowych zdolności,” *Defence24*, 4 May 2018, www.defence24.pl.

²⁷ E. Żemła, K. Turecki, “MON ujawnia szczegóły negocjacji o stacjonowaniu wojsk USA w Polsce. Opozycja: amatorszczyzna i brak profesjonalizmu,” *Onet Wiadomości*, 27 May 2018, www.wiadomosci.onet.pl; “Proposal for a U.S. Permanent Presence in Poland,” MON, 2018, www.docdroid.net/6c63Nsz/proposal-for-u.s.-permanent-presence-in-poland-2018-.pdf.

²⁸ *Defence24*, “Szatkowski: amerykańska baza w Polsce zmieniłaby geopolityczny krajobraz Europy,” *Defence24*, 19 September 2018, www.defence24.pl.

reconnaissance and intelligence, logistics), as well as command structures. It was pointed out that in the event of a conflict, these capabilities would also be crucial to enable the rapid reception of additional allied forces.²⁹

In July and August, the U.S. Congress adopted a provision directing the Department of Defence to prepare a report on the legitimacy and feasibility of the permanent deployment of an armoured brigade and support units in Poland.³⁰ The report was to be delivered to Congress by 1 March 2019 and should also assess the political implications of the permanent deployment of armed forces in Poland for NATO and Russia's possible reaction.

Another success of Polish efforts followed from the meeting of presidents Duda and Trump in Washington, with the latter indicating that the Polish offer was being seriously considered. Trump also stressed Poland's willingness to contribute to the costs of the U.S. deployment and that it already met its spending commitments in NATO.³¹ The permanent American bases that could be built in Poland have since been commonly referred to as "Fort Trump", since President Duda suggested that they might even be named as such. The commitment of both countries to "explore options for an increased U.S. military role in Poland" was included in the Joint Declaration on the Polish-American Strategic Partnership signed by the two presidents.³²

Representatives of the Department of Defence were initially sceptical about increasing the U.S. presence in Poland, pointing out, among other things, the shortcomings in infrastructure. Secretary of Defence Jim Mattis indicated that this concept should be analysed in detail and consulted with other NATO members.³³ Furthermore, the U.S. National Defence Strategy developed by the Pentagon in 2017 announced withdrawal from large and centralised installations in favour of smaller, dispersed bases that would be less vulnerable to attack. The

²⁹ "Szatkowski: dywizja US Army w Polsce...", *op. cit.*; J. Graf, "MON przedstawia wielopoziomową ofertę...", *op. cit.*

³⁰ This provision was included in *H.R.5515 - John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019*, 115th Congress (2017–2018), Sec. 1280, www.congress.gov.

³¹ "Remarks by President Trump and President Duda of the Republic of Poland Before Bilateral Meeting," The White House, 18 September 2018, www.whitehouse.gov; "Remarks by President Trump and President Duda of the Republic of Poland in Joint Press Conference," The White House, 18 September 2018, www.whitehouse.gov.

³² "Safeguarding freedom, building prosperity through Poland-US Strategic Partnership," *Prezydent.pl*, 18 September 2018, www.prezydent.pl. The document confirmed the validity of the bilateral 2008 Declaration on Strategic Cooperation and extended the scope of cooperation, listing the area of security and defence first.

³³ "Wątpliwości z Pentagonu. Polska jeszcze niegotowa na 'Fort Trump'," *Defence24*, 20 September 2018, www.defence24.pl; "Secretary Mattis Media Availability at the Pentagon," U.S. Department of Defense, 24 September 2018, www.defense.gov.

document also stressed the need for dynamic and flexible employment of forces,³⁴ all of which seemed to confirm the Pentagon's preference for a rotational form of forward presence on NATO's Eastern Flank. Nevertheless, there was a growing debate among U.S. experts and the military on the relative costs and efficiency of permanent stationing.³⁵ In September, the U.S. announced that by 2020, it would enhance its forces permanently stationed in Germany with new rocket artillery, air defence, and support units (about 1,500 soldiers in total).

The Polish efforts to obtain a permanent American military presence were controversial within NATO.³⁶ A number of voices in Western Europe claimed that the permanent deployment of an American division—or even smaller forces—in Poland would provoke further escalation of tensions and violate the 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act in which NATO declared that it would not permanently deploy additional “substantial combat forces” in the “current and foreseeable security environment”. Furthermore, Poland was accused of trying to bypass allied consensus from the Warsaw summit on the size and form of the forward presence on the Eastern Flank and of replacing the collective security guarantees of Article 5 with bilateral cooperation with the U.S. In response, Poland sought to prove that stronger U.S. military presence on its territory would enhance the credibility of NATO's deterrence and defence posture. To this end, Poland enhanced its dialogue with the Secretary-General of NATO.³⁷ The Polish authorities also assured that they were not seeking a relocation of American military bases from Germany.³⁸ They stressed that other NATO countries had long hosted U.S. forces and participated in the costs of its presence, and that the Polish offer was not a precedent.³⁹ In line with the position presented since 2014, Poland also stated that NATO is no longer bound by the self-restrictions in the Founding Act after Russia repeatedly violated it. Poland consistently argued that “an increased, permanent U.S. military presence in Poland [...] will eliminate double standards and strengthen the indivisibility of

³⁴ “Summary of the 2018 National Defense Strategy of the United States of America,” U.S. Department of Defense, pp. 6–7, www.dod.defence.gov.

³⁵ See, e.g.: J. Vandiver, “Hodges: Rotational forces best way to counter assertive Russia,” *Stars and Stripes*, 3 July 2017, www.stripes.com.

³⁶ See, e.g.: “Nie powinniśmy łamać Aktu NATO-Rosja, nawet jeśli Rosjanie robią to od dawna,” *TVN24*, 7 July 2018, www.tvn24.pl; Q. Lopinot, “Fort Trump?—Is There Added Value to a Permanent U.S. Military Base in Poland?,” *CSIS*, 19 November 2018, www.csis.org.

³⁷ To this end, on 21 October, Minister of Foreign Affairs Jacek Czaputowicz, Head of the National Security Bureau Paweł Soloch, and Deputy Minister of Defence Tomasz Szatkowski paid a visit to NATO Headquarters: R. Lesiecki, “Fort Trump to decyzja Polski i USA, ale Warszawa zaczyna oficjalnie informować sojuszników,” *Defence24*, 22 October 2018, www.defence24.pl.

³⁸ “Czaputowicz o amerykańskich wojskach w Polsce: tak, ale nie kosztem Niemiec,” *TVP Info*, 27 July 2018, www.tvp.info.

³⁹ J. Graf, “MON przedstawia wielopoziomową ofertę...,” *op. cit.*

European security”.⁴⁰ After discussions at NATO Headquarters (20 November), Minister Błaszczak announced that Secretary Stoltenberg had “admitted that the increased presence of American troops in Europe, in Poland, on the Eastern Flank of NATO strengthens the defence capabilities of the North Atlantic Alliance”.⁴¹

At the end of the year, the Polish authorities were optimistic about the chances for increasing the U.S. military presence on home soil, although they admitted that the process would be complex and lengthy. At the end of December, however, after the dismissal of Mattis, Poland believed that the objective could be achieved even sooner.⁴²

According to the Polish authorities, the purchases of American armaments and military equipment was not directly linked to the negotiations on the U.S. military presence in Poland, although it could have a positive impact on the progress. Poland also pointed out that by acquiring modern defensive and offensive systems, it was responding to the threat posed by Russia’s anti-access/area-denial capabilities and wanted to create a “safe haven” for allied forces on its territory. Poland also argued that the acquisition of American armaments would make it easier to enhance interoperability with U.S. forces.⁴³ Poland signed the largest armaments contract in its history, worth \$4.75 billion, on 28 March in Warsaw. It provided for the delivery of two batteries (16 launchers) of the Patriot air and missile defence system under the first phase of the “Wisła” programme by 2022. In April, negotiations of the second phase began, which concerned the purchase of another six batteries. On 30 November, the State Department agreed to sell 20 launchers of the High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) to Poland for \$414 million under the “Homar” programme.

Common Security and Defence Policy

Poland’s activity under the CSDP in 2018 focused on PESCO. When joining this defence cooperation mechanism in December 2017, Poland expressed a number of reservations about the need to coordinate PESCO with NATO activities.⁴⁴ Furthermore, Poland declared an initial interest in only two of the several

⁴⁰ J. Czaputowicz, “NATO zyska na bazach,” *Rzeczpospolita*, 22 October 2018, www.rp.pl.

⁴¹ “Błaszczak: Stoltenberg uważa, że wojska USA w Polsce wzmacniają zdolności obronne NATO,” PAP, 20 November 2018, www.pap.pl.

⁴² “Prezydent gościem ‘Śniadania w Trójce,’” *Prezydent.pl*, 22 December 2018, www.prezydent.pl.

⁴³ J. Graf, “MON przedstawia wielopoziomową ofertę...,” *op. cit.*

⁴⁴ They were expressed in a joint letter from Minister of National Defence Antoni Macierewicz and Minister of Foreign Affairs Witold Waszczykowski to High Representative Federika Mogherini. See: “Spotkanie ministrów obrony państw UE,” MON, 13 November 2017, www.gov.pl/web/obrona-narodowa.

projects under consideration at the time (they concerned military mobility and the development of a programmable radio). At the beginning of 2018, however, it adopted a broader formula for participation in this defence cooperation mechanism, recognising that it may bring tangible benefits with a relatively low risk of weakening NATO.⁴⁵ In March, when the EU Council (meeting for the first time in the PESCO format, i.e., without the UK, Denmark, and Malta) accepted the first set of 17 projects, Poland expressed interest in participating in six additional initiatives.⁴⁶ In November, when the second set was adopted (which also included 17 projects), Poland expressed interest in 10 of the initiatives.⁴⁷ Eventually, at the end of 2018, out of 34 PESCO projects, Poland was a participant in seven, and an observer in 11.⁴⁸

Poland chose projects that showed the potential to involve Polish defence companies more widely in European research and development (R&D) cooperation. Four projects concerned the development of new armaments and military equipment. Three focused on logistics and coordination and corresponded to NATO's needs, and thus directly reflected Poland's assumption of non-duplication and the coherence of PESCO with the Alliance's activities (see Table). The initiatives in which Poland was only an observer were also dominated by those related to R&D and industrial-defence cooperation.⁴⁹ Simultaneously, Poland publicly proposed to launch a new PESCO project concerning the development of a next-generation main battle tank. Suggesting that this project could extend the ongoing bilateral cooperation between Germany and France in this area (MGCS programme), it tried unsuccessfully to encourage these countries to open up to additional partners.⁵⁰

The Polish concerns about PESCO were also reduced by the Council's adoption (in October) of the recommendations developing 20 general defence policy commitments made during the activation of this cooperation mechanism.⁵¹ Their

⁴⁵ This is how Poland's approach to PESCO was defined by T. Szatkowski, Undersecretary of State in the Ministry of National Defence, in a radio interview during a joint broadcast of Catholic radio stations. "Tomasz Szatkowski: Jestem optymistą, jeśli chodzi o amerykańskie wojska w Polsce," *Siódma-Dziewiąta*, 7 May 2018, www.siodma9.pl.

⁴⁶ R. Lesiecki, "Kolejne 'polskie' projekty w ramach PESCO – m.in. logistyka, walka przeciwwminowa, artyleria i cyberbezpieczeństwo," *Defence24*, 11 April 2018, www.defence24.pl.

⁴⁷ R. Lesiecki, "17 nowych projektów PESCO, Polska zaangażowana w lądowe bezzałogowce," *Defence24*, 20 November 2018, www.defence24.pl.

⁴⁸ The full list of projects can be found on the official PESCO website: www.pesco.europa.eu.

⁴⁹ For more, see: R. Lesiecki, "17 nowych projektów..." *op. cit.*, R. Lesiecki, "Kolejne polskie projekty..." *op. cit.*

⁵⁰ "Mariusz Błaszczak: stała współpraca strukturalna PESCO nie jest załącznikiem wspólnej europejskiej armii," *Polskie Radio 24*, 19 November 2018, www.polskieradio24.pl.

⁵¹ *Council Recommendation of 15 October 2018 concerning the sequencing of the fulfilment of the more binding commitments undertaken in the framework of permanent structured cooperation (PESCO) and*

implementation was staged over time (the first stage by the end of 2020 and the second by 2025) and no measurable criteria for their fulfilment were introduced, while remaining softly worded (e.g., a commitment to contribute forces to EU battlegroups, support for EU military operations, search for opportunities to launch new PESCO projects, active use of EDF, contribute to the development of the EU defence industry, etc.)⁵². Hence, PESCO lost the potential to undermine NATO, which was the main cause of Polish concern.⁵³

Poland was also involved in negotiations concerning the rules of participation of third countries in PESCO projects. In 2018, the Council confirmed that such participation is only possible on a *case-by-case*⁵⁴ basis and announced a more detailed regulation in this matter. In the discussion concerning this issue, some argued against the broad opening of PESCO to non-EU countries as contradictory to the overarching objective of this mechanism—strengthening European military capabilities and the defence industry. Other voices, including Poland's, stressed the great value of military and industrial-defence cooperation with non-EU NATO countries, especially the U.S., the United Kingdom, and Norway.⁵⁵ Due to this dispute, the announced regulation could not be agreed upon by the end of 2018.

Alongside the acceptance of subsequent PESCO projects in the EU, the first five grants were allocated for research work under the so-called Preparatory Action, a smaller EDF pillar (€90 million by 2020). The three winning consortia included entities from Poland.⁵⁶ However, the attention of the Member States, including Poland, was drawn to the negotiations on the final shape of the EDIDP as the larger of the two pillars of the EDF (€500 million by 2020), aimed at supporting the development of defence capabilities.

The Polish proposals for the EDIDP were focused on setting the rules for EU funding of R&D programmes: while the initial stage amounts to a maximum of 20% of the costs of the most expensive phase, that is, the construction of

specifying more precise objectives, Dz.U. UE [Journal of Laws EU], 2018, no. C 374/1, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu>.

⁵² For more, see: M. Madej, M. Terlikowski, "Wspólna Polityka Bezpieczeństwa i Obrony w 2018 r... – dokąd zmierzają PESCO i EDF?," R. Kuźniar (ed.), *Rocznik Strategiczny 2018/19*, SCHOLAR, 2019, p. 65.

⁵³ "Mariusz Błaszczak: stała współpraca strukturalna PESCO..." *op.cit.*

⁵⁴ "Council Decision (CFSP) 2018/909 of 25 June 2018 establishing a common set of rules for the management of PESCO projects," *Official Journal of the European Union*, 2018, L 161/38.

⁵⁵ "O przyszłości polityki bezpieczeństwa Unii Europejskiej," MON, 20 November 2018, www.gov.pl/web/obrona-narodowa.

⁵⁶ See: "Pilot Project and Preparatory Action on Defence Research," European Defence Agency, 15 February 2019, www.eda.europa.eu.

a prototype, the remaining stages or elements of the programme, such as the preparation of technical documentation, might receive 100% funding. According to the European Commission's proposal, the introduction of the project into PESCO would allow funding of up to 30%. Projects with the participation of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) could expect even greater funding. Poland strived to ensure that the projects would be eligible for such additional EU funding even if they included *mid-caps* (i.e., companies with a market value of \$2–10 billion). The final shape of the regulation establishing the EDIDP corresponded to the Polish proposals, but the mid-caps were defined in terms of employment (up to 3,000 employees), and the total maximum value of EDIDP funding was set at 55%.⁵⁷

Similar discussions were held by Poland in the second half of the year, as part of negotiations on the regulation concerning the shape of the EDF for the next financial period, 2021–2027. By the end of 2018, only the so-called partial general approach (reflecting the consensus in the Council) was adopted, and the Polish proposals were maintained.

In the operational dimension of the CSDP, in 2018, Poland tried to demonstrate solidarity with its allies and strengthen political cohesion between the countries of the Eastern and Southern flanks of NATO. Poland supported the EU *NAVFOR Sophia* operation in the Mediterranean, contributing about 100 troops and a reconnaissance aircraft. It also maintained 50 troops in the *EUFOR Althea* mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Table

PESCO Projects with Poland's Participation

Project name	Purpose of cooperation	Coordinator (bold)/ participating countries
Military Mobility	Facilitating the transfer of troops and equipment across the EU's internal borders by removing legal and administrative barriers.	The Netherlands/all countries participating in PESCO
Maritime (semi-) Autonomous Systems for Mine Countermeasures (MAS MCM)	Development of underwater, surface and flying drones to counter sea mines.	Belgium/Greece, Latvia, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Poland

⁵⁷ "Regulation (EU) 2018/1092 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 establishing a European Defence Industrial Development Programme to promote the competitiveness and innovative capacity of the Union's defence industry," *Official Journal of the European Union*, 2018, L 200/30, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu>.

Project name	Purpose of cooperation	Coordinator (bold)/ participating countries
Harbour & Maritime Surveillance and Protection (HARMSPRO)	Development of an integrated system of platforms, sensors, and software for monitoring the situation in harbours and coastal waters.	Italy/Greece, Portugal, Poland
Modular Unmanned Ground System (MUGS)	The development of a modular ground drone, capable of carrying out transport and reconnaissance tasks.	Estonia/Belgium, Czechia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Netherlands, Spain, Poland
Network of logistics centres in Europe and support to operations	Enabling the sharing of military logistics infrastructure to facilitate the movement of troops and equipment within and outside the EU.	Germany/Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece, Spain, France, Holland, Croatia, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Poland
European Secure Software-defined Radio (ESSOR)	Development of technology for digital, encrypted military communications.	France/Belgium, Germany, Spain, Finland, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Poland
Cyber Rapid Response and Mutual Security Assistance Teams for Cyber Security (CRRTs)	Creating expert teams to identify and combat threats in cyberspace and enabling them to be used to mutual support in crises.	Lithuania/ Estonia, Finland, Croatia, the Netherlands, Romania, Poland

Source: The official PESCO website, www.pesco.europa.eu. See: R. Lesiecki, “Kolejne ‘polskie’ projekty w ramach PESCO—m.in. logistyka, walka przeciwwminowa, artyleria i cyberbezpieczeństwo,” *Defence24*, 11 April 2018; R. Lesiecki, “17 nowych projektów PESCO, Polska zaangażowana w lądowe bezzałogowce,” *Defence24*, 20 November 2018, www.defence24.pl.

Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction

Poland’s activities regarding the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction were in line with its priorities as a member of the UNSC and longstanding Polish efforts in this area. During the high-level debate in the UNSC on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (18 January), President Duda stressed the role of the NPT as “the only real tool to bring us closer to a world without nuclear weapons” and Poland’s efforts to maintain the credibility

of this regime.⁵⁸ In 2018, Poland chaired the Second Preparatory Committee of the NPT Review Conference (scheduled for 2020, on the 50th anniversary of the NPT's entry into force). The Committee met from 23 April to 4 May at the UN headquarters in Geneva under the chairmanship of Ambassador Adam Bugajski, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Poland to the UN Office and international organisations in Vienna.⁵⁹

Poland emphasised the need to strengthen all three pillars of the NPT: non-proliferation, disarmament, and the peaceful use of nuclear energy.⁶⁰ Poland contributed to consensus-building efforts at the NPT with proposals for action made under the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI), a group that had been active since 2010 and which also included Australia, Chile, Japan, Canada, Mexico, the Netherlands, Germany, Turkey, and the United Arab Emirates.

Poland consistently supported a *step-by-step* approach to nuclear disarmament. It stressed that it is a long-term process and that progress would depend on security conditions.⁶¹ Hence, Poland opposed the TPNW. Back in 2017, together with other NATO countries, it directly criticised this agreement as ineffective and deepening divisions within the NPT.⁶² Poland also argued that in order to be successful, disarmament needs to be verifiable. Poland participated in the development of new solutions in this area, including by co-chairing one of the working groups of the International Partnership for the Nuclear Disarmament Verification (IPNDV) since 2015 and participating in the UN group of governmental experts (UN GGE), established in 2017.

Poland criticised Russia's actions, including its violation of the INF Treaty, as one of the obstacles to progress in disarmament. It also pointed to Russia's violation of the Budapest Memorandum, which guaranteed Ukraine's territorial integrity in exchange for renouncing Soviet nuclear weapons.⁶³ Poland also criticised North Korea (which announced its withdrawal from the NPT in 2003) for violating UN sanctions and developing its nuclear, chemical, and missile programmes. It supported

⁵⁸ "Wystąpienie Prezydenta RP podczas Debaty Wysokiego Szczebla Rady Bezpieczeństwa ONZ," *Prezydent.pl*, 18 January 2018, www.prezydent.pl.

⁵⁹ "Proces przeglądu Układu o Nierozprzestrzenianiu Broni Jądrowej (NPT)," Permanent Representation of Poland to the United Nations Office and the international organisations in Vienna, 8 May 2018, www.gov.pl/web/onz/stale-przedstawicielstwo-rp-przy-biurze-narodow-zjednoczonych-wiedniu.

⁶⁰ "Statement of the Republic of Poland, General Debate –II NPT Preparatory Committee," United Nations, 23 April 2018, <https://statements.unmeetings.org>.

⁶¹ *Ibidem*.

⁶² "North Atlantic Council Statement on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons," NATO, 20 September 2017, www.nato.int.

⁶³ "Statement of the Republic of Poland, Cluster I—Nuclear Disarmament," United Nations, 26 April 2018, <https://papersmart.unmeetings.org>.

the reopening of dialogue between the U.S. and South Korea with the North, while also calling, however, for continued international pressure to be maintained until the country's complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearisation.⁶⁴

With regards to the nuclear agreement with Iran (JCPOA), Poland attempted to balance between the EU and the U.S., aspiring to the role of a mediator between them.⁶⁵ In accordance with the EU's position, Poland noted the need for full implementation of the JCPOA, and after the U.S. withdrawal from the agreement, it continued to adhere to its provisions. At the same time, the Polish authorities appealed to the EU Member States for a better understanding of the U.S. security concerns, such as those related to the development of Iran's ballistic programme and its involvement in regional conflicts. As a result, Poland opposed creating mechanisms enabling European companies to circumvent American sanctions, which would reduce the pressure on Iran (INSTEX).⁶⁶

Poland also emphasized the risks associated with chemical and biological weapons. It stressed, including in the UNSC, the need to prevent the use of such weapons and to draw up consequences against perpetrators.⁶⁷ In response to the Skripal poisoning attempt, Poland expressed solidarity with the United Kingdom and announced its support for the possible imposition of additional sanctions against Russia⁶⁸ by the EU. It subsequently expelled four Russian diplomats from the embassy in Warsaw (similar actions were taken by around 25 countries, mainly from the EU and NATO). The need for the international community to react to the chemical attacks was stressed in a 14 April statement by the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs following missile strikes in Syria by the U.S., the UK, and France in response to the use of such weapons by Bashar al-Assad's forces.⁶⁹ Although the statement did not explicitly support these strikes, this was clearly stated by President Duda and subsequently by representatives of the MFA.⁷⁰ Poland was also one of the co-initiators of a special meeting of the Conference of States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention (on 26 June). It resulted in the beginning of

⁶⁴ "Wystąpienie podczas posiedzenia Rady Bezpieczeństwa ONZ," *Prezydent.pl*, 26 September 2018, www.prezydent.pl.

⁶⁵ M. Strzałkowski, "Polska pośrednikiem między UE a USA ws. Iranu?," *EurActiv*, 25 May 2018, www.euractive.pl.

⁶⁶ "Polska przeciwko działaniom UE osłabiającym sankcje USA na Iran," PAP, 28 May 2018, www.pap.pl.

⁶⁷ "Wystąpienie podczas posiedzenia Rady Bezpieczeństwa...," *op. cit.*

⁶⁸ "Szefowie MSZ Polski i W. Brytanii o roli Rosji w ataku na Skripala," PAP, 16 March 2018, www.pap.pl.

⁶⁹ "Oświadczenie Ministerstwa Spraw Zagranicznych RP," MSZ, 14 April 2018, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja.

⁷⁰ "Prezydent: Popieramy działania naszych sojuszników w Syrii," *Prezydent.pl*, 14 April 2018, www.prezydent.pl; "Wiceszef MSZ: przyjmujemy z satysfakcją zdecydowane działania przeciwko broni chemicznej," PAP, 14 April 2018, www.pap.pl.

works on an international mechanism for identifying those responsible for attacks with chemical weapons. On 21-30 November, the Fourth Review Conference of the Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons was held. The Permanent Representative of the Republic of Poland to the OPCW, Ambassador Marcin Czepelak, chaired the works of the committee responsible for the preparation of final documents and decisions of the Conference. During the Conference, Poland organised accompanying events on the use of chemical weapons on Polish soil during World War I and the legacy of the disposal of such weapons in, for example, the Baltic Sea. Together with Lithuania, it also presented a working document on the latter topic.⁷¹

The year-long Polish presidency of the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCoC) ended in June.⁷²

Assessment

Despite tensions within NATO in 2018, the allied security guarantees for Poland were strengthened. They benefited from decisions at the Brussels summit to improve the mechanisms and instruments of collective defence, especially as regards the mobilisation and deployment of larger reinforcements in the event of conflict. However, implementation of these provisions, especially those concerning the development of forces for joint operations, remained the responsibility of individual states. The pace and scope of the necessary investments were to be affected by differences in the assessment of the scale of threat from Russia, limited resources, and the concentration of numerous allies on the southern flank. These factors most likely affected the lack of a decision to establish a NATO land component command in Poland.

The limitations that Poland faced in NATO prompted it to intensify efforts to strengthen the U.S. military presence on its territory on a bilateral basis and make it more permanent. Success would reduce both concerns regarding long-term American involvement in Europe and the gaps in NATO's military capabilities on the Eastern Flank. It was, however, in the interests of the United States to strengthen deterrence of Russia without undermining the political cohesion of the Alliance, as evidenced by signals from both the American administration and Congress. Further developments in this matter could be influenced by Poland's readiness to bear both the investment costs and the risks associated with participation in activities on the Eastern and Southern flanks of NATO. The U.S.

⁷¹ "IV Konferencja Przeglądowa Konwencji o Zakazie Broni Chemicznej," Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Hague, 14 November 2018, www.gov.pl/web/holandia.

⁷² Ambassador Marek Szczygieł was the Chair of HCoC.

decisions could also depend on factors that Poland has limited influence on, such as the level of defence spending by European NATO members.

The events of 2018 were a reminder that Poland's security could be affected by developments in arms control and non-proliferation regimes. The crisis surrounding the INF Treaty highlighted the fears of many Europeans about an arms race and a further escalation of tensions with Russia. In addition to the growing missile threat from Russia, there was also an increased risk of deepening divisions between the U.S. and Europe, as already brought about by the situation concerning Iran and the JCPOA. Over the long term, such proliferation crises could increasingly divert the attention and resources of the U.S. and other allies away from the Eastern Flank. Polish involvement in efforts to building consensus in these fields was a natural attempt to counter such risks.

Compared to the dynamic involvement in discussions on further adaptation of NATO and negotiations with the U.S. on strengthening their military presence on Polish territory, Poland's policy towards the CSDP was of no strategic importance. Being open to the PESCO projects enabled Poland to partially overcome the image of a country sceptical about strengthening defence cooperation in the EU. The Polish approach towards PESCO turned out to be pragmatic and, in this respect, similar to the policies of many other EU countries, which acknowledged that this mechanism, given the failure of the idea of making it a narrow core of defence integration in the EU, may become a useful "umbrella" for very diverse and unconnected programmes on R&D, military cooperation, development of capabilities, etc. However, Polish attachment to the principles of non-duplication and coordination of EU initiatives with NATO was perceived by many partners as promoting the concept of subordinating the development of PESCO and EDF to NATO. This, on the other hand, placed Poland outside the group of countries conducting an active debate on European strategic autonomy, understood more and more often as an alternative to the Alliance and a project not necessarily identical to CSDP (as proved by the establishment of E2I by France). Nonetheless, these debates did not bring about any changes in the military potential of the participating countries, so the practical significance of these discussions for Poland's security in the short and medium terms remained very limited.

Poland's Policy in the European Union

JOLANTA SZYMAŃSKA

2018 was another year of debate over the shape of the European Union after the United Kingdom's exit, as well as a period of intense negotiations on the terms of Brexit. The differences in the approaches of Germany and France towards key EU reforms narrowed—though still evident in 2017—the risk of diversifying integration, whilst providing an opportunity for other coalitions of states to present their own ideas for improving the Union. Poland tried to take advantage of the situation by coordinating its position on European issues with partners from the Visegrad Group (V4). At the same time, the Polish government sought new partners looking favourably at newly emerging alliances, such as the Hanseatic League.

Background

At the beginning of 2018, there was a change in the position of the head of Polish diplomacy—Witold Waszczykowski was replaced by the former Undersecretary of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Jacek Czaputowicz. This change was part of a broad government reconstruction that began back in late 2017 (initiated with the replacement of Beata Szydło as prime minister with Mateusz Morawiecki in December 2017), aiming at, among other things, easing tensions in Poland's relations with its European partners. The reconstruction at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs did not include the position of Secretary of State for European Affairs, held by Konrad Szymański.

European politics was marked by a dispute over the rule of law between Prime Minister Beata Szydło's government and the European Commission (EC), which in late 2017 led to the initiation of the sanctions procedure against Poland under Article 7 of the EU Treaty (TEU). The formal constraints of this procedure, namely the requirement that all states, apart from the one—the one against which it was initiated—agree to impose sanctions, meant that Hungary's open support of Poland limited the possibility of punishment under this mechanism. However, the issue of the protection of the rule of law aroused a lot of excitement, and the concerns of the public and Western European politicians about such problems in Central and Eastern Europe, where similar reservations were raised against Hungary, Romania, and others, kept the issue on the agendas of the EU institutions.

The context for the Polish government's European policy remained the ongoing debate within the EU on the organisation's future after Brexit. It covered such issues as the reform of EU institutions, the future of the common market, and the eurozone, the further development of migration policy, as well as security and defence policy, challenges relating to the development of technology and climate protection. The debate on challenges for the EU was linked to the discussion on the shape of the multiannual budget for 2021–2027, which gained momentum in mid–2018 with the announcement of the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) proposal by the European Commission.¹

The discussion concerning the EU's priorities, as well as its financing, divided the Member States. Despite a number of attempts by French President Emmanuel Macron to build a coalition for deeper integration, there was a growing divergence between France and Germany on a number of EU policy areas (e.g., eurozone reform). The elections in Italy, which witnessed the victory of a coalition composed of the anti-establishment Five Star Movement and the Eurosceptic League, put the conventional French-Italian alliance to the test. Alongside the problems in cooperation among the largest EU states, the ideas of creating an inclusive vanguard were losing popularity. Their implementation was also hampered by the activation of alternative alliances to the Franco-German tandem.

Security challenges arising from regions in the immediate vicinity of the organisation remained relevant for the EU in 2018. Although the migration-management crisis significantly lost intensity, as by 2018 irregular migration had reached 150,000 (i.e., the lowest level since 2013), this issue continued to stir emotions among European societies. Furthermore, Russian activity on EU territory, including instances of disinformation activities in media and on social networks, was considered a direct threat. The involvement of Russian services in the chemical weapons attack on British territory (poisoning of the former Russian intelligence agent Sergei Skripal and his daughter Yulia) also shocked public opinion. Although the Russian authorities denied accusations of involvement in the attack, the event triggered a crisis in diplomatic relations between the UK and the Russian Federation, affecting EU-Russia relations.

The rivalry between the U.S. and China, which determined the EU's position on the global stage, gained a new dimension. In July and August, and again in September, the U.S. imposed additional tariffs on products imported from China, which was followed by a similar response from China. Faced with an escalating trade war between the superpowers, the EU tried to maintain a neutral position.

¹ "A Modern Budget for a Union that Protects, Empowers and Defends. The Multiannual Financial Framework for 2021–2027," *Communication from the Commission*, COM(2018) 321 final, Brussels, 2 May 2018, www.eur-lex.europa.eu.

The Member States, however, differed in their assessment of the threats posed by the U.S.-China rivalry and the strategy the EU should pursue in the face of it. The outcomes of the conflict and the simultaneous direct EU-U.S. trade dispute risked slowing down economic growth in the EU, which was heavily dependent on exports.²

In 2018, negotiations concluded between the EU and the UK on the terms of leaving the organisation. As the process evolved, a political crisis deepened in the UK, stemming from the lack of agreement within the British political class on the desired shape of the agreement with the Union. This crisis raised fears of difficulties in ratifying the UK's exit agreement before the scheduled date of 31 March 2019.

Despite growing uncertainty about the future of EU trade and the outcome of Brexit, as well as the economic slowdown in the eurozone recorded since mid-2018, optimism about the future of the EU revived on the continent, with 61% of Europeans viewing it positively at the end of 2018, the highest percentage recorded since 2010.³ This optimism was caused by the still relatively stable economic situation in Europe—economic growth in the EU was 2% in 2018. The effects of the slowdown were not noticeable for many citizens; on the contrary, unemployment remained low (about 6-7%), prices were also stable, and average inflation was 1.7%.

The high support of Poles for the country's membership in the European Union continued in 2018. In the November CBOS survey, 87% of respondents were in favour of EU membership, while only 7% held the opposite view.⁴ On the other hand, despite continuing concerns about the diversity of integration, Poles were reluctant to adopt the euro (71% were against and 22% were in favour).⁵

Goals and Assumptions

The Polish government assumed the existence of a multidimensional crisis in the European Union, including the institutional, axiological, and external security spheres.⁶ The solution to these problems was to be reform of the Union.

² M. Makowska, M. Wąsiński, "EU Trade Policy in the Age of U.S. Protectionism," *PISM Bulletin*, no. 143 (1214), 18 October 2018, www.pism.pl.

³ "Special Eurobarometer 479 October–November 2018", The European Union, <https://europa.eu>.

⁴ "Poland in the European Union," *Polish Public Opinion*, no. 12/2018, CBOS, <https://cbos.pl>.

⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁶ "Government information on Polish foreign policy in 2018 (presented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland Jacek Czaputowicz at a sitting of the Sejm on 21 March 2018)," see p. 11 in this volume.

The government aimed to participate in the debate on its structure, acting as an advocate of the interests of the Central and Eastern European states.

The integration model preferred by the government assumed recognition of the fundamental role of the Member States “as hosts of the European integration process”.⁷ This postulated the strengthening of the role of national parliaments and intergovernmental institutions (especially the European Council) rather than supranational ones, including the European Commission (EC) and the European Parliament (EP). The government rejected proposals to establish supranational EP electoral lists and the idea of merging the positions of the president of the European Council and president of the Commission. It was also sceptical about the idea of using the “leading candidate” process (German: *Spitzenkandidaten*) for appointing the head of the European Commission.

Instead, the government declared its support for the principle of subsidiarity, stressing the importance of unanimity. Minister Czaputowicz stressed in his 2018 exposé that EU policies should not be imposed on states against their will, which signalled the government's distancing from the principle of qualified-majority voting in the EU Council.⁸

The government emphasised the unity of the EU, opposing the idea of a “two-speed Union”. It argued that diversification in integration would inevitably lead to disintegration. The result of creating a core of integration, or “first speed” group, would be, according to the government, “the transfer of any real decision-making process from the treaty-based institutions of the European Union, where all Member States are represented, to the newly created institutions of the eurozone and informal bodies. This would lead to the marginalisation of Central Europe and other regions—Scandinavia, the countries of the south of the eurozone, which struggled with the outcomes of the financial crisis”.⁹

In view of the growing protectionist tendencies, the government supported the protection of competitiveness and economic freedoms of the single market. While pointing out that protectionism not only generates conflicts within the EU (limiting Central and Eastern Europe's use of its competitive advantages), it also argued that it weakens the organisation's economic potential in the world.

Faced with escalating EU-U.S. tensions motivated by trade protectionism, among other things, the Polish government was an advocate of transatlantic solidarity, pointing to the need to preserve the unity of “the whole West”.¹⁰ Concern

⁷ *Ibidem.*

⁸ *Ibidem.*

⁹ *Ibidem.*

¹⁰ *Ibidem.*

for maintain good relations between the EU and the U.S. was an important principle of Polish policy also in the area of security, and the argument for unity was, among others things, a response to the growing threat from the Russian Federation, both in the EU's neighbourhood as well as within its borders.

Poland maintained its position on EU sanctions against Russia, declaring its readiness to extend them. In the field of energy policy, Poland continued to oppose the construction of the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline, arguing that it posed a threat to the energy security of the region.

In migration policy, the Polish government maintained the position that instead of wasting time on disputes over the redistribution of migrants, the EU should focus its efforts on strengthening external borders, assisting refugees outside Europe, and making return policy more effective. It strongly rejected the compulsory relocation of asylum seekers proposed by the EC as part of the revision of the Dublin Regulation. On border protection, it opposed supranational solutions that would "restrict national sovereignty" in this area.¹¹

At the beginning of negotiations on the EU's multi-annual budget, the government advocated increasing countries' contributions to the Union's budget in order to fill the gap left by the UK's exit and maintaining high spending on so-called traditional policies, including cohesion policy and the common agricultural policy. It stressed that financing new priorities (i.e., migration and security or climate policy) should not be done at their expense. Development differences between the Member States still remained significant.

Political Relations

In discussions on EU reform, Poland most often communicated with partners from the Visegrad Group, which presented a common position. In 2018, the V4 adopted two declarations on the future of the EU—the first on 26 January,¹² ahead of the informal EU–27 summit on institutional issues, and the second on 21 June,¹³ ahead of the EU summit on migration. In both cases, the conclusions of the EU summits largely reflected the preferences of the V4.

Regarding institutional issues, the Member States' leaders responded reluctantly to proposals by the head of the European Commission,¹⁴ who sought to re-apply the system of "leading candidates" when appointing the head of the EC after the EP

¹¹ "Szef MSWiA: Frontex i Agencja ds. Azylu UE nie mogą ograniczać suwerenności," *TVP Info*, 28 November 2018, www.tvp.info.

¹² "V4 Statement on the Future of Europe," KPRM, www.gov.pl/web/premier.

¹³ "Stronger Together V4 Joint Statement," Visegrad Group, www.v4.gov.hu.

¹⁴ J. Szymańska, "State of the Union," *PISM Spotlight*, no. 52/2017, 14 September 2017, www.pism.pl.

elections in 2019. In the conclusions of the informal summit, they stated that the European Council could not guarantee in advance that its candidate would be one of those previously nominated by European political parties. Jean-Claude Juncker's idea that two of the most important positions in the EU—that of the president of the European Commission and the president of the European Council—should be occupied by the same person was not shared by leaders either. The summit conclusions argued that such a solution would limit the role of the Member States in the EU. The idea promoted by President Macron to establish transnational electoral lists also caused controversy. Eventually, it was agreed that the heads of states and governments would return to discuss this issue before the 2024 elections.¹⁵

On the eve of the official EC summit on 28–29 June, the head of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker convened an informal meeting of “countries interested in finding European solutions on migration”. It was attended by 16 leaders of Member States. The representatives of Poland and other V4 countries, as well as the representatives of Cyprus, Estonia, Ireland, Lithuania, Latvia, Portugal, Romania, and the United Kingdom refused to participate. The migration mini-summit did not produce specific proposals, which only emerged at the official summit. The conclusions of the heads of states and governments meeting prioritised blocking the flow of migrants into Europe. As regards asylum issues, relocations were agreed only on a voluntary basis and the future reform of the Dublin system would not be introduced by a majority vote. The conclusions also stressed that Frontex would not replace national border services, thus responding to concerns previously raised by the Polish government and others.¹⁶

Apart from the V4's joint declarations on the future of the EU, Poland's contribution to the pan-European discussion was Prime Minister Morawiecki's speech to the European Parliament in June and the citizens' consultations organised by the government from August to October 2018.

Morawiecki's speech in the EP was part of a series of debates by Member State leaders on the future of the EU. In 2018, besides Morawiecki, 13 leaders presented their ideas, including French President Macron, Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte, and German Chancellor Angela Merkel. In his speech, the Polish prime minister emphasised the issues that unite the Member States, in particular the economic challenges related to the need to prepare the EU market for the digital revolution, the necessity to increase EU involvement in assisting African countries in order to reduce the causes of irregular migration to Europe (“Marshall Plan for Africa”), as

¹⁵ “Informal meeting of the 27 heads of state or government,” European Council, 23 February 2018, www.consilium.europa.eu.

¹⁶ J. Szymańska, “Efekty szczytu UE w sprawie migracji,” *Komentarz PISM*, no. 50/2018, 2 July 2018, www.pism.pl.

well as the achievements of the Polish government in implementing the principle of social solidarity and reducing poverty.¹⁷ Although the speech was conciliatory in tone and the prime minister avoided controversial issues, his presence in the EP became an opportunity to voice strong criticism of the Polish government due to violations of the rule of law in Poland. The debate following the prime minister's speech was almost entirely devoted to this problem.

The MEPs' allegations stemmed primarily from the lack of progress in the Polish government's dialogue with EU institutions on the rule of law. A few days before the Morawiecki's address to the EP, on 26 June, during a hearing in the EU Council under Article 7(1) of the Treaty, the Polish authorities failed to address the Commission's concerns regarding the Supreme Court Act. The following day, the College of Commissioners therefore authorised Vice-President Frans Timmermans to launch infringement proceedings against Poland. This resulted in Poland being referred to the EU's Court of Justice over violations of the principle of judicial independence in the Supreme Court Act.¹⁸

The civil dialogues on the Future of the EU, as part of a wide-ranging series of consultations initiated by President Macron in 2017 and endorsed by the leaders of the Member States at an informal summit on 23 February 2018, started in Poland with some delay.¹⁹ Between August and October, 15 conferences were held with the participation of representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Some of the discussions concerned a general vision for European integration, while others were more specific, covering such areas as migration, agriculture, or the future of the eurozone.²⁰ The conclusions of the national consultations provided input to a pan-European report developed under the auspices of the Austrian presidency and presented to the EC Summit in December 2018.²¹ The conclusions of the general report differed considerably in comparison to the conclusions of the national report prepared by the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. For example, whereas the presidency's report emphasised that the EU should speak with one voice on the global stage (especially in relations with powers such as

¹⁷ "Polish PM chooses to focus on economy, amid questions on rule of law in Poland," European Parliament, 4 July 2018, www.europarl.europa.eu.

¹⁸ "Praworządność: Komisja Europejska pozywa Polskę przed Trybunał Sprawiedliwości, aby ochronić niezależność polskiego Sądu Najwyższego," Komisja Europejska, 24 September 2018, <http://ec.europa.eu>.

¹⁹ In the EU, the consultation was conducted from April to November 2018. In Poland, the first debate was held on 28 August and the last one on 29 October 2018.

²⁰ *Raport w sprawie przebiegu konsultacji obywatelskich ws. przyszłości Europy w Polsce*, Warszawa, November 2018.

²¹ "Citizen's consultations—Joint Report," Council of the European Union, Brussels, 3 December 2018, <http://data.consilium.europa.eu>.

the U.S., China, and Russia), the Polish report distanced itself from the concept of a sovereign Europe, pointing out that emancipation from American influence raises citizens' concerns about European security.²²

The year 2018 saw an escalation of tensions between the EU and Russia over the use of Russian chemical weapons to poison the Skripals, among other actions. In a gesture of solidarity with the UK, the EU leaders issued conclusions condemning the attack.²³ As part of sanctions, most EU Member States, including Poland, expelled Russian diplomats from their territory. Furthermore, the works to create an EU sanctions regime against the use and proliferation of chemical weapons were initiated. In October, the EU Council adopted a decision establishing a new system of restrictive measures concerning "persons and entities directly responsible for the development and use of chemical weapons, as well as those who provide financial, technical or material support, and those who assist, encourage or support such activities".²⁴ It included a ban on entry to the EU and the freezing of assets, as well as a ban on funds being made available by persons and entities of the EU to sanctioned entities and persons.

Negotiations with the UK on the terms of its exit from the EU continued in 2018. They proceeded more slowly than initially expected: although the agreement was initially planned to be signed in mid-October, this was only achieved at the end of November. The shape of the agreement reflected the EU's preferences and was therefore welcomed by politicians on the continent, including those in Poland. The major problem, however, was the poor reception of the agreement by the political class in Britain, both the opposition parties and the ruling Conservative Party. The risk of the agreement being rejected by the House of Commons motivated the European Commission and the Member States to prepare for a no-deal Brexit. Poland, like other EU states, started preparations already in mid-2018. The government primarily monitored developments on the French-British border, which included the opening of a new sanitary and phytosanitary checkpoint and a new customs checkpoint in Calais by the French administration. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Technology also set up special email boxes where questions could be directed regarding Brexit and requests for the administration's participation in sectoral meetings and conferences.

²² "Raport w sprawie przebiegu konsultacji obywatelskich ws. przyszłości Europy w Polsce," MSZ, Warszawa, November 2018.

²³ "Konkluzje Rady Europejskiej w sprawie ataku w Salisbury (22 marca 2018)," European Council, 22 March 2018, www.consilium.europa.eu.

²⁴ "Broń chemiczna: nowy system sankcji," Council of the European Union, Brussels, 15 October 2018, www.consilium.europa.eu.

Economic Relations

In 2018, the EU remained Poland's main economic partner. Over 80% of Polish exports went to the single European market. The value of imports from the EU amounted to €156.40 billion (69.3% of total imports). The net transfer of funds from the EU budget increased in relation to previous years and reached more than €11 billion in 2018.

Value of exports to the EU (billions, EUR)	Value of imports from the EU (billions, EUR)	Trade balance with the EU (billions, EUR)	Exports to the EU (% total)	Imports from the EU (% total)
177.19	156.40	20.79	80.3%	69.3%

Source: Eurostat.

The crucial economic event of 2018 was the presentation of the proposal for the EU budget 2021–2027 by the European Commission in May.²⁵ The Commission postulated maintaining the level of spending from 2014–2020, which, in the context of Brexit, meant increasing the contributions of other EU states from 1.03% to 1.11% of gross national income. Although the idea of maintaining a large budget was in line with Poland's priorities, the EC's proposal also included changes to the structure of expenditures (e.g., increased spending on migration policy, climate policy, innovation, and mechanisms to support preparations for membership in the monetary union), which meant cuts in areas important from Poland's point of view, including the common agricultural policy and cohesion policy. Furthermore, the EC suggested the possibility of freezing European funds for states that violate the rule of law.²⁶ Connecting the budget to the rule of law was perceived as a remedy to the limitations of the sanction procedure under Article 7 TEU.²⁷

In response to the proposal of the budget for 2021–2027, the Polish government re-initiated the “friends of cohesion policy” group, which was active during the negotiations of the multiannual budget for 2014–2020. The first meeting of the re-constituted group was held at the end of November 2018 in Bratislava.

²⁵ “Nowoczesny budżet dla Unii...,” *op. cit.*

²⁶ “Wniosek ws. Rozporządzenia Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady w sprawie ochrony budżetu Unii w przypadku uogólnionych braków w zakresie praworządności w państwach członkowskich,” Brussels, 2 May 2018, COM(2018) 324 final.

²⁷ In the case of Article 7, the imposition of sanctions requires the consent of all states (except the one affected). In the case of budgetary sanctions, the EC proposed the so-called reversed qualified-majority vote, which would greatly facilitate their implementation.

It concluded with the adoption of a joint declaration by the representatives of Bulgaria, Czechia, Cyprus, Croatia, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, and Slovenia. The document emphasised that the financing of new EU priorities should not be at the expense of traditional policies, meaning cohesion policy and the common agricultural policy.²⁸

The idea included in the budget proposal of financial support amounting to €25 billion for countries intending to join the eurozone, mobilised a number of countries without the common currency (e.g., Bulgaria²⁹), but did not change the Polish government's position in this respect. Prime Minister Morawiecki explained in an interview that Poland's opposition to accession was due to the difference in the level of economic development between Poland and the old EU countries, and that any change of position would depend on the pace of convergence.³⁰ The convergence progress report published in May 2018 showed that Poland did not meet two of the four economic criteria necessary to adopt the euro, specifically the exchange rate criterion and the long-term interest rate criterion.³¹ At the same time, the government observed the current discussion on the upcoming reform of the eurozone in which the positions of supporters and opponents of liberalisation of fiscal discipline collided, including greater redistribution of financial resources from economically prosperous countries to those that were less well off (France and the southern European countries were on one side, and Germany and the northern European countries—the so-called New Hanseatic League—on the other³²). In view of growing divisions among the countries of the zone, the prospects for its reform seemed remote. This did not reduce the government's hesitancy to join the monetary union.

The idea of making the distribution of EU funds conditional on respect for the rule of law raised the government's concern. Although the Polish government did not question the very idea of protecting the rule of law, it pointed to problems with the proper implementation of the conditionality mechanism. In particular, the Polish authorities emphasised the problem of the absence of detailed criteria for assessing compliance with the rule of law, which could lead

²⁸ "Friends of Cohesion Joint Declaration on the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021–2027," *Politico*, www.politico.eu.

²⁹ J. Pieńkowski, "Bulgaria's Aspirations for eurozone Membership," *PISM Bulletin*, no. 130 (1201), 25 September 2018, www.pism.pl.

³⁰ "Mateusz Morawiecki podał warunek, od którego zależy wejście Polski do strefy euro," *Business Insider*, 2 July 2018, <https://businessinsider.com.pl>.

³¹ "Sprawozdanie z konwergencji z 2018 r. Przegląd postępów państw członkowskich na drodze do przyjęcia euro," Brussels, 23 May 2018, Kancelaria Senatu, www.senat.gov.pl.

³² In March 2018, the group included the Netherlands, Denmark, Ireland, Sweden, Finland, and the Baltic States, advocating restrictive fiscal policy in the eurozone.

to far-reaching arbitrariness in the imposition of sanctions by the Commission. Similar reservations with regard to the EC proposal appeared in opinions of the European Court of Auditors (ECA) and the legal services of the Council. The ECA pointed to the too broad scope of EC competences within the procedure and the risk of undermining the stability of public finances of sanctioned states.³³ The Council's legal services explicitly labelled the EC's proposed conditionality mechanism as unnecessary and ineffective. Despite these reservations, the EC did not withdraw from its introduction.

In 2018, there were ongoing works on a number of regulations relevant to the functioning of the common market. In June, the revision of the Posting of Workers Directive, considered unfavourable for Poland by the government, was finally approved.³⁴ Apart from Poland, Hungary also voted against, while Croatia, Lithuania, Latvia, and the United Kingdom abstained from voting.

The year 2018 also saw the continuation of works on the so-called mobility package, which assumed, among other things, that road hauliers would be subject to the rules on the posting of workers. Poland, with one of the largest transport fleets in the EU was particularly opposed to these regulations. In December 2018, the mandate to negotiate the final shape of the haulier regulation was adopted by the EU Council. Poland, along with Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Ireland, Lithuania, Latvia, Malta, and Hungary voted against it, however, this did not allow the decision to be blocked. Even though the final shape of the package was not agreed in 2018, the outcome of the vote on the Council's mandate limited the chances of a positive outcome for Poland in this case.

The new challenge that received a lot of attention in 2018 was the need to prepare the common market for digital solutions (the issue first appeared in the EU's agenda in the second half of 2017 under the Estonian presidency). In 2018, the regulation on the cross-border portability of online content services in the internal market came into force, abolishing geo-blocking.³⁵ The EuroHPC project was also developed to create a pan-European integrated infrastructure of exascale

³³ M. Makowska, M. Szczepanik, "Budgetary Sanctions as a Mechanism to Protect the Rule of Law in the EU," *PISM Bulletin*, no. 131 (1202), 26 September 2018, www.pism.pl.

³⁴ For more, see: J. Szymańska, "Poland's policy in the European Union," *Yearbook of Polish Foreign Policy 2017*, PISM, Warsaw, 2020.

³⁵ "Regulation (EU) 2017/1128 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 June 2017 on the cross-border portability of online content services in the internal market," OJ L 168, *Official Journal of the European Parliament and of the Council*, 30 June 2017, www.eur-lex.europa.eu.

supercomputers.³⁶ In 2018, Poland joined the signatories of a declaration in this respect.³⁷

In March 2018, the EC presented a package of two Directives on the taxation of the digital economy: the first concerned taxation from the sale of online advertising space and from the sale of user-provided data, and the second concerned taxation of internet companies.³⁸ The need for a unanimous decision of the Member States on the package made its adoption difficult, as the regulations were opposed by countries hosting the headquarters of large corporations in the sector, in particular Ireland, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg. Faced with a clinch at the EU level, and following the lead of countries such as France, Spain, Austria, Poland initiated a discussion on the introduction of digital taxes at the national level.

As regards energy issues in 2018, the works on the proposal of the so-called Gas Directive,³⁹ which was to include, among others, the Nord Stream 2 project in EU law, were *de facto* suspended in the EU Council. At the same time, the consortium started construction of the gas pipeline in September 2018 despite the lack of a complete set of permits. The play for time in the Council was mainly caused by opposition from Germany but also by scepticism towards the directive proposal from Bulgaria and Austria, which held the presidencies that year.

The timing was important because if the amendment was not adopted before Nord Stream 2 was completed, the pipeline could be granted derogations from the application of the Third Energy Package (thereby, from control of the European Commission). Poland hoped for unblocking works on the Directive proposal after Romania took over the presidency in the first half of 2019.

Climate policy attracted much attention at the EU forum in 2018. At the end of May, the LULUCF (*Land Use, Land-Use Change and Forestry*)⁴⁰ regulation, considered unfavourable to Poland by the government, was adopted, establishing,

³⁶ "Leading the way in the European Supercomputing," EuroHPCJoint Understaking, <https://eurohpc-ju.europa.eu/index.html>.

³⁷ "Polska w EuroHPC," MC, 1 June 2018, www.gov.pl/web/cyfryzacja.

³⁸ M. Makowska, "Prospects for Introducing a Digital Tax in the EU," *PISM Bulletin*, no. 30 (1276), 26 February 2019, www.pism.pl.

³⁹ Wniosek ws. dyrektywy Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady zmieniającej dyrektywę 2009/73/WE dotyczącą wspólnych zasad rynku wewnętrznego gazu ziemnego, COM/2017/0660 final.

⁴⁰ "Regulation (EU) 2018/841 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2018 on the inclusion of greenhouse gas emissions and removals resulting from activities related to land use, land use change and forestry into the 2030 climate and energy policy framework and amending Regulation (EU) No. 525/2013 and Decision No. 529/2013/EU (Text with EEA relevance)," OJ L 156, Brussels, 19 June 2018, European Commission, www.op.europa.eu.

among other things, logging limits to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the EU.⁴¹ A regulation on the governance of the energy union was adopted in December⁴² that obliged the Member States to prepare national energy and climate plans to be assessed by the EC.⁴³ Also in December, the negotiations of the regulation concerning the electricity market ended. Contrary to Poland's position, the final version of the regulation included the criterion of permissible emissions of energy producers operating on the power market (550 g/kWh). This deprives coal-fired power plants and combined heat and power plants of the possibility to obtain financing for the delivery of power reserves.

Assessment

After two years of disputes between the Polish government and its European partners, the year 2018 showed signs of the matter calming down. This was mainly due to changing circumstances, including growing tensions in the Franco-German tandem and the emergence of new alliances in the EU (i.e., the New Hanseatic League) opposing the dominant role of Germany and France. This resulted in the slowing down of far-reaching integration projects (including those requiring increasing diversification of integration) opposed by Poland, and the search for solutions that would satisfy the largest possible group and preserve the unity of the Union. The new government's strategy of not escalating conflicts, first and foremost in the area of the rule of law, was of considerable importance for the improvement of relations with European partners. It was also supported by both the limitations of the sanctions procedure under Article 7 of the TEU, and the weakening of public protests on this issue in Poland.

Taking advantage of the new circumstances on the European arena, Poland actively joined the debate on the future of the EU, coordinating its position with the V4 partners. In many cases, these activities translated into the results welcomed by the Polish government. In February 2018, most proposals to strengthen supranational institutions were rejected, and in June the leaders *de facto* rejected a mandatory relocation mechanism for asylum seekers in the EU, recognising

⁴¹ See: B. Mayer, "Porażka leśnej dyplomacji," *Puls Biznesu*, 14 June 2018, www.pb.pl.

⁴² "Regulation (EU) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2018 on Governance in the Energy Union And Climate Action, Amending Regulations (EC) No 663/2009 and (EC) No. 715/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Directives 94/22/EC, 98/70/EC, 2009/31/EC, 2009/73/EC, 2010/31/EU, 2012/27/EU and 2013/30/EU, Council Directives 2009/119/EC and (EU) 2015/652 and repealing Regulation (EU) No. 525/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council," OJ L 328/1, *Official Journal of the European Parliament and of the Council*, vol. 61, 21 December 2018, www.eur-lex.europa.eu

⁴³ For more see: A. Gawlikowska-Fyk, "Energy Union Governance: Transferring Competences to the European Union," *PISM Bulletin*, no. 113 (1184), 22 August 2018 www.pism.pl.

that the decision on this issue must be approved by the European Council (and thus have the unanimous support of the leaders). As a result of the Skripal affair, the position of most Member States towards Russia became stricter and the EU started to consider new sanctions for the use of chemical weapons. However, the tensions in relations with Russia did not contribute to rapprochement between the EU and the U.S. The regulatory changes in the economy became unfavourable to Poland. Apart from unfavourable trends in the services sector of the common market—adoption of amendments to the Posted Workers Directive, continuation of works on the Mobility Package—initiatives supported by Poland, such as the establishment of a digital tax or works on the adoption of the Gas Directive, slowed down. The multi-annual budget proposal was also a cause for concern as it could lead to a reduction of EU funds for policies important for Poland, such as the common agricultural policy and cohesion policy. However, the differences of opinion among the Member States on the proposals for reforming the eurozone diminished the concerns over the creation of a separate budget for the zone, which would lead to marginalisation of the countries outside the economic and monetary union.

The MFF negotiations will be a key challenge for the government over the next two years. Success will depend on the effectiveness of the alliances created by the government. A positive outcome in this respect would also be favoured by the conclusion of the dispute with the EU institutions on the rule of law.

Poland's Foreign Economic Policy

DAMIAN WNUKOWSKI

2018 turned out to be a successful year for the Polish economy, thanks to, among other things, the good economic situation on global markets, which lasted for most of the year. Exports and imports grew (due to high domestic consumption and other factors). Compared to 2017, the inflow of foreign investments to Poland also increased, including those in modern sectors of the economy (e.g., electromobility); however, the value of Polish investments abroad decreased. Despite a significant increase in domestic investments, the level in relation to GDP was still relatively low. Symptoms of unfavourable changes in Poland's economic environment were the result of the economic slowdown in the eurozone, the U.S.-China trade dispute, and other challenges. The government developed a system of support for Polish companies operating on foreign markets in which the Polish Investment and Trade Agency (PAIH) and its expanding network of foreign trade offices (ZBH) played a major role. At the early stage of their operations, however, ZBH faced, among other things, staff shortages, which limits their effectiveness.

Macroeconomic Situation

According to Eurostat data, Poland's GDP growth in 2018 amounted to 5.1%, making it the third-fastest growing economy in the European Union (together with Hungary), only behind much smaller countries (Ireland, 8.2%, and Malta, 7%). The growth rate of the Polish economy was more than 2.5 times higher than that of the entire EU economy (2%), as well as that of the eurozone (1.9%). At the same time, this was 0.2 percentage point (p.p.) better than in 2017 when Poland's GDP growth amounted to 4.9%.¹ Among the main factors that influenced the good economic situation in Poland the economists pointed to the favourable economic situation in the world economy. The positive situation in the labour market was also very important. According to Eurostat data, the unemployment rate in Poland at the end of 2018 amounted to 3.9%, with an average of 6.8% for the entire EU.² Simultaneously, wages grew as well, contributing to a total

¹ "Real GDP growth rate—volume," Eurostat, www.ec.europa.eu.

² "Total unemployment rate," Eurostat, www.ec.europa.eu.

increase of 4.5% in consumption (0.4 p.p. higher compared to 2017),³ which was one of the main economic engines. Higher consumption was also influenced by the implementation of social programmes, mainly the distribution of funds from the state programme “Rodzina 500+” (Family 500 plus). An important component of the economic growth was also an increase in investment outlays by 8.7% (4.7 p.p. higher compared to the previous year).⁴ It resulted from both the implementation of infrastructure projects, including those financed from EU funds, and higher investments from the private sector. The investment spending of medium and large companies (i.e., those employing more than 49 people) amounted to PLN 142 billion (the highest figure since 1989), making an increase of 12.2% year on year.⁵ Despite the increasing wage pressure, inflation remained below the NBP threshold⁶—according to the Eurostat methodology, it amounted to 1.2% in 2018 (the EU averaged 1.9%).⁷ Thanks to favourable economic growth, high budget revenues (e.g., from VAT) resulting from increased consumption and the tightening of the tax system meant public finances also improved. The budget deficit amounted to 0.4% of GDP (a year earlier it was 1.5%), which translated into lower borrowing needs and a decrease in the level of public debt to 48.9% of GDP (from 50.6% recorded in 2017).⁸

Despite the generally positive condition of the Polish economy in 2018, it had to face challenges, including the situation on the labour market. Businesses had difficulties in finding qualified employees, which limited their ability to handle orders, including foreign ones. This was due, among other things, to an exacerbation of the demographic situation and related decline in the number of people of working age, which also was connected to the first full year of the reduced retirement age.⁹ The level of employment may also have been influenced by the withdrawal of workers from the market due in part to the improvement in the financial situation caused by the reception of funds from the “Family

³ “Komentarz MPRIiT dot. rewizji danych GUS dotyczących PKB w 2017 i 2018 roku,” MPRIiT, 25 April 2019, www.gov.pl/web/rozwoj-praca-technologie.

⁴ “PAP, GUS zrewidował w górę dane o dynamice inwestycji,” *Interia Biznes*, 23 April 2019, www.biznes.interia.pl.

⁵ “W 2018 r. – mocny wzrost inwestycji przedsiębiorstw,” MPRIiT, 8 May 2019, www.gov.pl/web/rozwoj-praca-technologie.

⁶ That is, 2.5% with the possibility of deviation up or down by up to one percentage point. See: “Polityka pieniężna,” NBP, www.nbp.pl.

⁷ “HICP—inflation rate,” Eurostat, www.ec.europa.eu.

⁸ “File: Public balance and general government debt, 2015–2018,” Eurostat, www.ec.europa.eu.

⁹ At the end of 2017, a law to reduce it to 60 years for women and 65 years for men came into force. See: “Niższy wiek emerytalny już obowiązuje. Blisko 200 tys. Polaków chętnych,” *Business Insider*, 1 October 2017, www.businessinsider.com.pl.

500 plus” programme, although the results of studies on this aspect vary.¹⁰ This intensified wage competition among companies, and thus increased their costs. These problems were partly compensated by the inflow of foreign workers, mainly from Ukraine¹¹ (officially about 330,000 Ukrainians acquired work permits, while unofficially up to 1.2 million of them were working on the Polish market¹²).

Despite the increase in investments, however, their level in relation to GDP was one of the lowest in the EU and remained well below the 25% target by 2020 outlined by Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki.¹³ In the second half of 2018, a deterioration in Poland's economic environment was also noticeable. This was due, for example, to the economic slowdown in the eurozone, increased uncertainty related to the U.S.-China trade dispute, and the process of the UK leaving the EU (Brexit). This situation may have influenced business decisions to refrain from some production, export, or investment activities.¹⁴ This all contributed to the fact that in Q4 of 2018, the quarterly GDP grew by only 0.5%, representing the worst result in more than two years.¹⁵ The Polish trade exchange also remained strongly linked to the EU, in particular eurozone countries where almost 60% of the Polish goods exports went in 2018.

Objectives of Foreign Economic Policy

The main objectives of the Polish government in terms of foreign economic policy in 2018 included strengthening the economy by increasing the value of exports and investments (both foreign in Poland and the Polish abroad) and increasing the level of innovation and competitiveness of Polish enterprises in the international arena. The Polish administration also sought to diversify the

¹⁰ See: K. Klinger, G. Osiecki, “Sensacyjne wyniki badania GUS. 500+ jednak zachęca do podejmowania pracy,” *Dziennik Gazeta Prawna*, 2 January 2019, www.gazetaprawna.pl.

¹¹ The number of workers from other countries, including Asian countries such as India, Bangladesh, Nepal, and the Philippines also increased in 2018.

¹² “Przez polski rynek pracy ‘przewijają się’ ok. 1,2 mln Ukraińców,” *Business Insider*, 11 March 2019, www.businessinsider.com.pl.

¹³ “Ekonomiści ING wskazują jeden problem z polskim PKB,” *Business Insider*, 1 March 2019, www.businessinsider.com.pl.

¹⁴ In December 2018, the PMI index showing the economic situation in the industrial sector amounted to 47.6 points (1.9 points less compared to the month before) and was the lowest since April 2013. A PMI value below 50 points suggests a slowdown in a given branch of the economy. For more, see: “Słaby wynik polskiego przemysłu. ‘Od polskiej gospodarki odpadło dno,’” *Business Insider*, 2 January 2019, www.businessinsider.com.pl.

¹⁵ “Ekonomiści ING wskazują...” *op. cit.*

destinations of Polish exports and increase the share of dynamically developing non-EU markets in them, in order to reduce vulnerability to negative changes of the economic situation in the EU, especially in the eurozone.

These objectives were in line with the assumptions of the Strategy for Responsible Development (SOR), which as of February 2017 was the basic guiding document of the Polish government in economic matters. It recognised the economic expansion of Polish companies as one of the main areas determining Poland's long-term development and provided for its strong support by the government. Among its specific objectives, the SOR assumed, among others, an increase in the level of internationalisation of Polish enterprises, meaning encouraging them to undertake economic activity abroad (especially in non-European markets), as well as an increase in the share of exports of products with high added value (in this respect, Poland performed the worst among the Visegrad Group countries).

The need to support economic development was also indicated as one of the priorities of Polish diplomacy by Foreign Minister Jacek Czaputowicz in his speech in December 2018. This activity was intended to "build Poland's economic and social strength and, consequently, increase the welfare of its citizens".¹⁶ The implementation of these objectives was to be possible through, for example, MFA missions providing businesses with information on foreign markets, including legal and financial conditions,¹⁷ training courses for Polish entrepreneurs in the area of participation in tenders and projects of international organisations, and support for technological cooperation of Polish companies and research and development institutions with their counterparts abroad.¹⁸

The achievement of the aforementioned goals was to be facilitated by the improvement of Poland's economic diplomacy instruments, emphasised, among other things, in Minister Czaputowicz's parliamentary speech on Polish foreign policy priorities (of March 2018). The actions of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were to be coordinated with other ministries, including those of Investment and Development or Agriculture, and with the president.¹⁹ These postulates

¹⁶ "#PracaDlaPolski—minister Jacek Czaputowicz podsumował trzy lata pracy MSZ," MSZ, 7 December 2018, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*.

¹⁸ The last two groups of measures to support Polish enterprises were indicated by Minister Czaputowicz in his speech on Poland's foreign policy priorities in March 2018. For more, see: "Government Information on Polish foreign policy in 2018 (presented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland Jacek Czaputowicz at a sitting of the Sejm on 21 March 2018), see: p. 11 in this volume.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*.

were consistent with the assumptions on economic diplomacy stipulated in the Strategy of Polish Foreign Policy 2017–2021.²⁰

Another long-term objective of Polish diplomacy was to build a positive perception of Poland as a stable trade and investment partner, which was to be achieved through, for example, foreign visits of representatives of the administration and the implementation of promotion programmes.

International Trade

In 2018, Poland's trade turnover of goods with foreign countries reached €451.8 billion, which was €34 billion more than in comparison to 2017 (an increase of 8%). The good global economic situation, especially in the first half of the year, was conducive to the growth of goods exports, the value of which in 2018 amounted to €223.6 billion, or €17 billion more when compared to the previous year (an increase of 8.2%). At the same time, rising domestic consumption and investment, as well as higher prices for energy carriers,²¹ favoured an increase in the value of imports, which amounted to €228.2 billion in 2018, which was €22 billion more than in 2017 (an increase of 10.7%). Thus, Poland's trade deficit in goods amounted to €4.6 billion, although as recently as in 2017, a surplus of €560 million was recorded.²²

The geographical structure of Polish trade remained unchanged compared to previous years. Poland's most important trading partners were European countries. Goods worth €199.2 billion (89% of total exports) were exported to its European partners, an increase of 8.7% year on year, of which exports to EU states amounted to €180.3 billion (80.6% of total exports), which was 9% higher in comparison to 2017. However, the dynamics of exports to these countries were lower than a year earlier when they amounted to 12.4% and 12.1%, respectively. Imports from European countries in 2018 accounted for almost 70% of Poland's total and reached €159.5 billion, or 9.8% higher on an annual basis. The value of goods imported from the EU amounted to €134.1 billion (equivalent to 58.8% of all Polish imports), which meant an annual increase of 7.8%. As in the case of exports, the dynamics of imports from both directions significantly decreased compared to 2017 when they amounted to 13.7% and 12.3%, respectively.²³ The

²⁰ "Strategy of Polish Foreign Policy 2017–2021," MSZ, September 2017, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja.

²¹ A. Osiecki, "Nasz eksport ma się bardzo dobrze," *Rzeczpospolita*, 14 May 2019, www.rp.pl.

²² "Syntetyczna informacja o eksporcie i imporcie Polski styczeń–grudzień 2018 rok w mln EUR (dane ostateczne)," MPRI, August 2019, www.gov.pl/web/rozwoj-praca-technologie.

²³ *Ibidem*.

lower growth rate of trade turnover with EU countries could have been caused by, among other things, the deteriorating economic situation of Poland's most important trading partners, mainly those from the eurozone: in July-September 2018, the zone recorded quarterly GDP growth of just 0.1% of GDP (the lowest since mid-2014), and in the last three months of the year, just 0.2%.²⁴ As in previous years, non-European countries had a small share in Polish exports, accounting for less than 11% of the export value. However, they maintained a strong position in the geographical structure of Polish imports, accounting for over 30% of its value. Among the non-European countries, most goods were imported from Asia, mainly China, Japan, South Korea, and Vietnam (imports from this direction increased annually by nearly 40%, from €1.8 billion to €2.5 billion).

Table 1.

Directions of Polish Exports and Imports by Continent (2018)

Continent	2018			Dynamics (2017=100)		Share in 2018 (%)	
	Exports (million euro)	Imports (million euro)	Balance (million euro)	Exports	Imports	Exports	Imports
Europe	199 235.5	159 540.1	39 695.3	108.7	109.8	89.10	69.92
Asia	11 635.8	54 069.7	42 434	100.9	113.4	5.2	23.7
Africa	2297.7	2106.3	191.4	101.1	132.6	1.03	0.92
North America	7332.7	6919	413.7	109.7	106.8	3.28	3.03
South and Central America	2232.6	4351	-2118.4	109.4	114.6	1	1.91
Australia and Oceania	748.6	571.1	177.5	95	97.5	0.33	0.25

Source: Author's own compilation based on "Synthetic information on Polish exports and imports January-December 2018 in million €(final data)," Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Technology, Warsaw, August 2019.

In 2018, Poland recorded the largest trade in goods with Germany (more than €114.6 billion), China (more than €28.5 billion), Russia (more than €23 billion), Czechia (€22.1 billion), and Italy (more than €22 billion). Among the most important partners with regard to goods exports are Germany (€63.1 billion), Czechia (€14.2 billion), the United Kingdom (€13.9 billion), France

²⁴ J. Ferreira, "Eurozone Q4 GDP Growth Confirmed at Near 4-Year Low," *Trading Economics*, 14 February 2019, www.tradingeconomics.com.

(€12.5 billion), and Italy (€10.3 billion). Whereas the goods with the highest value were imported to Poland from Germany (€51.5 billion), China (€26.5 billion), Russia (€16.3 billion, an increase of more than 24% year on year, which was caused primarily by rising crude oil prices), Italy (€11.9 billion), and France (€8.4 billion). The biggest surplus in goods trade turnover was recorded with Germany (€11.6 billion), the UK (€8.4 billion), Czechia (€6.4 billion), France (€4.1 billion), and Romania (€2.5 billion), while the largest deficit was with China (€24.3 billion), Russia (€9.5 billion), South Korea (€3.6 billion), Japan (€3 billion), and Vietnam (€2.2 billion).²⁵

Taking into account the commodity structure, the most important groups of products exported from Poland in 2018 were products of the electromechanical industry (€89.2 billion, 39.9% of sales), chemical industry (€31 billion, 14%), agricultural and food products (€29.7 billion, 13.3%), and metallurgical products (€22.3 billion, 10%). In the case of imports, the group of goods with the highest value were also products of the electromechanical industry (€86.4 billion, 37.9%), the chemical industry (€38.4 billion, 16.8%), metallurgical products (€24.7 billion, 10.8%), and agricultural and food products (€20 billion, 8.8%).²⁶

Services played an important role in Polish foreign trade. According to NBP data, in 2018 exports of services amounted to €58.3 billion, while imports amounted to €36.8 billion. Accordingly, Poland recorded the highest ever positive balance in international trade in services of about €21.5 billion. The following categories dominated in exports: other services, transport services, and international travel. The majority of services were provided by Polish enterprises to entities from the EU (€40.5 billion), out of which the most important export direction was Germany, which accounted for €13.2 billion worth of Polish services.²⁷

Foreign Direct Investment

In 2018, net foreign direct investments (FDI) of €11.8 billion flowed into Poland, of which €11 billion (93%) came from EU member states. In 2017, it was €8.1 billion. Most FDI came from the Netherlands (€7.4 billion), Luxembourg (€1.7 billion), and Germany (€1.6 billion). Some countries experienced high levels of disinvestment, such as Spain (€1.7 billion) and Sweden (€0.6 billion). In total, the value of FDI in Poland in 2018 amounted to €199.8 billion, with the

²⁵ "Syntetyczna informacja o eksporcie i imporcie Polski," *op. cit.*

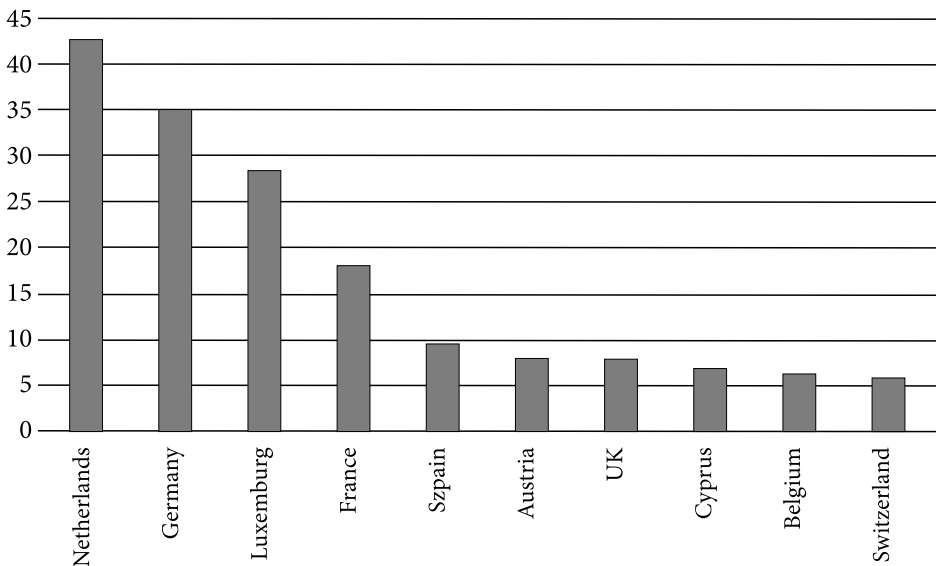
²⁶ *Ibidem.*

²⁷ "Międzynarodowy handel usługami w 2018 r.," NBP, 30 September 2019, www.nbp.pl. The figures are given at the average exchange rate of the National Bank of Poland on 31 December 2018 (1 EUR=4.3 PLN).

Netherlands (€42.6 billion), Germany (€35 billion), Luxembourg (€28.4 billion), France (€18.1 billion), and Spain (€9.5 billion) having the largest share (see Figure 1). At the end of 2018, the total value of Polish FDI in other countries amounted to €21.5 billion, almost €3 billion less than in the previous year. This was mainly due to changes in the valuation of foreign shares and reclassifications, as well as disinvestment of €344 million.²⁸

Figure 1

The Largest Foreign Investors in Poland in 2018 (billions, EUR)



Source: Author's own compilation based on data from the National Bank of Poland.

In 2018, the Polish Investment and Trade Agency (PAIH), which provides services to foreign investors in Poland, recorded 70 decisions to locate FDI in Poland (10 more compared to the previous year) for an amount of €2.13 billion (an increase of 2% year on year). Most projects concerned modern business services (21%), the automotive sector (19%), and electromobility (8%). They were implemented mainly by investors from the U.S. (24), Germany (10), and France (7).²⁹

Among the largest investments in Poland, carried out with PAIH participation in 2018, one can point to the initiation of the investment process for the

²⁸ "Polskie inwestycje bezpośrednie za granicą w 2018 roku," NBP, www.nbp.pl.

²⁹ However, it should be noted that these were investment decisions and not fully implemented projects. See: "Rekordowy rok," PAIH, 16 January 2019, www.paih.gov.pl.

construction of the Umicore plant, a Belgian manufacturer of components for ion-lithium batteries, in Nysa in the Opolskie Voivodeship (project value: about €320 million), Volkswagen's expansion of its plant in Antoninek in the Wielkopolskie Voivodeship (€200 million), and the establishment of the EME Aero service centre, a joint venture of Lufthansa Technik and MTU Aero Engines, implemented in the so-called Aviation Valley in Jasionka near Rzeszów (about €150 million). Also noteworthy is the opening in Warsaw by Johnson & Johnson of the company's first-ever research and development centre for the development, registration, and global marketing of health and hygiene products, as well as the opening by Equinix (a global provider of data centres and other services) of Europe's first research centre for the development and testing of network solutions. Kongsberg Automotive (a Norwegian producer of components and parts for the automotive industry) also opened a plant in Brześć Kujawski (value: €35 million), while in Kobylka near Warsaw, a production plant and research and development (R&D) centre belonging to a Chinese company, Nuctech Co. Ltd., opened (about €10 million). The construction of a plant in Bełchatów by DS Smith, a manufacturer of corrugated cardboard packaging (about €60 million) was also announced. Other investments included the expansion of the Michelin tyre factory in Olsztyn (value: about €40 million), the opening of an R&D centre in Warsaw by the Chinese company TCL (one of the world's largest LCD TV manufacturers),³⁰ and the start of construction of a plant and R&D centre by the Indian company Varroc Engineering Ltd. (supplier of products for the automotive industry) in Niemce near Lublin.³¹

The government also took measures aimed at facilitating economic activity for investors and Polish businesses. In May, an act on supporting new investments was adopted, aiming to create investment zones throughout the country,³² and at the end of the year, a package of acts was introduced, establishing a so-called Business Constitution, aiming to simplify regulations concerning business activity.³³ Nevertheless, in the *Doing Business* 2019 ranking of freedom of economic activity prepared by the World Bank, Poland was ranked only 33rd (down from 27th in the previous year). Among the unfavourable changes indicated were the complexity of the tax system related to VAT settlements. Poland also ranked very distant in terms of ease of setting up a business (121st out of 190 countries surveyed). However,

³⁰ It is to be the largest research centre outside China, with more than 100 employees. The work on artificial intelligence will be carried out there. See: "Chiński TCL stworzył centrum R&D w Warszawie do badań nad AI," *Money.pl*, 3 September 2018, www.money.pl.

³¹ "Rekordowy rok," *op. cit.*

³² It offers, for example, tax relief.

³³ "Konstytucja Biznesu," www.biznes.gov.pl.

there are also rankings in which Poland was considered a very attractive place to invest. The American *CEO World Magazine*, presenting the 50 best countries to do business, ranked Poland second after Malaysia.³⁴ The 13th Confidence Survey of the Polish-German Chamber of Industry and Commerce also brought positive results for Poland, with 90% of the surveyed companies having declared that if they had to make an investment decision again, they would choose Poland.³⁵

Overview of Selected Foreign Economic Policy Instruments

Activity of Polish embassies and consulates and foreign trade offices of the PAIH. The main roles in the system of supporting Polish businesses abroad are played by diplomatic and consular posts and PAIH foreign trade offices. The network of MFA posts supports Polish businesses by, for example, providing information about foreign markets, as well as political support for larger projects, including investments and contact with the local administration. The PAIH offices, ZBH, on the other hand, provide comprehensive services to Polish exporters, importers, and investors through economic consultancy, finding and verifying potential business partners, and holding business meetings. Operation in the formula of commercial law companies is to provide them with greater flexibility in implementing tasks in comparison to conventional establishments.

In 2018, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Polish diplomatic and consular posts provided support to around 300 businesses operating on foreign markets. The embassies in Albania and Portugal and the consulate general in Chengdu, China, were notable in this respect. The heads of these posts were awarded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in December 2018 in recognition of their special contribution to promoting the Polish economy and supporting Polish businesses.³⁶ In 2018, the PAIH completed the first stage of its ZBH PAIH network, ending the year with about 70 offices opened on six continents.³⁷ The ZBH PAIH participated in a number of events promoting Polish companies on foreign markets, including trade fairs and exhibitions. One of the major events of this kind in 2018 was

³⁴ "Polska w czołówce państw atrakcyjnych inwestycyjnie," PAIH, 20 December 2018, www.paih.gov.pl.

³⁵ "Ankieta koniunkturalna AHK: Polska stale atrakcyjna, ale pracownicy poszukiwani," PAIH, 11 April 2018, www.paih.gov.pl.

³⁶ "MSZ: aktywność MSZ w obszarze dyplomacji ekonomicznej (komunikat)," PAP, 18 December 2018, www.pap-mediatoroom.pl.

³⁷ Of which there are as many as six ZBHs in the U.S. and two in China. It is worth noting that as recently as mid-2017 there were only 10 offices open.

the first ever China International Import EXPO (attended by more than 5,500 Chinese distributors) held in early November in Shanghai.³⁸ In April, the PAIH also held the Polish national stand at Hannover Messe 2018, the world's largest exhibition for the industrial sector.

Although the scale of development of the ZBH network was impressive, many offices had not yet reached full functionality, and there were frequent cases of insufficient staffing, which could have had a negative impact on the ability to process enquiries from Polish companies. Furthermore, it was still unclear to what extent the lack of diplomatic or consular status of ZBH employees affects their ability to act, for example, in contacts with state authorities.³⁹

Sectoral promotion programmes, support for innovative companies. In 2018, the government initiated the "Trend for Export" framework programme to encourage Polish companies to sell abroad. The overall aim of the project was to increase the number of exporters from about 17,000 in 2018 to about 30,000 in 2030. It was also intended to foster an increase in the competitiveness and innovation of Polish enterprises on the international arena,⁴⁰ As part of this programme, the government initiated new sectoral programmes aimed at supporting the activity of Polish businesses on foreign markets, mainly those outside Europe, for example, the Furniture Industry Export Accelerator.⁴¹ Furthermore, in 2018 the PAIH undertook activities promoting Polish brands in specific industries. As part of the "Proudly made in Poland" initiative, implemented together with the Union of Brewing Industry Employers, the promotion of Polish beer brands and building the image of Poland as a country of origin for top-quality food products was initiated.⁴²

One of the main areas in which the Polish administration operated and implemented promotion programmes was support for companies offering innovative solutions. This was in line with the assumptions of the SOR on

³⁸ The Polish national exhibit, organised in cooperation with businesses and PAIH, was the largest among the stands of EU countries. See: "Polska z największą ekspozycją spośród krajów UE na China International Import Expo," PAIH, 5 November 2018, www.paih.gov.pl.

³⁹ The status of diplomats was held by employees of Trade and Investment Promotion Sections (replaced by ZBH) operating under Polish embassies.

⁴⁰ The programme consists of seven main issues (so-called streams), including building a knowledge base on Polish exports, financing and insuring exports, or broadly understood support for public institutions. See: E. Twaróg, "Startuje program Moda na eksport," *Puls Biznesu*, 18 July 2018, www.pb.pl.

⁴¹ It was prepared by the Polish Development Fund Group (PFR), the Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Technology (MPiT) and the Polish Chamber of Commerce of Furniture Manufacturers. In 2018, furniture exports from Poland ranked third in the world. See: "Ruszył Akcelerator Eksportu Branży Meblarskiej," PAIH, 21 November 2018, www.paih.gov.pl.

⁴² "Z dumą uwarzone w Polsce!," PAIH, 16 November 2018, www.paih.gov.pl.

supporting innovation as one of the pillars of the development of the Polish economy. In 2018, the PAIH initiated the implementation of the six-year project “Polish Technological Platforms” (PMT), which is export and investment support for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in promoting their innovative offers on non-EU markets. As part of the PMT in 2018, the applications of Polish companies to support their expansion in, among others, China, Japan, Vietnam, the United Arab Emirates, Kenya, Canada, the U.S., or Mexico were collected (the target markets were to change in subsequent years). Expert seminars were also held for businesses interested in these markets.⁴³ The PMT project was complemented through the inauguration of the Poland Prize competition by the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development (PARP). Its aim was to encourage foreign start-ups and innovative businesses to operate in Poland by offering, for example, subsidies to commence business activities in the country.⁴⁴

Overseas visits. As in previous years, in 2018 a frequently used instrument of economic diplomacy was the promotion of the Polish economy and Poland as an attractive investment destination on the occasion of overseas visits by representatives of the administration. This was seen in visits by the foreign minister's trip to Indonesia or Senegal (where the official opening of the Polish embassy occurred) in November 2018 or in the United Kingdom (where the consulate in Belfast was officially opened), as well as in Ireland, Finland, and the U.S. in December 2018. Deputy ministers of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also raised issues of economic cooperation during visits to, among others, Montenegro and Serbia (by Deputy Minister Szymon Szyrkowski vel Sęk) or Azerbaijan (Deputy Minister Bartosz Cichocki).

In 2018, the President Andrzej Duda was also active in promoting economic cooperation. He did so during visits to Lithuania and South Korea (February), Tajikistan (March), Georgia (May), Australia⁴⁵ and New Zealand (August), the U.S. (September)⁴⁶, Germany⁴⁷ (October) or Bulgaria (November). Furthermore, in January 2018, the President promoted the Polish economy at the World Economic Forum in Davos.

⁴³ The programme is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund. For more, see: A. Woźńska, “Polskie Mosty Technologiczne—budujemy strategię ekspansji MŚP,” 15 February 2019, Portal Promocji Eksportu, www.pmt.trade.gov.pl.

⁴⁴ “Poland Prize,” PARP, www.parp.gov.pl.

⁴⁵ “President open Polish trade agency's office in the Sydney,” *Prezydent.pl*, 21 August 2018, www.prezydent.pl.

⁴⁶ “President US one of Poland's most reliable friends,” *Prezydent.pl*, 24 September 2018, www.prezydent.pl.

⁴⁷ The president, among others, visited the office of Toruńskie Zakłady Materiałów Opatrunkowych (TZMO).

Support for Polish enterprises was also one of the main objectives of many overseas visits by Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki. It is worth mentioning in this context his visits to Lithuania (March), Slovakia (April), Macedonia, and again Lithuania (June), the U.S.⁴⁸ (October), Czechia and Germany (November), and the United Kingdom (December). The prime minister also participated in multilateral meetings of an economic nature, including the Third Summit of the Three Seas Initiative in Bucharest (September) and the Africa-Europe Forum in Vienna (December). In January 2018, he participated in the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, where he met, among others, the prime ministers of the Netherlands and Norway, the U.S. Secretary of Energy, and the CEO of Google.

PAIH EXPO 2018. On 25 October 2018, at the PGE National Stadium in Warsaw, the Polish Investment and Trade Agency held the PAIH EXPO 2018, the First Forum of Support for Polish Business Abroad.⁴⁹ Its task was to provide business circles, especially SMEs, with information on available support instruments from the public administration, including PAIH. The businesses could also learn about the markets on which the ZBH PAIH operates, prospective industries, or business culture and barriers to entering specific markets. There was a lot of interest, with representatives of about 6,000 companies registered.⁵⁰ The agency intended to make the PAIH EXPO an annual event, which would contribute to strengthening cooperation between business and administration.

Poland in international economic organisations. In June 2018, the World Bank (WB) Board of Executive Directors adopted a new six-year strategy for Poland. The WB's key areas of investment and advisory engagement included health system reform, improving air quality, and supporting regional development. Furthermore, the Bank was to be involved in projects related to the development of human capital and entrepreneurship, support for reforms stimulating sustainable economic growth, as well as environmental protection measures. Poland was to continue to have access to both the bank's advisory services and financial resources. In this context, there was to be greater involvement of the International Finance Corporation, a part of the WB Group, which was to support, for example, the expansion of Polish companies abroad.⁵¹

⁴⁸ Within its framework, the prime minister held, among other activities, meetings at the New York Stock Exchange.

⁴⁹ "PAIH EXPO – I Forum Wsparcia Polskiego Biznesu za Granicą za nami!," PAIH, 26 October 2018, www.paih.gov.pl.

⁵⁰ "PAIH EXPO: Nasze firmy chcą jak najwięcej eksportować," *W Gospodarce*, 25 October 2018, www.wgospodarce.pl.

⁵¹ "Rada Dyrektorów Banku Światowego poparła nową strategię dla Polski," World Bank, 6 June 2018, www.worldbank.org.

In April 2018, the Board of Directors of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development approved a new strategy for Poland for 2018–2023, according to which the bank's financing was to be used primarily to strengthen the competitiveness of the Polish economy. This objective was to be achieved by building up its resilience to global economic problems (e.g., as a result of the development of the capital market), as well as supporting innovation and measures aimed at changing the model to a more ecological ("green") one, including increasing energy efficiency or more extensive use of renewable energy sources.⁵²

At the International Monetary Fund (IMF), as of 1 November 2018, Piotr Trąbiński was deputy executive director of the Constituency, to which Poland belongs.⁵³ Previously, under an agreement with Switzerland, this group was headed for two years by another Pole, Mirosław Panek.⁵⁴

Assessment

Some of Poland's foreign economic policy objectives were met in 2018. Exports grew, although the simultaneously strong increase in imports resulted in the small trade surplus from 2017 being turned into a deficit. The positive export performance had a positive impact on the financial condition of companies operating in Poland, which favoured the objective of strengthening the position of the Polish economy in the international arena and increasing the level of internationalisation of enterprises. However, as in previous years, despite the support of public institutions, Polish business did not manage to diversify its export destinations. EU countries were still the most important, with a share in total Polish trade that was almost unchanged compared to 2017. The dynamically developing non-European markets still played a minor role. This could be due to Polish businesses' reluctance to change in times of an economic boom from the well-known European markets, or to the still relatively poor knowledge of non-EU markets. The uncertainty related to both economic factors, including signs of a slowdown in the global economy, and the international situation could also have had an impact. In this context, one should point out the actions of the

⁵² A. Reiserer, "EBRD approves new country strategy for Poland," European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 11 April 2018, www.ebrd.com.

⁵³ A Constituency is a group of countries represented by a single director who sits on the IMF Board of Directors. Together with Poland, this Constituency includes Switzerland, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Serbia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. As of 1 November 2018, the Executive Director representing the Constituency is the representative of Switzerland, Paul Inderbinen. For more, see: "Międzynarodowy Fundusz Walutowy," MF, www.gov.pl/web/finanse.

⁵⁴ A new director is elected every two years.

U.S. administration, including the escalation of political and economic disputes with China or Iran, which may have prompted Polish enterprises to limit risks in foreign trade. These factors may have also influenced the low investment activity of Polish enterprises abroad, which resulted in a decrease in the level of FDI compared to 2017 and a reduction in the scope of internationalisation of the Polish business.

The objective of developing instruments of economic diplomacy and a system of support for businesses was achieved to a large extent through, among other things, the opening of a large number of PAIH foreign trade offices and the implementation of new support tools (e.g., the Polish Technology Bridges programme). Still, the operability of many ZBHs was at a relatively low level, which might have had a negative impact on their efficiency in the short term.

The partial success of the government's agenda of increasing the competitiveness of the Polish economy and cooperation in the area of innovation with foreign partners can be considered attracting investments from modern sectors, especially electromobility, and R&D centres. On the other hand, the outcomes of measures aimed at building the image of Poland as an attractive and predictable trading partner varied. A number of facilities for investors were introduced and FDI inflows to Poland increased compared to 2017; however, in *Doing Business* 2019 rankings, Poland recorded a significant decline.

Despite the high rate of economic growth and increased trade turnover, the Polish economy will be exposed to numerous challenges in the coming years, associated with, among other things, the demographic situation and the decline in the number of people of working age. Furthermore, the prolonged trade disputes between the U.S. and China or potential outcomes of Brexit, disturbing the functioning of global value chains and other systems in which Polish enterprises participate, may pose a risk.

II.

POLAND'S POLICY

TOWARDS SELECTED STATES AND REGIONS

Poland's Policy Towards the United States

MATEUSZ M. PIOTROWSKI

Background

Poland's relations with the United States were constantly influenced by the asymmetry of the two countries' potentials. The U.S. is a key ally for Poland not only because of close bilateral defence cooperation but also because of its leadership in NATO. For the U.S., Poland remained a partner of mainly regional importance, the role of which, however, has increased in recent years in the face of aggression from Russia and the illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014, as well as the establishment of the Three Seas Initiative. Among external determinants, the state of U.S. relations with the Russian Federation and the question of President Donald Trump's approach to Russia and its leader, Vladimir Putin, were important.¹ Polish-American relations were also influenced by tensions between the U.S. and its conventional European allies in NATO.²

The United States remained Poland's most important non-European partner in 2018, particularly in the defence and security spheres. Strengthening cooperation in these areas was fostered by the redefinition of U.S. policy priorities, as expressed in the new U.S. National Security Strategy³ and the U.S. National Defense Strategy⁴, developed at the turn of 2017 and 2018. According to them, Russia and China were no longer treated as strategic partners, but as a threat. For Poland, this change meant that efforts to increase the U.S. military presence would not be confronted with comments about the adverse effect of these actions on political dialogue with Russia. Equally beneficial for Poland was the Trump administration's decision to strengthen the European Deterrence Initiative (EDI) programme.⁵ In February 2018, the president submitted a request to Congress to

¹ "Bartosz Wiśniewski: Wydaje się, że mimo wszystkich okoliczności, prezydent Trump nie stracił zaufania czy fascynacji prezydentem Putinem," *Siódma-Dziewiąta*, 5 April 2018, <http://siodma9.pl>.

² For more on the state of transatlantic relations, see: Ł. Kulesa, "Enlightened Opportunism? Poland's Policy Towards the Return of Transatlantic Tensions in 2017–2018" in this volume.

³ M.A. Piotrowski, B. Wiśniewski, "The U.S. National Security Strategy: The Trump Administration's Approach," *PISM Bulletin*, no. 128 (1068), 21 December 2017, www.pism.pl.

⁴ M.A. Piotrowski, "Changes in the Main Assumptions of the U.S. National Defense Strategy," *PISM Bulletin*, no. 14 (1085), 26 January 2018, www.pism.pl.

⁵ Before: European Reassurance Initiative, ERI.

increase EDI spending up to \$6.5 billion in 2019, part of which was to be allocated to military projects on the territory of Poland.⁶ The defence cooperation was also influenced by the modernisation of the Polish armed forces and the construction of the U.S. missile defence base, which was part of the European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA) architecture. On the other hand, the expansion of U.S. exports of liquefied natural gas (LNG) determined the Polish-American cooperation in the energy sector.

Despite the reorganisation of the government by Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki in January 2018, which involved the appointment of Jacek Czaputowicz as the new minister of Foreign Affairs and Mariusz Błaszczak as minister of National Defence, Poland's policy towards the U.S. did not change. The strengthening of bilateral relations in 2018 was fostered by Poland's taking up its mandate as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council, which allowed for more frequent contact with representatives of the U.S. administration.⁷ Poland's position in the bilateral dialogue was influenced by the adoption by Congress of the JUST Act, also known as S. 447,⁸ concerning the return of so-called "heirless" property of Holocaust victims. Furthermore, the relations were negatively affected by the still unresolved issue of the visa requirement for Polish citizens travelling to the United States. The appointment as U.S. Ambassador to Poland of Georgette Mosbacher, who came from business circles and was well acquainted with the elite in New York, Washington, and, above all, with President Trump and Vice President Mike Pence, played an important role in this regard. Ambassador Mosbacher made visa abolition a priority of her mission in Warsaw.⁹ Her appointment also had the effect of strengthening the bilateral dialogue.

Goals and Assumptions

Maintaining and strengthening transatlantic ties in the area of security was one of the main objectives indicated in Minister Czaputowicz's speech on Polish foreign policy objectives in 2018.¹⁰ The presence of U.S. military forces

⁶ J. Judson, "Funding to deter Russia reaches \$6.5B in FY19 defence budget request," *Defence News*, 12 February 2018, www.defencenews.com.

⁷ The United States Ambassador to the UN is a member of the so-called presidential cabinet. This means that the ambassador attends meetings between the U.S. president and the heads of departments and independent agencies.

⁸ "S.447—Justice for Uncompensated Survivors Today (JUST) Act of 2017," U.S. Federal Legislative Information, www.congress.gov.

⁹ "Mosbacher: jestem gotowa, żeby załatwić dla was sprawę wiz," *TVN24*, 1 November 2018, www.tvn24.pl.

¹⁰ "Government information on Polish foreign policy in 2017 (presented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland Jacek Czaputowicz at a sitting of the Sejm on 21 March

was considered crucial for the military security of Poland and other countries in the region. Therefore, the primary goal of bilateral relations was to establish a permanent American military presence on the territory of Poland. All other activities of the Polish government towards the American administration were subordinated to this goal. Despite the bilateral nature of the discussions on the permanent presence, Poland tried to present this objective as strengthening NATO's Eastern Flank and confirming the guarantees of Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty.

The second objective of Polish diplomacy was to maintain U.S. involvement in modernising the Polish armed forces. The signing of a contract for the acquisition of a Patriot air/missile defence system under the "Wisła" technical modernisation programme and the opening of the procedure for the acquisition of HIMARS mobile rocket artillery systems under the "Homar" modernisation programme were considered priority actions in this area. To facilitate the execution of the contract, the MOD decided to purchase both systems without seeking competitive offers, under the U.S. Foreign Military Sales (FMS) procedure. Although the aim was to modernise the armed forces, the involvement of American industry in this process was intended not only to strengthen bilateral relations but also to make it easier for Poland to establish a permanent U.S. military presence.

The third goal was to strengthen economic relations. During a visit to the U.S., this was emphasized by Jadwiga Emilewicz, the minister of Entrepreneurship and Technology, who indicated that Poland wants the United States to rise to its fifth-largest economic partner (in 2018, the U.S. ranked eighth).¹¹ The fourth objective was to increase Poland's energy security.

Political Relations

Polish-American bilateral relations were one of the most significant elements of Poland's foreign policy in 2018. Attempts to strengthen relations were made both in bilateral contacts and in international forums, primarily in NATO, as well as in the UN Security Council.

The most important activities of Polish foreign policy towards the U.S. in 2018 were efforts to establish a permanent U.S. military presence. Over the course of the year, in connection with discussions on this topic, President Andrzej Duda visited the United States, as did, on several occasions, ministers Błaszczak and

2018)," see p. 11 in this volume.

¹¹ "Emilewicz: dwukrotny wzrost wymiany handlowej między Polską a USA jest możliwy w perspektywie pięciu lat," PAP, 26 April 2018, www.pap.pl.

Czaputowicz and the head of the Presidential Chancellery, Krzysztof Szczerski.¹² Other topics raised by the Polish representatives during their visits to the U.S. included the purchase of American armaments, closer energy cooperation and the purchase of LNG, as well as U.S. involvement in the Three Seas Initiative. Although the question of visas was raised by members of the Polish delegation, it did not become a priority in bilateral discussions, primarily due to the persistently high number of rejected visa applications.¹³

For several months, bilateral relations had remained tense due to the amendment in the Polish parliament of the Act on the Institute of National Remembrance (IPN) introduced in January 2018.¹⁴ The U.S. authorities (and also Israel) objected to a provision imposing a prison sentence for attributing any responsibility for German Nazi crimes during World War II to the Polish nation or state.¹⁵ In their view, this was a restriction on freedom of speech and could obstruct the free exercise of scientific research. Representatives of the U.S. administration and a group of senators from both parties¹⁶ tried to persuade the Polish government to change its decision, and yet the amendment entered into Polish law. This resulted in, among other things, the cancellation of Vice President Pence's meeting with Prime Minister Morawiecki and his participation in the AIPAC congress instead.¹⁷ After being assured by Polish representatives that the controversial amendments would be withdrawn from the legal order (in April), the U.S. authorities tried to persuade Israel to end its dispute with Poland.¹⁸ Bilateral meetings at the ministerial level resumed in the same month. The crisis was definitively resolved only in June after the Sejm adopted another amendment, withdrawing the previous changes.¹⁹

A crucial point in bilateral relations was President Duda's visit to the White House in September 2018. The ministers Błaszczak and Czaputowicz and

¹² For more on the permanent presence of U.S. troops in Poland, see the following section on *Military Cooperation*.

¹³ For more on the visa issue, see the following section on Social Relations.

¹⁴ Z. Lewicki, "Polska–USA. Kryzys na całego," *Rzeczpospolita*, 8 March 2018, p. A12.

¹⁵ "Polish law on crimes committed during the Holocaust," U.S. Embassy & Consulat in Poland, 31 January 2018, <https://pl.usembassy.gov>.

¹⁶ A group of 59 senators, initiated by Democrat Tammy Baldwin and Republican Marco Rubio, sent a letter to Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki expressing concerns about changes regarding Holocaust issues in the Polish legal system; For more, see: www.baldwin.senate.gov.

¹⁷ The American-Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) is the largest pro-Israel lobbying organisation in the U.S.

¹⁸ B. Ravid, "Scoop: White House urged Israel to end Poland Holocaust bill dispute," *Axios*, 12 April 2018, www.axios.com.

¹⁹ "Polish law on crimes committed during the Holocaust," U.S. Embassy & Consulate in Poland, 27 June 2018, <https://pl.usembassy.gov>.

Chancellery head Szczerki were members of the delegation. The culmination of the visit included the signing of the Polish-American Strategic Partnership to Defend Freedom and Build Prosperity by the presidents of Poland and the United States.²⁰ The content of the declaration covered three areas—expanding cooperation in the spheres of security and energy, and increasing American investment in Poland and the countries of the Three Seas Initiative. During his September visit, President Duda also met with U.S. senators affiliated with Polish circles. The president visited the U.S. three times in 2018,²¹ although on two occasions these were lower-level visits.²² The first one was held in May when Duda visited the state of Illinois where he met with Governor Bruce Rauner and the Mayor of Chicago Rahm Emanuel. His planned visit to Washington and a meeting with Trump did not take place due to the U.S. president's busy schedule. The unofficial reason, however, was the position of the U.S. against the amendment regarding the IPN law. Duda's third visit to the U.S. came in December in connection with the funeral of former president George H.W. Bush.

The United States hosted five visits with Minister Błaszczak, who held discussions with his counterparts about the U.S. military presence in Poland and the purchase of American armaments. The visits came in January, April, September (before joining President Duda's delegation), October, and November. Błaszczak met with U.S. Presidential National Security Advisor Gen. H.R. McMaster and his successor John Bolton, Secretary of Defense Gen. James Mattis, and representatives of congressional committees on the armed forces and foreign affairs. A working team of the Ministry of Defence and the Department of Defense was established during the September visit, headed on the Polish side by Deputy Defence Minister Tomasz Szatkowski. Minister Czaputowicz visited the U.S. three times in 2018, in May, July, and September, together with President Duda. The purpose of his visits was to meet with Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, Bolton, and congresspeople. Furthermore, in July Czaputowicz participated in a State Department conference on religious freedom in the world. Minister Szczerki continued the dialogue on behalf of the Chancellery of the President. He visited the U.S. four times, in March, August (attending the funeral ceremonies of Senator John McCain), in

²⁰ "Safeguarding freedom, building prosperity through Poland-US Strategic Partnership," *Prezydent.pl*, 18 September 2028, www.prezydent.pl.

²¹ This and subsequent calculations for ministerial visits do not include visits to UN sessions.

²² According to the visit rank system adopted by the State Department, Duda's September visit to the White House was an "official working visit" (the third most important after a state visit and an official visit), scheduled for heads of government and heads of state at the invitation of the U.S. president. The programme involves a reception of the delegation at the president's guest house (Blair House), a meeting with the president and a working lunch at the White House. The other two visits were of the lowest (fifth) rank, which does not involve an invitation from the U.S. President.

September together with Duda, and in December. Szczerski met with Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Wess Mitchell,²³ Bolton, the congresspeople, and representatives of Washington think tanks, including the Atlantic Council and the Centre for European Policy Analysis.²⁴ The purpose of the ministers' meetings was to discuss an increase in the U.S. military presence in Poland, as well as the modernisation of the Polish Armed Forces and the related negotiations on the purchase of military equipment manufactured by the U.S. defence industry.²⁵

In matters related to energy, Poland was represented by the Minister of Energy Krzysztof Tchórzewski and the government plenipotentiary for energy infrastructure, Piotr Naimski. Tchórzewski visited the U.S. in November. He signed a declaration on enhanced cooperation in energy security with Secretary of Energy Rick Perry at that time. This was a continuation of the agreement concluded by Presidents Duda and Trump in September. The declaration, apart from energy security issues—diversification of sources, development of gas infrastructure, LNG transit to Central and Eastern European countries—it also covered cooperation in the field of nuclear energy (supporting scientific and business cooperation, the prospect of obtaining financing for the construction of a nuclear power plant) and cybersecurity for critical infrastructure (sharing knowledge and good practices, conducting joint exercises and simulations).²⁶ Naimski visited the United States twice, first in March in connection with energy forums, during which time he met with Perry, and in October when he visited the Departments of Energy, Treasury, and State and met with representatives of the National Security Council.

In April, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Science and Higher Education Jarosław Gowin visited the U.S. A declaration on scientific and technical cooperation with the U.S. was signed at that time, providing for closer contacts between Polish and American government agencies in the area of scientific research,

²³ Mitchell, for years associated with the Washington-based think tank Centre for European Policy Analysis and described as an ally of Polish interests in the U.S. administration, was allegedly the only one willing to talk to the Polish side during tensions over the IPN law. In fact, he was the only one among representatives of the U.S. administration to meet with Szczerski during his visit.

²⁴ For more on the role of Washington think tanks in the process of negotiating an increased U.S. presence in: Ł. Kulesa, "Wzmocnienie obecności wojskowej USA w Polsce: perspektywa amerykańskich think tanków," *Polski Przegląd Dyplomatyczny*, 2019, no. 2, pp. 104–119.

²⁵ For more on the increase of the U.S. military presence in Poland and agreements on the purchase of American arms, see the section on Security Cooperation.

²⁶ "Wzmocnienie polsko-amerykańskiej współpracy w zakresie bezpieczeństwa energetycznego," ME, 8 November 2018, www.gov.pl/web/energia.

with the primary objective of intensifying economic cooperation.²⁷ The delegation also included Minister of Entrepreneurship and Technology Jadwiga Emilewicz, who visited the U.S. for the second time in July to meet with Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross, congresspeople, as well as business representatives. The Minister of Health Łukasz Szumowski also visited the United States in July. The purpose of the delegation was to sign a cooperation agreement on health and medical sciences with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Szumowski also visited scientific centres involved in medical research. Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki visited the U.S. in October, however, his visit was solely related to his participation in a conference and business seminar in New York.

In 2018, after a two-year interval, the meetings under bilateral cooperation mechanisms established in previous years resumed. A Strategic Dialogue session was held in September, while a meeting of the Polish-American Consultative Group for Strategic Cooperation took place in November. The discussions focused on deterrence policy, bilateral defence cooperation (with regard to the U.S. military presence in Poland, the European Deterrence Initiative and defence industry cooperation), European security initiatives and Russia's violation of the INF Treaty.²⁸ The declaration signed by Duda and Trump in September established the third cooperation mechanism, the Strategic Dialogue on Energy.

Cooperation in the Area of Security

American Military Presence. An Armored Brigade Combat Team and Land Forces Combat Aviation Brigade continued to form the basis for the U.S. rotational presence in Poland in 2018. As part of the NATO eFP (enhanced forward presence) battalion, armoured and mechanised units of the Tennessee National Guard²⁹ were dispatched to Poland, replacing troops directed from Germany. In response to the efforts of the Polish government, the Americans decided to transfer to Poland a Mission Command Element,³⁰ a component operating as part of the *Atlantic Resolve* operation.³¹

²⁷ "Nowa umowa o współpracy naukowo-technicznej z USA," MNiSW, 24 April 2019, www.gov.pl/web/nauka.

²⁸ "Wspólny Komunikat na Zakończenie Dorocznego Spotkania Dwustronnej Grupy Konsultacyjnej ds. Współpracy Strategicznej (SCCG)," U.S. Embassy & Consulate in Poland, 5 November 2018, <https://pl.usembassy.gov>.

²⁹ R. Lesiecki, "Abramsy i Bradley zamiast Strykerów. Nowy dowódca i nowy skład batalionu NATO w Polsce," *Defence24*, 20 September 2018, www.defence24.pl.

³⁰ "Siły sojusznicze w Polsce," MON, www.gov.pl/web/obrona-narodowa.

³¹ Atlantic Resolve is a United States' EDI operation that includes a series of joint operations with NATO countries in Central and Eastern Europe. The operation was one of the steps taken by the

Efforts to increase the U.S. military presence in Poland intensified at the end of 2017 when the Ministry of Defence submitted a proposal to the United States for the permanent deployment of an armoured division.³² The plan was prepared based on existing agreements on military cooperation of those countries under which American troops are permanently deployed. The plan stated that Poland was ready to allocate \$2 billion for building permanent infrastructure for American troops. The congresspeople participating in the works of the Armed Forces Committee of both chambers and the advisors to the president of the United States were engaged in discussions at the political level, while the Department of Defense and American think tanks dealing with international security began to review possible forms of establishing a permanent military presence in Poland.³³ The U.S. Senate Committee on Armed Services, in developing its defence budget proposal for fiscal year 2019 in May (the bill was passed in August 2018), required the Department of Defense to consider the possibility of a permanent location for an armoured brigade in Poland and to report directly to Congress on the subject.³⁴ The report was due to be submitted to Congress in the first quarter of 2019. Consequently, by the end of the year, no declarations had been made regarding the establishment of a permanent presence or the reinforcement of units already stationed with additional rotating formations.

Cooperation of the Polish and American Armed Forces. Construction work on the Aegis Ashore base in Redzikowo, part of the EPAA system, was delayed. This was reported before the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee by the commander of the Missile Defense Agency (MDA) responsible for the project.³⁵ Initial operational readiness was scheduled to be achieved by the end of 2018, then the deadline was postponed to 2020. The year 2018 marked the 25th anniversary of the beginning of cooperation between the Polish Army and the Illinois National Guard under the

U.S. following the illegal annexation of Crimea by Russia and the outbreak of war in Donbas in 2014.

³² "Proposal for a U.S. Permanent Presence in Poland," MON, 2018, www.gov.pl/web/obrona-narodowa.

³³ See: Ł. Kulesa, "Wzmocnienie..." *op. cit.*

³⁴ "An Act to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2019 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes," 115th Congress, H.R.5515, U.S. Federal Legislative Information, www.congress.gov.

³⁵ "Lieutenant General Samuel A. Greaves, USAF Director, Missile Defence Agency Before the Senate Armed Services Committee Strategic Forces Subcommittee," MDA, 22 March 2018, www.mda.mil.

State Partnership Program (SPP) initiated in 1993 by the Defense Department.³⁶ Apart from regular participation in joint exercises, this cooperation had special manifestation in overseas missions in Iraq and Afghanistan. During his visit to the U.S. in May 2018, President Duda visited an Illinois National Guard base. Among the topics of discussion was the possibility of strengthening cooperation between the National Guard and the Polish armed forces, including the newly formed Territorial Defence Forces³⁷.

Modernisation of the Armed Forces. In 2018, the Ministry of Defence completed the purchase of a Patriot missile defence system under the so-called first phase of the “Wisła” technical modernisation program.³⁸ In March, the Polish and U.S. authorities concluded a contract for the delivery of two missile batteries until 2022. The purchase of the Integrated Air and Missile Defense Battle Command System (IBCS) / Patriot is the largest arms purchase contract in the history of Poland. Its costs have been estimated at PLN 16.6 billion. Initial operational readiness is scheduled at the turn of 2023 and 2024. The value of the 46 offset contracts signed in March with the companies Raytheon and Lockheed Martin Global Inc. amounted to nearly PLN 1 billion, and their duration was set for 10 years. Primarily, the contracts cover the acquisition of command and fire-control capabilities using the IBCS module, production of the PAC-3 MSE missile elements and their launchers, as well as servicing.³⁹ In September, the Department of Defense made an order to Raytheon for Patriot components to be delivered to the Polish armed forces,⁴⁰ by implementing the next stage of the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) procedure. Despite earlier announcements, no discussions had been held by the end of 2018 on the acquisition of a further six batteries as part of the second phase of “Wisła”. In October, the Polish government placed an official order (Letter of Request, LoR) for the delivery of a group of HIMARS mobile launchers in connection with the “Homar” modernisation programme.⁴¹ In November, the State Department approved the sale of the launchers to Poland. The cost of acquiring the group was initially determined by the Defense Security

³⁶ “Ćwierć wieku współpracy z amerykańskimi gwardzistami,” *Polska Zbrojna*, 16 April 2018, www.polska-zbrojna.pl.

³⁷ “USA: prezydent RP odwiedził bazę Gwardii Narodowej Illinois w Kankakee,” *Dzieje*, 19 May 2018, <https://dzieje.pl>.

³⁸ “Największy w historii Polski kontrakt zbrojeniowy. Umowa na zakup Patriotów została podpisana,” *Wprost*, 28 March 2018, www.wprost.pl.

³⁹ “Umowy offsetowe do programu ‘WISŁA’ podpisane,” *MON*, 23 March 2018, www.gov.pl/web/obrona-narodowa.

⁴⁰ J. Palowski, “Pentagon zamówił Patrioty dla Polski,” *Defence 24*, 6 September 2018, www.defence24.pl.

⁴¹ Z. Lentowicz, “Rakietowego homara podadzą bez offsetu,” *Rzeczpospolita*, 22 October 2018, www.rp.pl.

Cooperation Agency (DSCA) at about PLN 2.3 billion. Congress did not express any objections,⁴² which enabled the American administration to begin preparing an intergovernmental agreement project (Letter of Offer and Acceptance, LOA). However, it was not presented to Poland before the end of 2018. Furthermore, in May 2018, the Polish police ordered two S-70i Black Hawk helicopters for anti-terrorist units. The Black Hawks were manufactured at the PZL Mielec plant owned by the American Sikorsky/Lockheed Martin corporation. They entered police service already in November 2018. In the same month, a contract was signed for the acquisition of a third helicopter, with an option to purchase a further two. Both contracts, together with the costs of pilot training, amounted to a total of PLN 205 million.⁴³

Economic Relations

The year 2018 once again saw an increase in trade exchange. The total value of trade turnover amounted to \$14.9 billion, of which Polish exports accounted for \$7.3 billion. The increase of the export value for the third year in a row contributed to the decrease in the negative balance to \$333 million, the lowest in recent years.⁴⁴ Polish companies exported primarily turbojet and turboprop engines and parts, electrical machinery and equipment, furniture, and parts for non-rail vehicles, aircraft, and spacecraft to the U.S. On the other hand, Poland imported aircraft, electrical machinery and equipment, turbojet and turboprop engines, and products of the chemical industry.

In order to strengthen bilateral economic relations, the office of the Polish Chamber of Commerce was opened in Washington.⁴⁵ It gathers Polish businesses and offers assistance with conducting business in the United States, as well as to present Poland as an attractive investment area. The Chamber also cooperates with American companies interested in entering the Polish market and conducts activities aimed at strengthening economic relations between the two countries. The Polish Investment and Trade Agency (PAIH) opened four new Foreign Trade Offices in the U.S. in 2018⁴⁶—in Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, and New York—

⁴² “Błaszczak: Departament Stanu zatwierdził sprzedaż Polsce wyrzutni HIMARS,” *Onet Wiadomości*, 30 November 2018, www.wiadomosci.onet.pl.

⁴³ J. Sabak, “65 mln za trzeciego Black Hawka dla Policji,” *InfoSecurity24*, 21 December 2018, www.infosecurity24.pl.

⁴⁴ Prepared on the basis of data from GUS, <http://swaid.stat.gov.pl>.

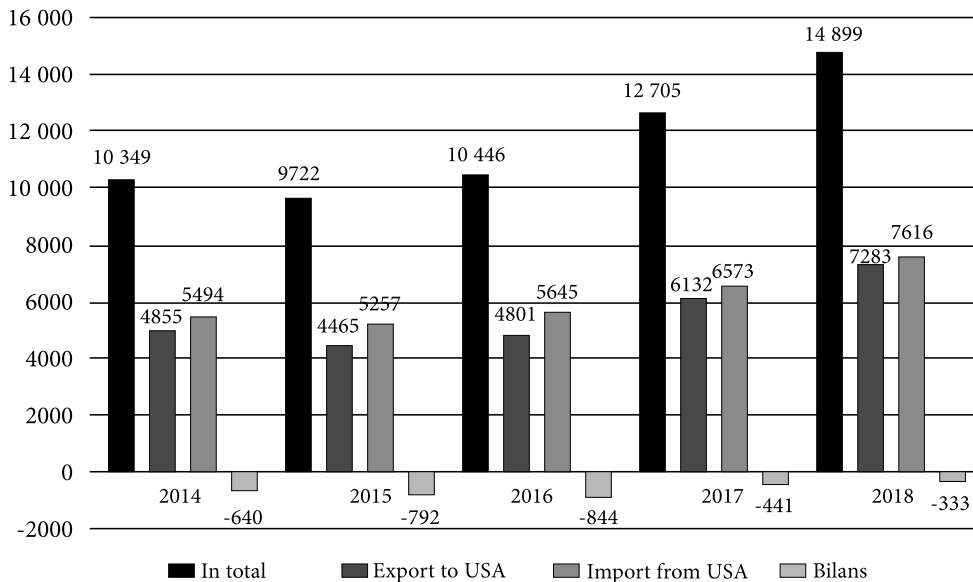
⁴⁵ “Polska wzmacnia współpracę gospodarczą z USA – powołanie Polskiej Izby Handlowej w Waszyngtonie,” MPiT, 4 April 2018, www.gov.pl/web/rozwoj-technologie.

⁴⁶ “PAIH otworzy do końca lipca dwa nowe biura w USA,” *Portal Spożywczy*, 26 April 2018, www.portalspozywczy.pl.

complementing the offices in Washington and San Francisco. Their goal is to support Polish businesses in establishing contacts and entering the American market. PAIH also implements projects to encourage foreign investors to start investing in Poland. The data for 2018 show that American companies participated in a third of all PAIH projects implemented in 2018, with a total value of PLN 560 million. They are expected to contribute to creating about 7,000 new jobs in Poland.⁴⁷

Figure 1.

**Balance of Trade between Poland and the United States
(in millions, USD)**



Source: Author's own compilation based on the CSO data.

In the middle of the year, PGNiG signed agreements with U.S. concerns Venture Global LNG and Port Arthur LNG on the terms of purchase of LNG. These resulted in the subsequent conclusion of purchase agreements for 20 years.

⁴⁷ "Amerykanie inwestują w Polsce na potęgę," *W Gospodarcę*, 31 December 2018, <http://wgospodarcę.pl>.

The contracts with Venture Global⁴⁸ and Port Arthur⁴⁹ expect deliveries of about 2 million tonnes of LNG per year from each transaction, with the first transfers in 2023, while PGNiG also concluded an agreement with Chenierie Marketing International. The contract was established for 24 years, with two periods with separate sales volumes. In the years 2019–2022, Chenierie is to supply a total of about 0.5 million tonnes of LNG to the terminal in Świnoujście, while in the years 2023–2042, the volume of deliveries is to be up to 1.5 million tonnes per year.⁵⁰ The anticipated total increase in the share of LNG by 5.5 million tonnes will mean that with the current annual gas consumption at the level of 18 bcm, the LNG from the U.S. may account for about 42% of the Polish gas market.⁵¹

Social and Cultural Relations

According to a survey conducted by CBOS in the first quarter of 2018, 43% of respondents viewed the American people with fondness, while only 14% described their attitude towards them as reluctant.⁵² There was a decrease in fondness compared to the results of the 2017 survey of as much as 11 p.p. This did not, however, translate into an increase in respondents' dislike, which rose by only 1 p.p. In a separate survey conducted in May 2018, the assessment of Polish-American relations improved with respect to the latest polls of October 2016. The relations were assessed as good by 47% of respondents (against 43%), while only 5% thought they were bad (no change). The group of people describing relations as "neither good nor bad" decreased from 42% to 32%; however, the number of respondents answering "hard to say" increased from 10% to 16%. Among the reasons for their positive attitude, the respondents mentioned cooperation in the area of security, the issue of U.S. military installations in Poland, and general agreement in diplomatic relations.⁵³

A socially relevant issue was the continued maintenance of visa requirements for those seeking to travel to the United States. This was mainly due to the number of rejected applications for tourist and business (type B) visas

⁴⁸ "PGNiG i Venture Global LNG ogłosiły podpisanie kontraktów na zakup 2 milionów ton rocznie skroplonego gazu ziemnego (LNG)," PGNiG, 17 October 2018, <https://pgnig.pl>.

⁴⁹ "PGNiG: kolejny wieloletni kontrakt na LNG z USA podpisany," PGNiG, 19 December 2018, <https://pgnig.pl>.

⁵⁰ "PGNiG: 24-letni kontrakt z Cheniere podpisany – dostawy amerykańskiego LNG do Polski ruszą w 2019 roku," PGNiG, 8 November 2018, <https://pgnig.pl>.

⁵¹ It is assumed that 1 t. of LNG is equivalent to 1.38 billion m³ of natural gas.

⁵² "Stosunek do innych narodów," *Komunikat z Badań*, no. 37/2018, CBOS, www.cbos.pl.

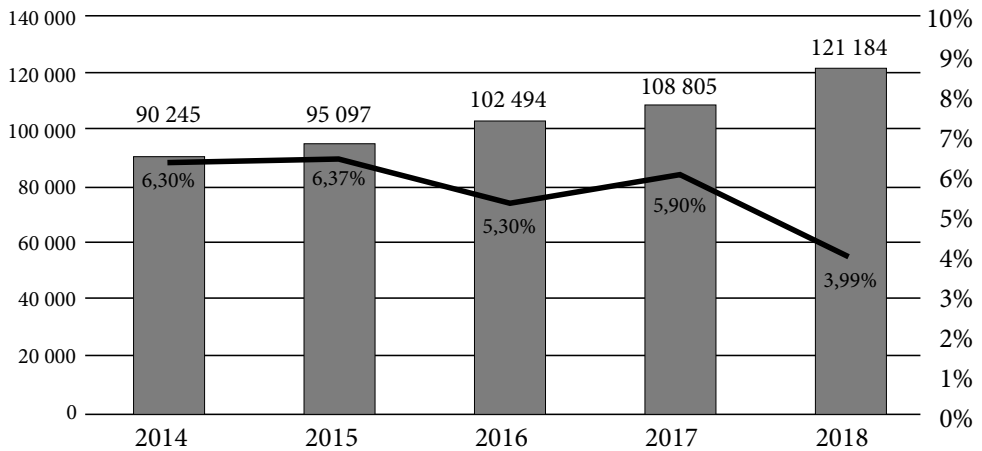
⁵³ "O stosunkach polsko-amerykańskich i prezydenturze Donalda Trumpa," *Komunikat z Badań*, no. 57/2018, CBOS, www.cbos.pl.

exceeding the permissible threshold of 3%. It is notable, however, that in 2018, this percentage came much closer to the required level (it was 3.99%), while a record high number of visas of this category were granted—more than 121,000.⁵⁴ The rejection rate is calculated by the U.S. administration based on the nationality of the applicant, not the place of application, therefore the statistics also include applications processed in other countries' posts. A significant number of visas were not granted to persons of Polish citizenship applying at U.S. posts on the territory of the United Kingdom, among others.

Figure 2.

**Number of Visas Granted and Percentage of Rejected Applications
for Non-immigrant “B” Visas [by nationality of applicants]**

Source: Author's compilation based on data from the U.S. Department of State. Key:



blue=number seeking the visa; orange=percentage of rejected applications

The celebration of the centenary of Poland regaining its independence was the main theme of events organised as part of the promotion of Polish culture in the U.S. in 2018. The Polish embassy in Washington carried out dozens of projects dedicated to commemorating the event. These included the “100th Anniversary of Poland Regaining Independence” concert by the National Philharmonic in Strathmore, the “7th Tadeusz Kosciuszko Fighter Squadron” exhibition in the U.S. Senate building, and anniversary celebrations at the headquarters of the United States Institute of Peace. The embassy also conducted additional activities,

⁵⁴ “Nonimmigrant Visas Issued by Nationality (Including Border Crossing Cards) Fiscal Year 2009–2018,” U.S. Department of State, <https://travel.state.gov>.

including another edition of the “Polish Heritage Night” in cooperation with NBA basketball player Marcin Gortat, a screening of Władysław Pasikowski’s *Jack Strong* as part of the Visegrad Film Festival, and a screening of Paweł Pawlikowski’s *Cold War*, nominated for an Academy Award in three categories in 2019,⁵⁵ at the opening of the AFI European Union Film Showcase film festival in Washington DC. The post in Washington was also responsible for organising study visits to Poland, including for assistants of members of Congress and experts with the Congressional Research Centre.

Assessment

Despite the asymmetry of potentials, in 2018 Poland continued to strengthen its position as an important U.S. partner in Central Europe. The engagement in NATO and maintaining U.S. interest in the Three Seas Initiative were intended to serve this purpose. As a result of numerous purchases of U.S. arms and LNG, Poland succeeded in convincing the U.S. to pursue its overarching goal of increasing the U.S. military presence on Polish territory.

The process of intensification of cooperation can be evidenced primarily by President Duda’s visit to the White House and numerous visits by the heads of ministries or departments of both countries. This is confirmed by the Strategic Partnership, declaration on cooperation in the field of energy security, and the agreement on scientific and technical cooperation signed in 2018. It should be emphasised that the discussions on cooperation in the field of security were conducted primarily at the ministerial and working levels by the Ministry of National Defence and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and with the participation of the president and ministers of the Presidential Chancellery. An intensification of economic cooperation was also noticeable, for example, the opening of new posts in the U.S. and holding ministerial meetings, as well as strengthening of relations in the energy sector. An element that proved unfavourable for bilateral relations and negatively affected them for several months were changes in the Polish legal order, which were eventually withdrawn.

No decisions were made in 2018 concerning the deployment of additional U.S. military units in Poland. However, achieving this goal requires a complex process, some of which was beyond Poland’s control (such as the Pentagon’s commitment to report on this opportunity only in 2019). The involvement of Congress and the American administration at various levels, as well as think tanks, in the dialogue resulted in establishing a Ministry of Defence and Department of Defense working team and more frequent contacts between representatives of the Polish

⁵⁵ Best director, best cinematography, best foreign language film.

government and Washington expert circles. The most important achievement, bringing Poland closer to its goal, was the conclusion of the Declaration on Strategic Partnership with the component of cooperation in the field of security and defence. The Partnership in its content refers to the Declaration on Strategic Cooperation between the Republic of Poland and the United States of America signed on 20 August 2008 by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Minister of Foreign Affairs Radosław Sikorski,⁵⁶ confirming and ensuring the validity of the principles and mechanisms contained therein. Thus, the 2018 declaration on partnership assumes a continuation of the same line with the adoption of the declaration in 2008; its level of detail, however, is lower. The Declaration identifies areas for enhancing cooperation or specific mechanisms for doing so, such as the deployment of a Patriot missile battery in Poland, the transfer of situation reports on missile defence, or the establishment of a Consultative Group for Strategic Cooperation. The Polish-American Strategic Partnership, on the other hand, merely outlines these areas.

Poland succeeded in engaging the U.S. in the modernisation of its armed forces. The negotiations on the purchase of a Patriot missile system and HIMARS mobile rocket launchers, and the subsequent approval of Poland's purchase of them, were important steps in the process of deepening cooperation in the area of security. Therefore, this objective should be regarded as achieved. The fact that only the first phase of the "Wisła" programme was implemented and that discussions on the acquisition of a further six batteries for the second phase were not commenced in 2018, as well as the non-participation of the Polish defence industry in acquiring HIMARS launchers, may leave some sense of dissatisfaction. The concessions regarding the arms purchases may have been necessary to advance negotiations on increasing the U.S. military presence. Furthermore, the purchases were decided not as part of a tender, but during the intergovernmental dialogue. It was argued that it was necessary for implementing both modernisation programmes as soon as possible due to the Polish Army's lack of capabilities in the areas of missile and air defence.⁵⁷ The lack of competition meant that the price would be imposed by the American producer, while the application of the FMS procedure, commonly referred to as an "off-the-shelf purchase", excluded the significant participation of the Polish military industry.

Another increase in trade exchange, the growth of Polish exports, and a reduction in the negative balance resulted from the importance of Poland's

⁵⁶ "Declaration on Strategic Cooperation between the Republic of Poland and the United States of America," BBN, 20 August 2008 r., www.bbn.gov.pl.

⁵⁷ The "Wisła" and "Homar" programmes were included in the Technical Modernisation Plan for 2013–2022 in December 2012; however, conceptual work was in progress earlier.

economic relations with the United States. The statements by representatives of the Polish government, as well as the measures taken to strengthen economic cooperation with the United States, indicate that in the coming years the U.S. may become an even more important trading partner for Poland. The objective of enhancing Poland's energy security was also achieved. The conclusion of three contracts for the purchase of LNG from American companies was to reduce the dependence of the Polish gas market on raw materials from Russia and significantly diversify the sources of imported hydrocarbons. Annual deliveries are to amount to 7.6 bcm, while Russia is currently responsible for providing about 10 bcm of the gas used in Poland. Apart from the continuation of the dialogue in the fields of security and energy, further efforts can be expected in the coming years with regard to the increase in numbers of the American military in Poland, the participation of the United States in the Polish nuclear energy programme, an increase in the number of American investments in Poland and Central Europe, as well as the involvement of the United States in the implementation of Three Seas Initiative projects.

Poland's Policy Towards Germany

LIDIA GIBADŁO

Background

In 2018, one of the major factors determining Poland's policy towards the Federal Republic of Germany included joint membership of the European Union. Germany remained one of the key states shaping the processes that take place within the EU, and its position was strengthened as a result of the UK's decision to leave the EU. This was particularly important in the context of the discussion on the EU's future, the main focus of which was the proposals presented by President Emmanuel Macron during his speech in the Sorbonne in autumn of 2017 concerning European integration based on the "multi-speed Europe" scenario. These were not supported by Poland, while Germany, despite a positive assessment, did not take steps to bring them closer to implementation. The concept of a "new European Eastern Policy" based on the intensification of bilateral and regional political cooperation with the Central European countries, presented by the German minister of foreign affairs, Heiko Maas, in June, was a clear message that Germany wanted to avoid creating divisions within the EU. Relations with the western neighbour were also influenced by the European Commission's decision of December 2017 to include Poland in proceedings concerning protection of the rule of law under Article 7 of the EU Treaty. An important issue in relations with Germany was also the shape of the EU budget for 2021–2027, which, in accordance with the proposal put forward by the EC, assumed an increase in funding for innovation, research, and security at the expense of funds allocated to agricultural and cohesion policy,¹ as well as linking payments to respect for the rule of law.

In 2018, Poland's policy towards Germany was influenced by a dispute between Germany and the U.S. in primarily two areas. The first was security policy. Donald Trump's administration continued to criticise the German government for defence spending not exceeding 2% of GDP. Germany, on the other hand, reacted negatively to the U.S. President's decision to withdraw from the agreement on the control of Iran's nuclear weapons development programme

¹ S. Plóciennik, "WEU Budget Plan for 2021–2027: The European Commission's Proposals," *PISM Bulletin*, no. 72 (1143), 21 May 2018, www.pism.pl.

(JCPOA). Another focus of the dispute was American economic protectionism threatening Germany's commercial interests. The differences in positions on security and trade not only increased anti-American sentiment but also provided an argument for supporters of greater independence of Europe from the U.S. in the security and economic area.

A factor that further complicated relations with Germany was the position of the German authorities on three issues important from the Polish point of view. First, the German government continued to support the construction of the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline despite Poland's clear opposition. Second, the two countries had a different approach towards the development of climate policy: unlike Germany, Poland, did not intend to give up coal-fired power, also planning to build the first nuclear power plant despite public support for increasing renewable resources in the energy mix. Relations with Germany were also influenced by historical issues. The German government, referring to the resolution of the Council of Ministers of the People's Republic of Poland of 23 August 1953, refused to pay reparations, as requested by representatives of the Law and Justice government.

Poland's policy towards Germany was influenced by its status as the most important trading partner, interested in making investments in Poland and developing cooperation in new areas, such as artificial intelligence. Relations with the western neighbour were also determined by the large Polish community—in 2018, there were more than 860,000 Poles in Germany, second after Turkish citizens (1.4 million).² Another factor influencing mutual relations was the 100th anniversary of Poland regaining its independence, which was an opportunity for the representatives of the authorities of both countries to meet.

Goals and Assumptions

The importance of relations with Germany is evidenced by the definition of it as Poland's "main political and economic partner in the European Union" by Polish Foreign Minister Jacek Czaputowicz in his "Information on the tasks of Polish foreign policy in 2018".³ The head of diplomacy referred to "friendly relations" with Germany as prerequisite for the "success of any positive projects submitted in the European Union". This included blocking the implementation of the French

² "Bevölkerung und Erwerbstätigkeit Ausländische Bevölkerung Ergebnisse des Ausländerzentralregisters," Statistisches Bundesamt, 15 April 2019, www.destatis.de.

³ "Government information on Polish foreign policy in 2018 (presented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland Jacek Czaputowicz at a sitting of the Sejm on 21 March 2018)," see p. 11 in this volume.

scenario of a “two-speed Europe”. Poland also wanted Germany’s favour to avoid cuts in spending on cohesion policy in the EU’s budget for 2021–2027 and to refrain from making the payment of funds conditional on an assessment of the state of the rule of law in a given country. The Polish authorities also hoped that Germany would withdraw from supporting the mandatory reception of refugees in an EU-wide redistribution project (quota system). The government also sought to revive cooperation within the Weimar Triangle.

With regard to energy, the Polish government’s priority was to convince the German side to withdraw its support for the construction of the NS2 gas pipeline. The agreement with Germany was also important due to the Polish postulate to take into greater account national climate and energy agendas in shaping EU policy.⁴ The Polish government intended to continue the development of economic cooperation with Germany aimed at increasing the innovation of the Polish economy. The intensification of cooperation at the level of governments and economic entities was to be helpful in this process.

In the area of security, the cooperation within the North Atlantic Alliance and the EU was expected to continue, provided that it did not duplicate NATO’s activities and expenditure. In the context of its policy towards Russia, Poland hoped that the German position against lifting the sanctions would not change and that the German government would support their extension in response to further violations of international law.

Poland’s aim was to find “legal, political and financial means”⁵ of obtaining compensation from Germany for the losses suffered during World War II and to convince the German authorities to change their position on reparations. Poland also strived to fulfil the 1991 Treaty of Good Neighbourliness and, above all, to increase opportunities for learning Polish in Germany. At the same time, it was expected to promote Polish culture in Germany and to enhance scientific cooperation. The traditional objective was to maintain close contacts between the societies of both countries.

Political Relations

From the point of view of achieving the objectives of policy towards Germany, it was important to maintain intensive bilateral relations. The first significant

⁴ “Premier Mateusz Morawiecki w Brukseli: Jesteśmy po niezwykle udanym szczycie RE,” KPRM, 23 March 2018, www.gov.pl/web/premier.

⁵ “Government information on Polish foreign policy in 2018...,” *op.cit.*

meeting after the reconstruction of the government was held in January.⁶ During his visit to Berlin, the Polish head of diplomacy held discussions with the then German minister of foreign affairs, Sigmar Gabriel (SPD), the focus of which was the future of European integration. There was a noticeable softening of positions in disputed areas. In view of the reparations issue, the head of Polish diplomacy pointed out that “at this stage, this is not an issue that represents a problem for relations between governments”, and that the Polish side wanted the discussion on this subject to be conducted among experts⁷. Minister Gabriel, on the other hand, expressed his satisfaction with the proposal to draft a White Paper in which the Polish government was to address the issues presented in the EC’s motion to activate Article 7 against Poland, although he confirmed the German government’s support for the EU authority’s decision.⁸

There was another meeting between representatives of the Polish and German governments as early as February. This time, the Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki visited Berlin where, together with Chancellor Angela Merkel, he stressed the importance of good bilateral relations, particularly noticeable in economic and trade cooperation as well as in security policy. The meeting resulted in an agreement with the German government on the organisation of a roundtable on the situation of the Polish community in Germany and the German minority in Poland. Differences in positions were still evident on issues such as the construction of the NS2, the reform of the Polish justice system, and EU migration policy, however, Morawiecki did not raise the issue of war reparations.⁹

A significant message of maintaining intensive relations, from Poland’s perspective, was the passage included in the coalition agreement forming the new CDU/CSU-SPD government stressing the “special importance of relations with Poland”, as well as the strengthening cooperation within the Weimar Triangle.¹⁰ The decision of both the new minister of foreign affairs, Heiko Maas,¹¹

⁶ “Minister Jacek Czaputowicz złożył wizytę w Berlinie,” MSZ, 17 January 2018, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja.

⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁸ J. Lepiarz, “Czaputowicz deklaruje w Berlinie wolę rozwijania partnerstwa z Niemcami,” *Deutsche Welle*, 17 January 2018, www.dw.com/pl.

⁹ “Merkel: Gemeinsamkeiten stärken,” *Der Bundeskanzler*, 16 February 2018, www.bundeskanzleramt.de; W. Szymański, “Morawiecki w Berlinie: mniej emocji, więcej pragmatyzmu,” *Deutsche Welle*, 16 February 2018, www.dw.com/pl.

¹⁰ “Ein neuer Aufbruch für Europa, Eine neue Dynamik für Deutschland, Ein neuer Zusammenhalt für unser Land. Koalitionsvertrag zwischen CDU, CSU und SPD. 19. Legislaturperiode,” *Die Bundesregierung*, 12 March 2018, www.bundesregierung.de.

¹¹ M. Kozłowska, A. Głowczewski, “Czaputowicz i Maas: Polska i Niemcy mają wspólne cele, m.in. silną UE,” PAP, 16 March 2018, www.pap.pl.

and Chancellor Merkel¹² to choose Warsaw as their second foreign trip was also meaningful. Both decisions were perceived by the Polish authorities as a message of the readiness of the German authorities to deepen cooperation.¹³ As during the visits of representatives of the Polish government, Maas and Merkel emphasised the strategic importance of the partnership between Poland and Germany, necessary to guarantee the unity of the EU. Among the topics discussed during the politicians' visits to Poland were security issues, including relations with Russia, and EU-U.S. trade relations. The representatives of both countries also reiterated their intention to strengthen cooperation within the framework of the Weimar Triangle and, on disputed issues, such as the procedure under Article 7 TEU and reparations, their willingness to cooperate and to reach agreement.

In November 2018, the 15th German-Polish intergovernmental consultation was held in Warsaw with the participation of the majority of the heads of Polish and German ministries. During the press conference, Chancellor Merkel and Prime Minister Morawiecki stressed that Poland and Germany share a common position on the EU's future financial perspective, the strengthening of German-Polish economic cooperation, the maintenance of good relations with the United Kingdom after its exit from the EU, and the importance of relations with the U.S.. Discrepancies arose with regard to the construction of NS2,¹⁴ as confirmed by the declaration of the ministers of foreign affairs of both countries.¹⁵ No crucial agreements were concluded and the meetings were rather a signal of willingness to continue cooperation between various ministries.¹⁶

Two weeks after the meeting in Warsaw, the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the German-Polish Institute (Deutsches Polen-Institut) in Darmstadt held a conference entitled the "Century of German Policy towards Poland 1918–2018". It was attended by politicians, scientists, social activists, and journalists from both countries. In his opening speech, the Polish Ambassador to Germany Prof. Andrzej Przyłębski expressed the opinion that "more than half of the century of German policy towards Poland have been a disaster", pointing to what

¹² "Merkel: z zadowoleniem przyjąłabym pomyślny wynik rozmów Komisji Europejskiej z Polską," TVN24, 19 March 2018, www.tvn24.pl; "Minister Szczerski: Polska i Niemcy powinny zrobić wszystko, żeby Europy nikt nie podzielił," *Prezydent.pl*, 19 March 2018, www.prezydent.pl.

¹³ "Pressekonferenz von Bundeskanzlerin Merkel und dem polnischen Ministerpräsidenten Morawiecki," *Der Bundeskanzler*, 19 March 2018, www.bundeskanzlerin.de.

¹⁴ "Pressekonferenz von Bundeskanzlerin Merkel und dem polnischen Ministerpräsidenten Mateusz Jakub Morawiecki," *Der Bundeskanzler*, 2 November 2018, www.bundeskanzlerin.de.

¹⁵ "Wspólne oświadczenie ministrów spraw zagranicznych Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej i Republiki Federalnej Niemiec," Przedstawicielstwo Niemiec w Polsce, 2 November 2018, www.polen.diplo.pl.

¹⁶ "Polsko-niemieckie konsultacje – zestawienie tematów rozmów," Instytut Spraw Publicznych, 6 November 2018, www.isp.org.pl.

he called the insufficient presence of Polish victims of German aggression in 1939 in the public debate and the failure to implement some of the provisions of the Treaty on Good Neighbourliness, which “is not fully satisfactory from today’s perspective”. In 2018, according to the ambassador, there was an evident change in the German approach to Poland: Germany became “a difficult partner in the EU’s reform process and in the implementation of many new projects”.¹⁷

The political dialogue continued at the presidential level. During meetings with his counterpart, President Andrzej Duda—like other representatives of the Polish government—emphasised the importance of good bilateral relations. He also referred to the Polish position on issues that differed between both countries, for example the construction of NS2 and the assessment of the state of the rule of law in Poland. The celebration of the 100th anniversary of Poland regaining independence was an exceptional opportunity for discussions. The first meeting was held in June when President Steinmeier arrived in Warsaw. The event was accompanied by the conference “Poland and Germany in Europe”.¹⁸ The return visit was held in October in Berlin where both presidents participated in the 19th Polish-German Forum, with its title “Europe 1918–2018: history with the future”, and Duda also met with Chancellor Merkel. The presidents emphasised the importance of Polish-German relations for the future of the EU.¹⁹ However, the difference in positions was once again evident on the construction of NS2 and the rule of law.

Compensation for losses suffered by Poland during the Second World War remained an important area of dispute. The German authorities, however, considered the case closed, as Poland waived its claims in 1953—both the foreign minister and the spokesman of the German government stated that the issue of reparations had been settled.²⁰ A gesture of goodwill, however, was the consent of the then head of German diplomacy, Sigmar Gabriel, to organise a meeting of experts proposed by Minister Czaputowicz in January. The conference “Compensation for World War II and German-Polish relations” organised by the Western Institute was held in September. The organisers announced that the aim of the event was “to show the problem of compensation for losses caused by

¹⁷ “Przemówienie Ambasadora Andrzeja Przyłębskiego z okazji otwarcia konferencji ‘Ein Jahrhundert deutsche Polenpolitik (1918–2018)’ [Stulecie niemieckiej polityki wobec Polski 1918–2018],” Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Berlin, 15 November 2018, www.gov.pl/web/niemcy.

¹⁸ “Wizyta Prezydenta Niemiec w związku z 100. rocznicą odzyskania przez Polskę niepodległości,” *Prezydent.pl*, 5 June 2018, www.prezydent.pl.

¹⁹ “Rozmowy Prezydentów Polski i Niemiec,” *Prezydent.pl*, 5 June 2018, www.prezydent.pl.

²⁰ J. Lepiarz, “Rzecznik rządu RFN: stanowisko rządu ws. reparacji nie uległo zmianie,” *Deutsche Welle*, 29 October 2018, www.dw.com/pl; J. Lepiarz, “Czaputowicz w Berlinie: okrągły stół polsko-niemiecki na początku 2019 r.,” *Deutsche Welle*, 13 December 2018, www.dw.com/pl.

Germany during the World War II in historical terms” and “to try to determine what impact and outcomes had the compensation aspect on the state of German-Polish relations”.²¹ Although the meeting did not change Germany’s official position, it was perceived as a manifestation of the evolution in the government and “part of the German elite”.²²

A joint meeting of the Sejm and Bundestag presidiums could not be organised in 2018; however, the president of the German parliament, Wolfgang Schäuble, visited Warsaw in June, meeting met with Prime Minister Morawiecki and participating in a debate at the College of Europe in Natolin.²³ Noteworthy were the changes to the chairs of the Polish-German parliamentary group. Szymon Szykowski vel Sęk, since June the Secretary of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for European Policy including relations with Germany, was replaced by Bartłomiej Wróblewski, and on the German side, the successor of Thomas Nord was Manuel Sarrazin. Renata Szczęch, the Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs and Administration, was appointed the new coordinator for German-Polish cooperation, while the Brandenburg Prime Minister, Dietmar Woidke remained her counterpart.

European policy

At the EU forum, Poland tried to block integration that corresponded to the French proposal of a “two-speed Europe”, which required German support. During meetings with representatives of the German government, the Polish side argued the negative consequences for the EU of implementing this approach. On his first visit to Berlin, Minister Czaputowicz pointed out that Poland and Germany were among the group of liberal democracies supporting “strong competition, free trade, increasing competitiveness and the EU’s position towards the outside world”, contrasting them with protectionist democracies seeking to restrict the four freedoms of the EU’s common market,²⁴ whose economies require reform. As expected by the Polish government, Germany did not take steps that would bring the French integration scenario closer to implementation. However, the

²¹ “Sprawa odszkodowań za II wojnę światową i stosunki polsko-niemieckie,” Instytut Zachodni w Poznaniu, 6 September 2018, www.iz.pl.

²² M. Miłosz, “Prof. Żerko: Pojednanie oparte na przemilczeniu,” *Dziennik Gazeta Prawna*, 10 September 2018, www.dziennik.pl.

²³ “Premier spotkał się z szefem Bundestagu. Debata o przyszłości Europy,” *TVN24*, 25 June 2018, www.tvn24.pl.

²⁴ M. Sommer, „Szefowie MSZ Polski i Niemiec: możliwa debata ekspertów ws. reparacji,” PAP, 17 January 2018, www.pap.pl.

Meseberg Declaration²⁵ was signed, and during her speech in the European Parliament, Chancellor Merkel supported the establishment of a European army and a separate budget for the eurozone. The participation of the German foreign minister at the Three Seas Initiative summit in Bucharest (as an observer²⁶), despite previous criticism by Germany, was a signal that the country wanted to avoid divisions within the EU.

Another important issue was gaining Germany's support for changes to the draft of the new EU budget unfavourable for Poland due to cuts in development funds and amounts for agricultural policy. The announcement of the establishment of Polish-German expert teams to work out new budget proposals for the European Commission (EC) was therefore a positive message.²⁷ The issue of assessing the state of the rule of law in Poland was problematic. The German side stressed the need to respect the principle as essential for the future of the EU, however, its assessment was not *sine qua non* for cooperation. At the same time, the representatives of the German government encouraged Polish authorities to reach an agreement with the EC. In 2018, however, there were increasing signs of possible consensus on linking the assessment of the rule of law to the allocation of EU funds. An example was the approval for the introduction of this mechanism expressed by the German Minister for European Affairs Michael Roth in an article published in the daily newspaper *Die Welt* in December.²⁸ There was also growing support from the German government for the abolition of the unanimity rule in foreign and security policy, which the Polish government opposed.²⁹

From the point of view of the Polish government, events concerning EU asylum policy were successful. Poland opposed the reform suggested by the German authorities to introduce a system of automatic distribution of refugees among EU members. The support for this position by other Visegrad Group countries, as well as Austria, which held the Presidency of the EU Council (at the June and October Council summits), made it possible to maintain the voluntary reception

²⁵ S. Płóciennik, J. Szymańska, "Deklaracja z Mesebergu: Francja i Niemcy przedstawiają plan zmian w Unii Europejskiej," *Komentarz PISM*, no. 46/2018, 20 June 2018, www.pism.pl.

²⁶ Ł. Janulewicz, T. Żornaczuk, "Germany and the Three Seas Initiative," *PISM Bulletin*, no. 120 (1366), 22 August 2019, www.pism.pl.

²⁷ "Nowy budżet UE zbliżył Polskę i Niemcy. Będzie zacieśnienie współpracy," *Business Insider*, 6 September 2018, www.businessinsider.com.pl.

²⁸ M. Roth, "War es das schon mit Europas besten Jahren? Mitnichten!," *Die Welt*, 5 December 2018, www.welt.de.

²⁹ R. Eichinger, A. Hellemann, "Wir müssen Gesicht zeigen gegen Neonazis und Antisemiten," *Bild am Sonntag*, Auswärtiges Amt, 2 September 2018, www.auswaertiges-amt.de.

of refugees.³⁰ The continuing opposition to the introduction of a mechanism for mandatory refugee quotas made the German authorities more and more inclined to accept the concept of “flexible solidarity”, supported by the Polish government. This was reflected in the acceptance of the increased involvement of governments such as Poland and Hungary in the fight against the causes of migration in Africa expressed by the German foreign minister in an interview for the newspaper *Bild am Sonntag*.³¹

Energy and Climate Policy

In 2018, the construction of the NS2 remained the most serious disputed issue in relations with Germany. The German government has not withdrawn its support for this project. In August, at a meeting with Czaputowicz, Maas admitted that the German side was aware of Poland's concerns, but did not share them.³² However, there was an adjustment in the political debate regarding this issue, which was influenced by, among other things, repeated Polish criticism of the construction of the second gas pipeline. In April, during a meeting with the Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko, Merkel acknowledged for the first time that NS2 also has a political dimension³³ concerning the risk of stopping the transit of Russian gas through Ukraine. The issue of securing supplies and continuing transit through Poland was also raised by deputies of the CDU, CSU, FDP, and the Greens to the Bundestag and to the EP in a joint letter published in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. In the opinion of MEPs, NS2 is a politically harmful project, lacking the support of the majority of the Member States and the EC, and creating divisions within the EU.³⁴

An important aspect of Poland's policy towards Germany in 2018 was the climate issue, especially in connection with the 24th Conference of the Parties (COP24) for the United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change (UNFCCC) organised in Katowice in December. This event was one of the topics of the 9th St. Petersburg Climate Forum. The consultations were attended by Prime Minister Morawiecki, Minister of the Environment Henryk Kowalczyk, as

³⁰ J. Mastalerz, “Konrad Szymański o kompromisie w sprawie uchodźców: To prawdziwy przełom,” *Interia*, 29 June 2018, www.interia.pl.

³¹ R. Eichinger, A. Hellemann, “Wir müssen Gesicht...,” *op.cit.*

³² “Czaputowicz po rozmowach z szefem niemieckiego MSZ: Nord Stream 2 jest szkodliwy,” *Polsat News*, 20 August 2018, www.polsatnews.pl.

³³ “Pressekonferenz von Bundeskanzlerin Merkel und dem Staatspräsidenten der Ukraine, Petro Poroschenko,” *Der Bundeskanzler*, 10 April 2018, www.bundeskanzlerin.de.

³⁴ M. Weber, R. Bütikofer, N. Hirsch, E. Brok, N. Röttgen, O. Krischer, M. Link, “Nord Stream 2 schadet Europa,” *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 19 February 2018, www.faz.net.

well as Deputy Minister of the Environment and the President of COP24 Michał Kurtyka.³⁵ The challenge for Poland and Germany remained to reconcile economic development with concern for environmental protection. Eurostat data show that in 2018, despite a 5.4% reduction in carbon dioxide production, Germany was the largest emitter in the EU (22.5%). Poland, on the other hand, increased production by 3.5% and accounted for 10.3% of EU emissions.³⁶ This problem prompted Poland and Germany to postulate the setting of a new target for the reduction of car exhaust emissions in the Union by 30% from 2030 and not by 35%, as was finally agreed.³⁷ Germany also admitted that it will not manage to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 40% by 2020.³⁸ At the same time, both countries declared their desire to reduce the share of non-renewable sources in the energy mix.

However, the differences between Poland and Germany were evident in the long-term climate strategy. The German government made efforts to abandon coal-based power generation. This was demonstrated by the establishment of the Committee on Growth, Structural Change and Employment in June, the aim of which was to develop a plan for decommissioning coal-fired power and thermal power plants by December 2018. The draft of “Poland’s energy policy until 2040”, presented in November by the Ministry of Energy, on the other hand, assumed maintaining the share of coal in energy production until 2030 and introducing nuclear energy until 2033.³⁹

Security Policy

Poland expected the development of cooperation with Germany under the EU’s Common Security and Defence Policy, although it stressed that new initiatives must be complementary to NATO. Another objective was to maintain direct military cooperation with Germany. Polish and German troops participated together in the *Anaconda 2018* and *Trident Juncture 2018* exercises—the largest NATO manoeuvres since the end of the Cold War. Poland also continued the

³⁵ “Negocjacje klimatyczne podczas Dialogu Petersburskiego,” MŚ, 19 June 2018, www.gov.pl/web/srodowisko.

³⁶ “In 2018, CO2 emissions in the EU decreased compared with 2017,” *Eurostat*, 8 May 2019, www.ec.europa.eu.

³⁷ “Nowe samochody w Unii z większym ograniczeniem emisji CO₂,” *Business Insider*, 10 October 2018, www.businessinsider.com.pl

³⁸ “Klimaschutzbericht 2017. Zum Aktionsprogramm Klimaschutz 2020 der Bundesregierung,” Bundesministerium für Umwelt, Naturschutz, nukleare Sicherheit und Verbraucherschutz, June 2018, www.bmu.de.

³⁹ “Projekt ‘Polityka energetyczna Polski do 2040 roku,’” ME, 23 November 2018, www.gov.pl/web/energia.

programme of mutual subordination of battalions of armoured and mechanised units in cooperation with the Bundeswehr.⁴⁰

The Polish government was also interested in expanding armaments cooperation. Therefore, Poland was an observer in three out of six new PESCO projects in which Germany was involved—the European MALE class drone, an element of coordination of geo-meteorological and oceanographic support, and a European radio navigation solution.⁴¹ The Polish Ministry of National Defence indicated its willingness to join the project of building a European tank, with Germany leading the effort.⁴² The German company ThyssenKrupp Marine Systems (TKMS) was one of the three companies competing for the contract of building submarines for the Polish Navy. The TKMS offered, among other things, to establish a joint venture with the Polish Armament Group, meaning that production and repair of the ships would take place in Poland.⁴³

An important element in the context of security policy was Eastern policy. Poland's objective was to maintain the EU sanctions imposed on Russia, something which was made possible by the support of Germany. Therefore, the need to maintain a common position on this issue within the EU was emphasised by the representatives of the Polish authorities and their German counterparts. This was reflected in the November declaration by the ministers of foreign affairs of both countries, in which they agreed that “the duration of the Donbas-related economic sanctions imposed by the European Union is clearly dependent on Russia's irreversible implementation of the Minsk agreements”.⁴⁴ However, it was not possible to take any further steps preventing Russia's aggressive policy. In response to the takeover of Ukrainian ships by Russia in November, Minister Czaputowicz said during his visit to Kyiv that “Poland considers it necessary for the international community to react decisively to events in the Sea of Azov by strengthening sanctions against Russia”, thus indicating its readiness to raise

⁴⁰ J. Palowski, “Polsko-niemieckie wojska pancerne. Armia wprowadza zmiany,” *Defence24*, 19 April 2018, www.defence24.pl.

⁴¹ R. Lesiecki, “17 nowych projektów PESCO, Polska zaangażowana w lądowe bezzałogowe,” *Defence24*, 20 November 2018, www.defence24.pl.

⁴² J. Palowski, “Europejski czołg przyszłości coraz bliżej. Niemcy liderem,” *Defence24*, 20 June 2018, www.defence24.pl.

⁴³ K. Turecki, “Niemcy oferują Polsce okręty podwodne. Mówią o „wielkiej okazji,” *Onet*, 27 March 2018, www.onet.pl.

⁴⁴ “Wspólne oświadczenie ministrów spraw zagranicznych...” *op. cit.*

this issue in the international forum⁴⁵. However, the head of German diplomacy rejected such a possibility.⁴⁶

Economic Relations

Traditionally, the economy remained an important area of cooperation between the two countries. In 2018, Germany maintained its status as Poland's most important trading partner—exports to Germany amounted to 28.2% (€62.2 billion) and were 0.7 percentage points (p.p.) higher compared to the previous year. German products accounted for 22.4% of Polish imports (€50.6 billion), 0.7 p.p. less than in 2017. This meant an increasing trade surplus with Germany by €2.5 billion to a level of €11.6 billion.⁴⁷

German business entities remained active investors on the Polish market. Examples include Daimler's decision to build a factory producing batteries for electric cars⁴⁸, Miele's investments near Łódź⁴⁹ or Steich, and a Volkswagen company in Głogów.⁵⁰ In 2018, Germany ranked second after the U.S. in terms of the number of investments serviced by the Polish Investment and Trade Agency, with 10 projects amounting to €327 million (24 projects totalling €600 million).⁵¹ Poland's decline in the ranking of investment attractiveness could have been a reason for concern. Surveys carried out by 14 German chambers of commerce (including the German-Polish Chamber of Commerce and Industry, AHK Polska) showed that Poland was ranked third among the countries of the Central Europe, overtaken by Estonia and the Czech Republic. Possible disincentives for investors included the low level of economic policy predictability and socio-political stability, as well as systemic, institutional, and tax burden issues.⁵²

Polish companies in Germany were still far from the level of the respective activity of German business entities in Poland. According to data from the

⁴⁵ M. Sommer, "Szef MSZ: Polska uznaje za niezbędne wzmocnienie sankcji wobec Rosji," PAP, 1 December 2018, www.pap.pl.

⁴⁶ "Maas gegen neue Russland-Sanktionen," Reuters, 13 December 2019, www.de.reuters.com.

⁴⁷ "Obroty towarowe handlu zagranicznego ogółem i według krajów w 2018 r.," GUS, 11 February 2018, <http://stat.gov.pl>.

⁴⁸ "Daimler NOWĄ inwestycją dołącza Polskę. Niemiecki koncern zbuduje drugą fabrykę," *Dziennik*, 17 December 2018, <https://www.dziennik.pl>.

⁴⁹ "Spektakularna inwestycja pod Łodzią. Miele planuje długofalowo," *Property News*, 6 July 2018, www.propertynews.pl.

⁵⁰ "Dolny Śląsk: Niemiecki Sitech rozbuduje fabrykę w Głogowie," *Investmap*, 8 November 2018, www.investmap.pl.

⁵¹ "Rekordowy rok," PAIH, 16 January 2019, www.paih.pl.

⁵² "Polska trzecia w rankingu. Niepewność regulacyjna doskwiera firmom," *Polsko-Niemiecka Izba Przemysłowo Handlowa*, 20 November 2018, www.ahk.pl.

German Chamber of Industry and Commerce, about 6,500 German companies employing 340,000 people are active in Poland, with turnover of €70 billion. By comparison, there are about 1,000 Polish companies in Germany, which employ 10,000 workers with a turnover of €6.5 billion.⁵³ According to a survey conducted by AHK Polska, more than half of the respondents conducting business activity in Germany assessed the situation of their company as good, 14.3% as very good and 31.4% as satisfactory. The motivation to start up their own business in Germany was for 54.3% of the respondents to gain access to new markets and partners. The respondents also mentioned the need to increase the scale of operations (31.4%) and the possibility of gaining new competences (22.9%). All survey participants also declared that they would choose Germany again as an investment destination. This was influenced by the positive assessment of the state of the German economy—51.4% rated it as good and 40% of respondents as very good.⁵⁴

An area where cooperation may be extended in the future is artificial intelligence and electromobility, among others. This latter topic dominated the discussions between Jadwiga Emilewicz, the minister of Entrepreneurship and Technology, and Peter Altmeier, the minister of Industry and Energy, in June and September. The heads of ministries also announced a German-Polish business summit in 2019.⁵⁵

Cultural, Scientific, and Social Relations

The objective of the Polish government in this area was, among other things, the implementation by the German side of the Treaty of Good Neighbourliness. The aim was primarily to increase the availability of Polish language learning from the 7-9,000 children that studied in German public schools in 2018⁵⁶ (for comparison, in 2018, more than 1.8 million children studied German in Poland).⁵⁷ Fulfilling this objective, among others, was to be monitored by the parliamentary team established in September for the Implementation of the Treaty Provisions

⁵³ J. Lepiarz, "Polskie firmy w Niemczech: zadowolone, ale jeszcze nieliczne," *Deutsche Welle*, 14 February 2018, www.dw.com/pl.

⁵⁴ "Niemcy w ocenie firm polskich obecnych za Odrą," Polsko-Niemiecka Izba Przemysłowo Handlowa, 20 November 2018, www.ahk.pl.

⁵⁵ "Spotkanie ministrów gospodarki Polski i Niemiec," MPiR, 5 September 2019, www.gov.pl/web/przedsiębiorczosc-technologie.

⁵⁶ W. Ferdecki, "Kolejny sejmowy zespół PiS przyjrzy się Niemcom," *Rzeczpospolita*, 23 October 2018, www.rp.pl.

⁵⁷ "Języki obce wg województw – wg stanu na 30 września 2018 r.," CIE, <https://cie.gov.pl>.

between the Republic of Poland and the Federal Republic of Germany on Good Neighbourliness and Friendly Cooperation.

The 100th anniversary of Poland's regaining independence was an opportunity to promote Polish cultural heritage. On this occasion, the Polish embassy in Berlin held an exhibition entitled "Jeszcze Polska nie zginęła", presenting the efforts and achievements of Poles from the time of the partitions and loss of independence until regaining it in 1918 and the building of an independent state in the interwar period.⁵⁸ The anniversary was also commemorated with a concert by the Poznań Philharmonic Orchestra in the Konzerthaus in Berlin, attended by the presidents of Poland and Germany.⁵⁹ The Polish authorities continued the restitution of cultural assets. In July, the Grassi Ethnographic Museum in Leipzig transferred more than 100 exhibits taken by Germany during World War II to the Archaeological and Ethnographic Museum in Łódź.⁶⁰

The centenary of Polish independence was also one of the main themes of the Polish Film Festival in Berlin, FilmPolska.⁶¹ The Grand Prix by the jury of the International Film Festival in Berlin, given to Małgorzata Szumowska for her film *Twarz*,⁶² also contributed to the popularisation of Polish cinema in Germany.

The November intergovernmental consultations served to discuss scientific and academic cooperation, during which Jarosław Gowin, minister of Science and Higher Education, and Anja Karliczek, minister of Education and Scientific Research, signed a declaration on cooperation in scientific research and development. The governments of both countries undertook to support research projects as the main element of bilateral cooperation.⁶³ The decision to establish two Dioscuri Centres of Scientific Excellence at the M. Nencki Institute of Experimental Biology PAS in Warsaw was a success. The Dioscuri programme, the objective of which is to establish research teams in Central and Eastern Europe that are capable of competing effectively in the international arena, was

⁵⁸ "Otwarcie wystawy 'Jeszcze Polska nie zginęła' z udziałem Marszałka Senatu RP, Stanisława Karczewskiego," Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Berlin, 11 July 2018, www.gov.pl/dyplomacja/germany.

⁵⁹ "Uroczysty koncert w Berlinie z okazji 100. rocznicy odzyskania przez Polskę niepodległości," *Prezydent.pl*, 23 October 2018, www.prezydent.pl.

⁶⁰ "Z Lipska do Łodzi: restytucja łódzkiej kolekcji etnograficznej," MKiDN, 10 July 2018, www.gov.pl/web/kultura.

⁶¹ W. Szymański, "Święto polskiego kina w Berlinie. Ruszył festiwal FilmPolska 2018," *Deutsche Welle*, 25 April 2018, www.dw.com/pl.

⁶² "Berlinale 2018: oto zwycięzcy. Srebrny Niedźwiedź dla Małgorzaty Szumowskiej za film 'Twarz,'" *Onet*, 24 February 2018, www.onet.pl.

⁶³ "Ministrowie nauki Polski i Niemiec podpisali deklarację ws. Współpracy, *Nauka w Polsce*, 3 November 2018, www.naukawpolsce.pl.

established on the initiative of the Max Planck Society. The goal is to set up 10 research laboratories under the existing research units in Poland, which are to cooperate with a mentoring unit, that is, a university or research institution in Germany.⁶⁴

In 2018, youth exchanges continued. According to data presented in December 2018 by the Polish-German Youth Exchange organisation, the number of projects and their participants increased: in 2017, 2,605 projects were implemented in Poland, Germany, and other countries with the participation of more than 100,000 people (6.8% and 5.9% more than in 2016, respectively).⁶⁵

Assessment

In 2018, the policy towards Germany continued to be built based on a declaration of intent to deepen cooperation with Poland's western neighbour and to persuade the German side to recognise Polish interests.⁶⁶ In European politics, Poland tried to convince the German government of the negative consequences of implementing the "two-speed Europe" scenario. However, it is difficult to assess to what extent the lack of German action in this area was the result of the Polish government's efforts or resulted from a negative assessment of the effects of its implementation from the point of view of German interests. A success was Poland's effort to gradually persuade the German partners to accept the model of "flexible solidarity" in European migration policy. In 2018, however, the Polish government failed to persuade the German authorities to speak out against the European Commission's proposals to cut funding for cohesion policy and not to link the assessment of the rule of law to the payment of funds from the EU budget. In 2018, despite political declarations, there was still no revival of relations at the highest level in the Weimar Triangle format.

Energy policy remained an area of clear divergence of interest. The Polish government failed to persuade its western neighbour to give up supporting the construction of the NS2 gas pipeline. Despite the common problem of reducing CO₂ emissions, increasingly serious discrepancies will in future relate to climate policy and the share of coal in Poland's energy mix. Economic cooperation was developed and discussions between representatives of both governments indicated that it could cover the area of new technologies. However, a significant share of

⁶⁴ "Rozstrzygnięto pierwszy konkurs na Centra Doskonałości Naukowej Dioscuri," *Nauka w Polsce*, 23 October 2018, www.naukawpolsce.pl.

⁶⁵ "Dane i fakty PNWM 2017 w liczbach i wykresach," Polsko-Niemiecka Współpraca Młodzieży, December 2018, www.pnwm.org.

⁶⁶ S. Płóciennik, "Poland's Policy towards Germany," *Yearbook of Polish Foreign Policy 2016*, PISM, Warsaw, 2020.

Germany's exports may be problematic in the face of U.S. trade protectionism. The products sold by Poland to Germany in 2017 were dominated by machinery and equipment, electrical and electro technical equipment, transport equipment, as well as precious metals and articles made of them.⁶⁷ If, therefore, the trade war between the EU and the U.S. escalated and customs duties were to be imposed on aluminium, steel, and cars imported to the U.S. from the EU, the negative consequences would be suffered by Germany, followed by Poland, whose companies are often subcontractors to German corporations.⁶⁸

As expected, the cooperation with Germany in NATO and the EU continued, which, in line with the Polish government's objective, did not become an alternative to the Alliance. In its policy towards Russia, on the one hand, the German government, in accordance with Polish expectations, did not change its position on maintaining sanctions. On the other hand, Poland did not succeed in getting Germany to extend its package in response to Russia's aggressive actions against Ukraine.

Attempts to influence a change in Germany's attitude towards the payment of reparations for losses suffered by Poland during the World War II and to equate the number of schools offering Polish language teaching in Germany and German language teaching in Poland failed. A roundtable meeting on the situation of the Polish community in Germany and the German minority in Poland could not be organised. Better results were achieved in promoting Polish culture beyond Oder, as well as in strengthening scientific cooperation and increasing the number of projects implemented by young people from both countries.

⁶⁷ "Handel zagraniczny. Polska w Unii Europejskiej," GUS, <http://stat.gov.pl>.

⁶⁸ M. Makowska, M. Wąsiński, "EU Trade Policy in the Age of U.S. Protectionism," *PISM Bulletin*, no. 143 (1214), 18 October 2018, www.pism.pl; S. Plóciennik, "Preventing a Trade War: Germany's Dilemma on U.S. Tariffs on Steel and Aluminium," *PISM Bulletin*, no. 79 (1150), 8 June 2018, www.pism.pl.

Poland's Policy Towards the United Kingdom

PRZEMYSŁAW BISKUP

Background

The most important long-term factors determining Poland's policy towards the United Kingdom¹ in 2018 were both countries' membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), high economic turnover (about PLN 111 billion), as well as the presence in the UK of one of the world's largest Polish communities. The UK also remained Poland's leading ally because of its high military, technological, and financial potential. Although Polish policy towards the UK was limited by the difference in economic and political potentials, this imbalance was partly evened out in 2018 by the intensifying process of the British exit from the European Union (Brexit),² which absorbed political resources, weakened the UK's image, and motivated it to enhance bilateral cooperation with EU members.

An important circumstance of Poland's policy towards the UK was also its credibility as an ally. It resulted both from Britain's defence-related budgetary and technical capacity, as well as from the political will to engage in Poland and the Baltic States.³ The convergence of the positions of the two countries was evident in the perception of the role of the U.S. in security policy in Europe and Russia as a source of threats to international security.

Poland's effectiveness in relations with the UK continued to be limited by the former's dispute with EU institutions concerning the rule of law and related infringement proceedings (under Art. 7 TEU), which affected the British public perception of the Polish authorities. Although media and public opinion in the UK shared the overall assessments of the European Commission (EC),⁴ the UK

¹ The full name is the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. In this text, the author uses 'Britain' interchangeably with the term 'United Kingdom'.

² P. Biskup, "Poland's Policy Towards the United Kingdom," *Yearbook of Polish Foreign Policy* 2017, PISM, Warsaw, 2020.

³ "Defence Expenditure of NATO Countries (2010–2017)," PR/CP(2018)16, NATO, 15 March 2018, www.nato.int.

⁴ N. Nougayrède, "The EU isn't punishing Poland. It's protecting its integrity as a bloc," *The Guardian*, 26 December 2017, www.theguardian.com; P. Foster, M. Day, "EU triggers 'nuclear option' against Poland as Theresa May walks into diplomatic maelstrom," *The Telegraph*, 20 December 2017, www.telegraph.co.uk.

government abstained from supporting the EC's position due to its policy of strengthening cooperation with Poland.⁵

The key determinant of Polish-British relations in 2018 was the Brexit policy strategy adopted by the Polish government in 2016–2017. It assumed the communitarisation of negotiations and their ongoing conduct by the EC task force (*Task Force 50*), while maintaining the strategic direction of the European Council. The legal framework of Brexit required the completion of talks and the signing of the withdrawal agreement in 2018. At the same time, as a result of the EC's assessments of the growing likelihood of the UK's "no-deal" exit from the EU, the Member States intensified their preparations for such a situation from June. The Polish administration conducted internal preparatory work from July, and a public information campaign was launched in September.⁶ Poland also maintained an intensive dialogue with the EC, which was responsible for preparations at the Union level.⁷

A "no-deal" exit of the UK from the EU was to be particularly costly and risky for Poland. Potential economic costs were associated with the significant share of Polish exports to the UK of fresh food, other agricultural and food goods and transport services (including cabotage), the profitability of which is strongly dependent on efficient border checks. The financial risk was related to the disruption of stable inputs to the EU budget through a loss of contributions and duties collected in the UK for the EU. Another source of political risk for Poland in the case of a "no-deal" Brexit was the impact of the economic and political crisis in the UK on Poland's activity in NATO and on the status of Polish citizens residing in that country.⁸

A crucial determinant of Poland's policy in the last few weeks of 2018 was the political crisis developing in the UK⁹ that made it impossible for the House of Commons to ratify the EU-UK withdrawal agreement¹⁰ signed on 25 November

⁵ P. Foster, "Theresa May in Brexit bind as she faces calls to condemn anti-democratic Polish government," *The Telegraph*, 20 December 2017, www.telegraph.co.uk.

⁶ "Brexit. Co powinien wiedzieć przedsiębiorca?," MSZ, 12 September 2018, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja.

⁷ "Spotkanie wiceministra Konrada Szymańskiego z Michele Barnierem," MSZ, 12 October 2018, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja; "Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki meets Michel Barnier," KPRM, 12 October 2018, www.gov.pl/web/premier.

⁸ P. Biskup, "The UK Policy Paper on UK-EU Future Relations: Impact on Brexit Negotiations," *PISM Bulletin*, no. 126 (1197), 14 September 2018, www.pism.pl.

⁹ P. Biskup, "The UK Political Crisis as a Barrier to the Ratification of the Brexit Agreement," *PISM Bulletin*, no. 78 (1324), 7 June 2019, www.pism.pl; P. Biskup, "UK Government Reshuffle," *PISM Spotlight*, no. 2/2018, 12 January 2018, www.pism.pl.

¹⁰ "European Commission Draft Withdrawal Agreement on the withdrawal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from the European Union and the European Atomic Energy

in Brussels and supported by the Polish authorities.¹¹ Inter-party cooperation between the United Right (Zjednoczona Prawica) and Tories within the European Conservatives and Reformists Group in the European Parliament¹² was an important context for bilateral discussions undertaken by the government of Poland for the ratification of this agreement.

Goals and Assumptions

Poland's policy towards the UK in 2018 focused on the assumption adopted in 2016 that Britain should, despite Brexit, remain one of Poland's leading partners, both bilaterally and multilaterally, especially in the field of transatlantic cooperation and NATO.¹³

In 2018, the basic objectives of the Polish government's policy towards the UK were a continuation of the two previous years. In the EU dimension, this was the conclusion of negotiations on Brexit in a way that would protect Poland's fundamental interests directly linked to the exit process (especially citizens' rights and the stability of financing the EU budget) while at the same time enabling the closest possible EU-UK cooperation. In the opinion of the Polish authorities, this allowed for the potentially most difficult issues to be shifted from the level of bilateral relations to the European Union level (especially the issue of free movement of people or the British contribution to the EU budget and how it is spent). In the context of the December 2018 political crisis in the UK, the objective of Poland's policy towards Britain was to support the ratification of the withdrawal agreement in the UK parliament through diplomatic action. As concerns the non-EU dimension of Polish-British relations, cooperation on defence and security was the most prominent field.

The government of the Republic of Poland also planned to further develop the formats of political cooperation built since 2015 and to continue—and possibly strengthen—the British military presence on NATO's Eastern Flank. The ratification of the Defence Treaty signed in December 2017 was also planned for 2018. Implementation of these objectives was to bring about closer

Community,” European Union, 28 February 2018, <https://ec.europa.eu>.

¹¹ “Spotkanie wiceministra Konrada Szymańskiego z Michelelem Barnierem,” *op. cit.*; “Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki meets Michel Barnier,” *op. cit.*

¹² “Morawiecki ws. Brexitu: Staramy się proponować rozwiązania, które będą kompromisowe,” *Dziennik Gazeta Prawna*, 17 October 2018, www.gazetaprawna.pl; J. Barigazzi, “Poland breaks ranks from EU Brexit unity,” *Politico*, 20 September 2018, www.politico.eu.

¹³ “Government information on Polish foreign policy in 2018 (presented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland Jacek Czaputowicz at a sitting of the Sejm on 21 March 2018),” see p. 11 in this volume.

coordination between the two countries in the area of the EU and NATO's eastern neighbourhood, as well as increase the interoperability of their armed forces. With Poland holding a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council, diplomatic cooperation was planned in the area of global issues and non-European crises. The Minister of Foreign Affairs Jacek Czaputowicz indicated the objectives to be achieved in 2018 were "to deepen the dialogue between Polish and British civil societies" using the formula of the Belvedere Forum and to intensify economic cooperation during the celebrations of the Polish-British Year of Enterprise, Science and Innovation. To this end, a business forum was scheduled for May 2018 and the creation of a "new mechanism for regular [intergovernmental] consultation on economic issues".¹⁴

Brexit and Poland's Policy Towards the United Kingdom

Since 2016, the key point of reference for Poland's policy towards the UK, both in the EU and in the bilateral dimension, has been the UK's exit from the EU. The authorities of the Republic of Poland participated in managing this process in the discussed period primarily through EU institutions. In autumn 2018, diplomatic efforts were also undertaken to assist ratification of the agreement with the EU by the United Kingdom.

Importantly, in 2018 key decisions in the EU-UK negotiations were taken, as well as the Withdrawal Agreement was signed, and obstacles to its ratification emerged. Namely, in February, the EC published a legal draft of the Withdrawal Agreement, then in July, the British government published a White Paper on future relations with the EU (the so-called Chequers Plan), followed in September by an intensification of the UK-EU dispute during the informal European Council (EUCO) summit in Salzburg, and finally in November, the withdrawal agreement was signed in Brussels.¹⁵

The withdrawal agreement signed on 25 November with EUCO consent (including Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki) consisted of two documents: the Withdrawal Agreement and the Political Declaration on the framework for future cooperation.¹⁶ The agreement governed the issues directly related to the UK's exit from the EU and established a transition period (a.k.a., implementation

¹⁴ "Government information on Polish foreign policy in 2018...", *op. cit.*

¹⁵ P. Biskup, "Brexit—precedens w funkcjonowaniu Unii Europejskiej," *Infos*, 4 (257), Biuro Analiz Sejmowych, 2019, www.sejm.gov.pl.

¹⁶ "Umowa o wystąpieniu Zjednoczonego Królestwa i Irlandii Północnej z UE i Europejskiej Wspólnoty Energii Atomowej oraz Deklaracja polityczna określająca ramy przyszłych stosunków między UE a Zjednoczonym Królestwem," *European Journal of Laws*, C 66, 19 February 2019, pp. I/01, I/02.

period) until the end of 2020 when Britain was to be treated as an EU Member State, with the exception of decision-making powers. In particular, the agreement provided for guarantees for the rights of EU and British citizens living on the territory of the other party and for the role of the EU Court of Justice in protecting their legal rights. It also governed financial settlements estimated at €50 billion, including confirmation of the United Kingdom's contribution to the EU Multiannual Financial Framework 2014–2020. It also provided for an arbitration mechanism involving representatives of both parties, but without the possibility of terminating the agreement. A permanent emergency mechanism (*backstop*) for the land border on the island of Ireland was also established.¹⁷

The declaration set out the assumptions for the post-2020 EU-British cooperation on economic issues, foreign and security policy and institutional arrangements. The document announced that future relations would be based on common European values, in particular, those defined in the European Convention on Human Rights. The future agreement was also intended to address the UK's participation (including financial) in EU programmes involving scientific cooperation, innovation, the defence industry, and youth exchange. The framework for economic cooperation was defined in general terms: the document referred to "duty-free and quota-free" exchanges as the basic objective. As regards financial services, the declaration provided for the maintenance of cooperation based on equivalence. The parties agreed to maintain access to public procurement markets to a greater extent than is provided for in the WTO rules. Coordination of cooperation in the field of foreign and security policy, including partial continuation of the exchange of personal and other sensitive data, was also agreed.

In the opinion of the Polish government, the content of the agreement secured, subject to effective ratification, the implementation of Poland's priorities (citizens' rights, settlements, maintaining the freedom of further trade) and the interests of the EU as a whole. However, at the time of the signing of the agreement, numerous controversies related to it emerged in Britain and some EU Member States. The main source of these controversies in the UK was the *backstop* mechanism, and in the EU, the question of the future access of the bloc's fishing fleet to UK fishing

¹⁷ P. Biskup, "The UK Political Crisis...", *op. cit.*; P. Biskup, "The Republic of Ireland and the Risk of 'No-Deal' Brexit," *PISM Bulletin*, no. 127 (1373), 4 September 2019, www.pism.pl. The *backstop* mechanism provided that if the future relationship agreement could not be concluded by 2020, the whole of the UK would remain in the EU customs area, including the harmonisation of environmental regulations, labour laws, or public aid. If the future relationship agreement established a looser model of the British-EU's cooperation (e.g., free trade area), Northern Ireland would remain in a customs and regulatory union with the EU.

grounds and the status of Gibraltar.¹⁸ As a result, the Polish authorities engaged in an intensive bilateral dialogue with other EU countries and with the United Kingdom in order to foster effective ratification of the withdrawal agreement. The confidential discussions and public diplomacy activities were undertaken by Prime Minister Morawiecki, Minister Czaputowicz, and Deputy Minister Konrad Szymański. However, this involvement did not produce results by the end of 2018.¹⁹

Political Relations

Polish-British political relations developed primarily at two levels, bilaterally and in the EU. In 2018, the importance of cooperation with the UK on global issues increased in connection with Poland's membership of the UN Security Council in 2018–2019.

From the perspective of the government of Poland, it was important to further develop the formats and initiatives for bilateral cooperation, especially intergovernmental consultations and the so-called Quadriga Talks, which were started in 2015. These talks involving the ministers of foreign affairs and defence took place in Warsaw on 20 June. They were attended by ministers Czaputowicz and Mariusz Błaszczak, as well as Boris Johnson and Gavin Williamson, respectively. The priorities of Poland and the UK for the July NATO summit in Brussels were coordinated, the British forward military presence on Polish and Baltic State territory and the outcomes of Brexit were discussed. Furthermore, the coordination of both countries' activities under the Berlin Process was agreed, including preparations for its London Summit in 2018 and the subsequent summit in Poland in 2019, as well as combating Russian disinformation in the Eastern Partnership countries. The ministers also expressed their support for the European aspirations of the Western Balkan countries.²⁰

Intergovernmental consultations chaired by Prime Ministers Morawiecki and Theresa May were held in London on 20 December.²¹ The countries emphasised coordinated efforts to strengthen NATO cohesion and defend the Eastern Flank.

¹⁸ P. Biskup, "Brexit Model under the Proposed EU-UK Deal," *PISM Bulletin*, no. 166 (1239), 9 December 2018, www.pism.pl.

¹⁹ "Premier Mateusz Morawiecki: Umowa w sprawie brexitu odpowiada naszym oczekiwaniom," KPRM, 25 November 2018, www.gov.pl/web/premier; "Spotkanie wiceministra Konrada Szymańskiego z Michele Barnierem," *op. cit.*

²⁰ "Polsko-brytyjskie konsultacje w formule kwadrygi," MSZ, 20 June 2018, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja.

²¹ The ministers for foreign affairs, internal affairs, defence, energy, treasury/finance, and economic affairs participated in the consultations, respectively: J. Czaputowicz, J. Brudziński, M. Błaszczak, J. Emilewicz, A. Nowak, J. Hunt, S. Javid, G. Williamson, P. Hammond, and G. Clark; see: "Polsko-brytyjskie konsultacje międzyrządowe w Londynie," KPRM, 20 December 2018, www.gov.pl/

The Polish government also undertook to convince the British partners that the Withdrawal Agreement signed a month earlier was the best possible solution to the problem of an orderly Brexit. During his visit, which was extended until 21 December, Minister Czaputowicz held consultations with politicians from Northern Ireland and opened the Polish Consulate-General in Belfast²².

Furthermore, a number of visits at the ministerial level were held in 2018. On 16 March, Minister Czaputowicz paid a visit to London at the invitation of Prime Minister Johnson, and on 23 March, Undersecretary of State for Security, Eastern Policy and American Policy Bartosz Cichocki held consultations with Alan Duncan, the Minister of State for Europe and the Americas. During both visits, the discussions focused on the question concerning the EU's eastern neighbourhood and security policy, as well as the implementation of the letter of intent on deepening cooperation to counteract Russian disinformation.²³

In 2018, both countries cooperated on the EU's eastern and neighbourhood policies. The government delegation chaired by Prime Minister Morawiecki participated in the London Summit of the Berlin Process on 10 July, and on 14 October, Minister Czaputowicz attended the London meeting of the heads of diplomacy of the UK, Poland, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Hungary. The main topics of discussions during both summits were policy towards Russia, the conflict in Ukraine, the Eastern Partnership, and further adaptation of NATO to new security challenges. The participants of the discussions spoke in favour of maintaining close relations with the United Kingdom in the field of foreign and security policy after Brexit. They also expressed hope that the agreement on Iran's nuclear programme (JCPOA) would be maintained.²⁴

Poland also engaged in diplomatic and security activities supporting the British response to the chemical attack in Salisbury on 4 March²⁵, executed, as

web/premier; "Polsko-brytyjskie konsultacje międzyrządowe w Londynie," MSZ, 20 December 2018, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja.

²² "Wizyta ministra Jacka Czaputowicza w Wielkiej Brytanii i Irlandii," MSZ, 19 December 2018, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja. He also visited the Republic of Ireland in the following days to discuss Brexit; see: "Wizyta ministra Jacka Czaputowicza w Irlandii," MSZ, 21 December 2018, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja.

²³ "Minister Jacek Czaputowicz z wizytą w Wielkiej Brytanii," MSZ, 16 March 2018, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja; "Wizyta w Londynie i Bletchley Park," MSZ, 23 March 2018, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja.

²⁴ "Premier Mateusz Morawiecki po spotkaniu w ramach Procesu Berlińskiego," MSZ, 10 July 2018, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja; "Wizyta ministra Czaputowicza w Londynie," MSZ, 14 October 2018, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja.

²⁵ "A statement to the House of Commons by Prime Minister Theresa May following the Salisbury incident," PM's Office (UK), 14 March 2018, www.gov.uk.

a UK investigation showed, by Russian secret services.²⁶ The Polish authorities, in a statement of 26 March, condemned this act of aggression and expelled four Russian diplomats.²⁷ In the following months of 2018, Poland systematically supported the UK's requests in the EU and NATO forums for international support for its investigation into this matter and the subsequent imposition of sanctions on Russia.²⁸

Taking advantage of Poland's elected membership to the UN Security Council in 2018, the countries presented convergent positions on conflict prevention and resolution of existing ones, particularly those in Libya and Syria. Poland diplomatically supported the military action taken by the UK in cooperation with the U.S. and France in connection with the use of chemical weapons by the Bashar al-Assad regime.²⁹ Both countries agreed to coordinate (within the UN, NATO, EU, and Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons) activities aimed at preventing the use of weapons of mass destruction.³⁰

Defence Cooperation

Poland's cooperation with the United Kingdom developed further in both the multilateral (NATO in particular) and bilateral formats. In 2018, the most important event was the ratification of the Polish-British defence treaty signed in December 2017.³¹ This treaty provides a legal basis for bilateral cooperation and is complementary to the North Atlantic Treaty. The agreement involves cooperation in the area of territorial defence, defence industries, and the exchange of information on procurement for the armed forces, among other areas. The

²⁶ "Prime Minister Theresa May's statement to Parliament about the Salisbury incident, made on 5 September 2018 after PMQs," PM's Office, www.gov.uk.

²⁷ "Rozmowa telefoniczna ministrów spraw zagranicznych Polski i Wielkiej Brytanii," MSZ, 14 March 2018, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja; "Wizyta w Londynie i Bletchley Park," *op. cit.*; "Statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland," MSZ, 26 March 2018, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja.

²⁸ "Spotkanie ministrów spraw zagranicznych państw NATO w Brukseli," MSZ, 27 April 2018, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja.

²⁹ The troops of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad were accused by the U.S. and EU countries of using chemical weapons on 6 April to attack the last rebel positions in the Damascus area of Eastern Ghouta. At least several dozen people were killed and several hundred wounded in the attack; see: M. Orłowski, "Syria: Atak chemiczny we wschodniej Ghucie," *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 8 April 2018, www.wyborcza.pl.

³⁰ "Oświadczenie Ministerstwa Spraw Zagranicznych RP," MSZ, 14 April 2018, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja; "Rozmowa telefoniczna ministrów Jacka Czaputowicza i Borisa Johnsona," MSZ, 15 April 2018, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja.

³¹ "UK/Poland: Treaty on Defence and Security Cooperation CS Poland," no. 1/2018, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 9 May 2018, www.gov.uk/government/publications/.

treaty confirmed that the defence policy of the Republic of Poland and the United Kingdom is based on common interests, values, and duties, including active engagement within NATO. It also emphasised that both countries are determined to contribute effectively to the implementation of common defence within the Alliance. The treaty entered into force on 4 July.³²

Security issues were the subject of the Quadriga Talks in June and intergovernmental consultations in December.³³ Both countries agreed on the need to develop forces and capabilities for collective defence operations with respect to conventional, nuclear, and cyber threats. An enhanced plan of defence cooperation was agreed during discussions between Undersecretary of State in the Ministry of Defence Tomasz Szatkowski and Minister of State for the Armed Forces Mark Lancaster in London on 26–27 February.³⁴ It included further involvement of the UK as part of an enhanced presence on the Eastern Flank of the Alliance, improving the interoperability of the armed forces of both countries, including the development of the operational capabilities of the Polish armed forces using the British experience, as well as common priorities for the forthcoming NATO summit in Brussels. Furthermore, Szatkowski visited the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps headquarters in Innsworth.

A practical field of cooperation was the enhanced forward presence of British troops in Poland and the Baltic States. In 2018, there were about 130 troops from the UK on the territory of Poland. In order to continue the forward presence of NATO troops in the Baltic States, Poland maintained a contingent in Latvia, and the United Kingdom was the framework country of the Allied Battalion Battle Group in Estonia.³⁵

Another example of practical cooperation was the organisation of the Polish-British Defence Industry Forum in Warsaw on 20 June, aimed at intensifying military and industrial cooperation under the aforementioned defence treaty. The future of business activity in the British defence market after Brexit was discussed

³² “Oświadczenie rządowe z dn. 22 sierpnia 2018 r. ws. związania Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej Traktatem między Rzeczpospolitą Polską a Zjednoczonym Królestwem o współpracy w dziedzinie obronności i bezpieczeństwa, sporządzonym w Warszawie dnia 21 grudnia 2017 r.,” *Monitor Polski*, 2019, item. 105, www.monitorpolski.pl.

³³ “Wspólnie zabiegamy o bezpieczeństwo w regionie,” MON, 21 June 2018, www.gov.pl/web/obrona-narodowa; “Polska i Wielka Brytania kluczowymi sojusznikami strategicznymi,” MON, 20 December 2018, www.gov.pl/web/obrona-narodowa.

³⁴ “Współpraca polsko-brytyjska,” MON, 27 February 2018, www.gov.pl/web/obrona-narodowa.

³⁵ “Święto Wojska Polskiego w PKW Łotwa,” MON, 15 August 2018, www.gov.pl/web/obrona-narodowa.

during the government session. The industrial panel served to present the latest products and services of the armaments market.³⁶

Economic Relations

According to the Polish Central Statistical Office (GUS) in 2018, the UK ranked fourth among Poland's trade partners, after Germany, Czechia, and France. The total value of the Polish-British trade in goods amounted to nearly PLN 83.01 billion, which meant an increase by 9% compared to 2017. A surplus on the Polish side has been visible for many years. The UK as an importer of Polish goods gave way only to Germany and was equal to Czechia (a position similar to 2017), while in the import of goods to Poland, the UK ranked 10th.³⁷ In 2018, the value of Polish exports to the British market amounted to PLN 58.23 billion (an increase of 2.5%). At that time, Poland purchased goods worth PLN 24.78 billion, which provided a positive exchange balance of PLN 33.45 billion (a decrease of PLN 1.32 billion). In 2018, Britain was responsible for 6.19% of Polish exports and 2.4% of imports.³⁸

The value of the Polish-British exchange in services in 2018 amounted to PLN 31.66 billion, giving way only to Polish-German exchange (an increase of 12.2% compared to 2017).³⁹ The United Kingdom ranked third after Germany and Switzerland in terms of the value of services sold by Polish entities (PLN 18.75 billion) and second to Germany in terms of services purchased by Polish entities (PLN 12.91 billion), with a positive balance of PLN 5.84 billion for Poland (an increase of about 44% compared to 2017).⁴⁰

Poland exported mainly machinery and equipment, electrical and electro-technical equipment (26.41%), agri-foods (19.43%), transport equipment, cars, car parts and accessories (13.6%), chemical products, plastics and rubbers (10.82%), industrial goods, including furniture, prefabricates and toys (9.6%), as well as base metals and metal articles (4.40%). Imports were dominated by chemical products, plastics and rubbers (27.0%), machinery and equipment, electrical and

³⁶ "Polsko-Brytyjskie Forum Przemysłów Obronnych," MON, 20 June 2018, www.gov.pl/web/obrona-narodowa.

³⁷ "Obroty towarowe handlu zagranicznego ogółem 11 czerwca 2019 r. i według krajów w okresie styczeń–kwiecień 2018," GUS, <https://stat.gov.pl/>.

³⁸ "Obroty handlu zagranicznego według krajów," GUS, <https://stat.gov.pl/>.

³⁹ "Import, eksport, saldo usług według krajów," data from 2017–18, GUS, <https://stat.gov.pl>.

⁴⁰ "Eksport towarów i usług według krajów," data from 2017–18, GUS, <https://stat.gov.pl>; "Import towarów i usług według krajów," data from 2017–18, GUS, <https://stat.gov.pl>.

electro-technical equipment (21.33%), transport equipment (19%), base metals and base-metal articles (4.91%), as well as textile materials and articles (4.45%).⁴¹

The value of the British cumulative foreign direct investment in Poland in 2018 amounted to about PLN 34 billion, which ranked seventh among the largest investors and represented an outflow of PLN 1.4 billion of investments.⁴² Of the 100 largest British companies listed on the London Stock Exchange, 26 of them had investments in Poland. The largest British investors in Poland were Tesco, Imperial Tobacco, GlaxoSmithKline, AVIVA, Royal Bank of Scotland, Provident, Prudential, Bates, Shell, BP, Rolls-Royce, GKN Driveline, Johnson Matthey, Associated British Foods, EasyJet, and BAE Systems. According to data by GUS for 2015, Polish enterprises had a total of 128 foreign enterprises in the UK, while data from the Polish-British Chamber of Commerce showed about 20,000 companies registered by Poles on the UK's market.⁴³

In promoting economic cooperation, a key role was played by business federations supported by public institutions (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, embassy and commercial attaché office in London, and consulates in the United Kingdom). The most important federation remained the British-Polish Chamber of Commerce (BPCC), bringing together several hundred entities and maintaining offices in Warsaw, Wrocław, and Kraków in Poland, as well as an office in the metropolitan area of London. The flagship bilateral initiative, co-created by the Polish government, was the Polish-British Economic Forum (Business, Trade and Investment Forum, BTI), held on 24–25 May 2018 in Warsaw.⁴⁴ Also worth mentioning is the 5th Congress of Polish Entrepreneurs held in London on 29 November by Polish Business Link (PBLink) with the support of the Embassy of the Republic of Poland with the participation of about 200 companies.⁴⁵ Polish Business Roadshow conferences were held in Scotland on 4–25 October in Edinburgh, Aberdeen, and Glasgow, and the Edinburgh Business

⁴¹ "Handel zagraniczny. Polska w Unii Europejskiej," GUS, 28 December 2018, pp. 101–103, <https://new.stat.gov.pl>.

⁴² "Foreign direct investments in Poland and Polish direct investment abroad in 2018," NBP, www.nbp.pl.

⁴³ B. Znojek, "Poland's Policy towards the United Kingdom," *Yearbook of Polish Foreign Policy* 2016, PISM, Warsaw, 2020.

⁴⁴ The event benefited from the experience of previous forums co-organised by the BPCC. In 2018, the responsibility for organising the forum on the Polish side was taken over by the Polish Chamber of Commerce and Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Technology; "Polsko-Brytyjskie Forum Gospodarcze 24–25 maja 2018," *Warszawska Izba Gospodarcza*, 19 April 2018, <http://wig.waw.pl>.

⁴⁵ "2018 Congress of Polish Entrepreneurs in the UK," British Polish Chamber of Commerce, www.archive.bpcc.org.pl, "V Kongres Polskich Przedsiębiorców w Londynie," Polish British Link, 29 November 2018, www.pbllink.co.uk.

Show on 23 November.⁴⁶ Furthermore, the 7th Polish Economic Forum was held on 10 March at the London School of Economics. In 2018, it was attended by Marek Magierowski, Undersecretary of State for Economic Diplomacy, American, Asian, African and Middle-Eastern Politics, and Arkady Rzegocki, ambassador of Poland to the United Kingdom among others.⁴⁷

In 2018, the support of the Polish government for the above-mentioned economic forums and congresses served, in particular, to support the business preparedness for Brexit. It included assistance in identifying, planning, and implementing legal and organisational solutions based on the anticipated conditions for an orderly exit of the UK from the EU. In the second half of the year, ministries and the Polish embassy in London also used economic congresses to distribute information on preparations in the event of a “no-deal” Brexit. Nevertheless, in 2018, the key constraint on the operations of the Polish authorities in this area was the continuing uncertainty as to the final outcome of the EU-UK negotiations and, at the same time, the reluctance to provoke panic that would result in artificially limiting Polish-British exchange.

Social and Cultural Relations

In 2018, Polish citizens were the largest national minority in the United Kingdom, ahead of citizens of India and Pakistan. According to data from the UK Office for National Statistics (ONS), the number of people holding Polish citizenship in 2018 amounted to 905,000. In 2018, Poles accounted for 14.82% of all foreigners in the United Kingdom and 24.86% of citizens of the EU Member States.⁴⁸

Due to its size and embeddedness in British society, the Polish community clearly marked its presence in the social and cultural life of the United Kingdom, where more than 400 different organisations and institutions of the Polish community were registered (140 of which are educational establishments, mainly Saturday schools). For decades, they have played a key role in passing on knowledge of the mother tongue to subsequent generations of people of Polish origin.⁴⁹ The Polish Social and Cultural Centre (POSK) and the Gen. Sikorski Institute and Museum in London, as well as the closely cooperating federation of

⁴⁶ “Polish Business Roadshow,” *op. cit.*

⁴⁷ “7th Polish Economic Forum in London,” MSZ, 10 March 2018, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja.

⁴⁸ “Population of the UK by country of birth and nationality: January to December 2018,” Office for National Statistic, www.ons.gov.uk.

⁴⁹ P. Biskup, “Poland’s Policy Towards the United Kingdom,” *Yearbook of Polish Foreign Policy 2016*, PISM, Warsaw, 2020.

Saturday schools (Polska Macierz Szkolna) played an important role among social and cultural organisations. Furthermore, more than 40 media and publications aimed at the Polish community were active in the UK. The total number of Polish organisations registered in the UK amounted to about 500 (according to GUS data from 2016).⁵⁰

From a social and legal point of view, Poles in the United Kingdom were in two basic categories in 2018: the Polish community, most often linked by family ties to the native population of the British Isles and holding British citizenship, and people who came to the UK under the EU freedom of movement. The vast majority of the second category at the time of the British decision to leave the EU did not have a legal title under UK law to permanent residency in Britain. In 2016–2018, during government and ministerial consultations, the Polish authorities consistently informed their British partners that the issue of honouring the acquired rights of EU citizens after Brexit is crucial to the success of the UK-EU negotiations. From the perspective of 2018, it can be concluded that the British position was reshaped in line with Poland's preferences as reflected in the Withdrawal Agreement signed by Prime Minister May. Nonetheless, the problems with its ratification were worrying. It is also worth noting the increase in the number of applications for British citizenship submitted by Poles, which began as early as 2017, although the scale of this phenomenon remained limited in 2018 compared to the number of Poles present at that time in the UK.⁵¹ The most important event organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland in cooperation with its British counterpart, aimed at developing bilateral cooperation in social, political and economic dimension, was the Second Polish-British Belvedere Forum in London on 19–20 February. It was attended by more than 200 representatives of the world of science, business, politics, media, and civil society. The debates were devoted to foreign policy, history, migration, the future of business relations, new technologies, social changes, and the future of Poles living in the UK. During the forum, the Polish government was represented by Szymański and Rzegocki, while the British government was represented by Duncan and UK Ambassador to Poland Jonathan Knott. In September 2018, a decision was made to transfer, by the year 2020, the organisation of the forum to the Polish Institute of International Affairs (PISM) and Chatham House (The Royal Institute of International Affairs).⁵²

⁵⁰ *Ibidem*; "Baza organizacji i instytucji polskich i polonijnych za granicą," GUS, 5 April 2017, <https://stat.gov.pl/>.

⁵¹ In 2017, 6, 179 applications were submitted, resulting in an increase of 43.9% compared to 2016; "EU applications for UK citizenship up 80% since Brexit," *BBC*, 25 August 2017, www.bbc.co.uk.

⁵² "Drugie Polsko-Brytyjskie Forum Belwederskie," 20 February 2018, MSZ, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja; "Rusza druga edycja Polsko-Brytyjskiego Forum Belwederskiego," *Onet*, 19 February

As regards academic and research cooperation, the most important initiative was the Polish-British Year of Entrepreneurship, Science and Innovation 2018 (YESI). It was first announced during intergovernmental consultations in December 2017. The initiative culminated in the Polish-British Science Forum (PL-UK Science Forum 2018) on 13–14 September in Warsaw, attended by about 150 delegates, with the Polish government represented by Deputy Ministers of Science and Higher Education Piotr Müller and Sebastian Skuza. The Forum was devoted to cooperation in scientific circles, technology transfer centres, and institutions supporting development or responsible for implementing new innovative solutions in Poland and the UK. Bilateral scientific cooperation was supported by Poland's National Science Centre (basic research), National Centre for Research and Development (applied research), and the National Academic Exchange Agency. As part of YESI, the Ministry of Science, in cooperation with the British Embassy and the British Council, prepared scientific workshops on intelligent cities of the future and artificial intelligence, while the Warsaw Copernicus Science Centre and the British Council organised a competition called FameLab for science popularisers. The discussions also focused on the continuation of the post-Brexit cooperation under EU programmes such as Horizon 2020 or Erasmus+.⁵³

Assessment

With regard to the objectives of Poland's policy towards the United Kingdom in 2018, the effects of efforts to maintain the British presence on NATO's Eastern Flank after Brexit and, more broadly, in continental Europe, deserve a positive assessment.

With regard to the negotiations on the British exit from the EU, the assumption adopted at the turn of 2016–2017 on the protection of key Polish interests through the active participation of the Polish government in the process of creating the institutional framework for negotiations and influencing the EU's mandate was successfully translated into the content of the Withdrawal Agreement in 2018. Nevertheless, in the last weeks of 2018, the awareness of the challenges related to the process of ratification of this agreement on the British side has been growing in Poland and other Member States. Hence, the intensification of preparations by the Polish authorities for the “no-deal” Brexit scenario, which were made public in

2018, <https://wiadomosci.onet.pl>; “Drugie Polsko-Brytyjskie Forum Belwederskie,” *Emito*, 25 February 2018, www.emito.net; G. Prochal, “II Polsko-Brytyjskie Forum Belwederskie,” *Radiostar*, 21 February 2018, <https://radiostar.net>.

⁵³ “Polsko-Brytyjskie Forum Nauki,” MNiSW, 14 September 2018, www.gov.pl/web/nauka; “Polsko-Brytyjskie Forum Nauki,” Politechnika Warszawska, 7 September 2018, www.wt.pw.edu.pl.

September. Together with these preparations, the Polish government undertook diplomatic actions, both with regard to the United Kingdom and the EU partners, to help identify concessions helpful for ratification of the agreement. However, these activities did not produce tangible results in the discussed period.

With regard to post-Brexit relations, Poland has consistently promoted in discussions at the EU forum the idea of the need to maintain the closest possible cooperation between the EU and the United Kingdom in terms of economic exchange and security. The Polish authorities systematically developed new formats of cooperation, including the Belvedere Forum or government consultations (previously conducted by Britain only with France), and created new ones, such as BTI or YESI. This was conducive to intensifying the bilateral dialogue. The demonstrations of solidarity towards the United Kingdom following the Russian chemical attack, which strengthened Poland's allied image in the UK, should also be viewed positively.

In conclusion, the year 2018 can be characterised as the second year of the gradual transition of Polish-British relations, firmly inscribed in the EU context, into a Brexit-based relationship. Both parties demonstrated their willingness to maintain close relations in terms of policies considered to be convergent; however, the materialisation of the new model of Polish-British relations was dependent on the systematic multiannual development of bilateral cooperation and on the Brexit outcomes, which in the last weeks of 2018 became very unclear due to the growing political crisis in the UK.

Poland's Policy Towards France

ŁUKASZ JURCZYSZYN

Background

The main determinant of Poland's foreign policy towards France in 2018 was the differences between the Polish and French governments. They concerned European policy and involved, first, the initiation of the procedure against Poland for monitoring the rule of law (Article 7 of the EU Treaty) by the European Commission at the end of 2017, which was supported by France. Second, the differences of interest became apparent in the debate on the future of the EU in the context of the forthcoming elections to the European Parliament (May 2019), as they were also intended to appoint new leadership for key EU institutions. The concept of "multi-speed Europe"¹ as promoted by French President Emmanuel Macron, the core of which would be a Franco-German tandem and a more integrated eurozone, was in conflict with the main European policy line of the Polish government. Not only did it oppose this concept but also advocated postponing the decision on Poland's accession to the eurozone. Another conflicting aspect of relations between the two countries at the EU level was Macron's efforts to amend the EU Directive on posted workers, which was unfavourable to Poland. Not only was Poland the European leader in posted work but also one of the largest promoters of the four fundamental freedoms of the EU (movement of people, capital, goods, and services).

Another important factor in mutual relations was the growing tension in transatlantic relations and the divergent interests of Poland and France towards Russia. Poland sought special relations with the administration of President Donald Trump, while Franco-American relations entered into crisis when Trump announced the withdrawal of the U.S. from the Paris Agreement and terminated the nuclear agreement with Iran (JCPOA). Poland, because of the Russian annexation of Crimea, was firmly opposed to normalisation of relations with Russia, while France, despite supporting NATO's policy of sanctions and unity

¹ Ł. Jurczyszyn, "French Presidential Candidate Macron's European Policy Concept," *PISM Bulletin*, no. 39 (979), 21 April 2017, www.pism.pl.

towards Russia, tried to reduce the diplomatic isolation of the Russian authorities and decided to intensify the Franco-Russian communication channel.²

An important determinant of Poland's foreign policy towards France was to obtain, for the sixth time, a two-year mandate as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council (2018–2019). At the UN level, Poland's participation in the Council was an important additional tool for cooperation with France, a permanent member, but it also could be important at the bilateral level considering the rather not-so-good relations since 2016. Following a crisis related to the withdrawal of the Polish government in October 2016 from the contract for the purchase of 50 Caracal multi-purpose helicopters, manufactured by the Franco-German-Spanish armaments concern Airbus Helicopters, the state of relations continued to be an important factor in Poland's foreign policy towards France.³

Goals and Assumptions

In his information on the tasks of Polish foreign policy in 2018, Jacek Czaputowicz, the head of Polish diplomacy, stressed in relation to France the significance of conventionally strong ties, distinguishing the importance of constantly developing economic cooperation. The minister stated that: “seeing a deep need to stabilise our European neighbourhood, we see France as a key partner in military cooperation, both in bilateral relations and within NATO and the European Union”.⁴

In the European dimension, the government of the Republic of Poland focused primarily on intensifying official contacts with France.⁵ Furthermore, its objective was to counter protectionist practices in the EU internal market, which President Macron has used since the beginning of his presidency. Examples of this include initiatives to amend the EU Directive on posted workers and his proposals to reform the so-called EU mobility package. Both were acting against so-called social dumping and opted for equal compensation for the same work at the same workplace. The Polish government considered it unacceptable to lose the advantage of cheaper labour while wealthier countries retain their competitive

² “Discours du Président de la République à la conférence des Ambassadeurs,” Président de la République, 27 August 2018, www.elysee.fr.

³ Ł. Jurczyszyn, “Poland's Policy Towards France,” *Yearbook of Polish Foreign Policy 2017*, PISM, Warsaw, 2020.

⁴ “Government information on Polish foreign policy in 2018 (presented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland Jacek Czaputowicz at a sitting of the Sejm on 21 March 2018),” see p. 11 in this volume.

⁵ *Ibidem*.

advantages. Therefore, one of its priorities was to maintain the single internal market.⁶ Another objective of the Polish government was to convince the French partner that the concept of “two-speed Europe” was unfavourable to mutual relations. Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki commented on this issue for the French daily *Le Figaro*, to whom he stressed his objection against deeper integration, strongly supported by Macron. The Polish prime minister said he believed that the democracies in the EU, including Poland, would not want to follow this direction, so it will be difficult for Macron to implement any project aimed at a large, separate eurozone budget.⁷

On the other hand, the institutional objective of Poland’s politics was to strive for more dynamic cooperation with Germany and France within the Weimar Triangle, whose operation at the highest political level has been at an impasse in recent years. As the head of Polish diplomacy said: “Poland wants to make greater use of the potential of the Weimar Triangle, especially in terms of solving common problems as well as strengthening the unity and cohesion of the European Union”.⁸

In terms of security, Poland’s objective towards France was to develop military cooperation within NATO (e.g., through joint exercises) and within the EU Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) mechanism.⁹ A separate security objective concerned Russia. Poland, both bilaterally and at the UN, sought to convince France not to treat Russia solely as an economic partner but also to take account of its neo-imperialist policy. The objective was to maintain diplomatic isolation of the Russian authorities for as long as possible as a consequence of Russia’s aggression against Ukraine and interference in elections in other countries.¹⁰

In the field of climate policy, Poland intended to use the preparations and the UN climate conference in Katowice itself to deepen cooperation with France in this area.¹¹ Poland wanted to use the conference in discussions on the differences in positions, for example, the issue of decarbonisation.

⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁷ “Mateusz Morawiecki: ‘La seule solution réaliste est de bâtir une Europe des nations,’” *Le Figaro*, 11 December 2018, <http://premium.lefigaro.fr>.

⁸ “Government information on Polish foreign policy in 2018...,” *op. cit.*

⁹ “Jacek Czaputowicz: ‘Il faut résoudre le problème de l’immigration à la source,’” *Le Figaro*, 5 April 2018, <http://premium.lefigaro.fr>.

¹⁰ “Mateusz Morawiecki: ...,” *op. cit.*

¹¹ A detailed analysis of the COP24 is contained in the article by M. Wąsiński, “The Katowice Climate Summit: Preparations and Outcomes,” in this volume.

In terms of social and cultural policy, Poland's objective towards France was to use the 100th anniversary of regaining independence to organise a number of public events and thus contribute to the intensification of official contacts.

Political Relations

A number of high-level political visits were made in 2018. One of the most important was the two-day visit (on 4-5 April) of Foreign Minister Jacek Czaputowicz to Paris.¹² The head of Polish diplomacy met with his French counterpart Jean-Yves Le Drian. The main objective of the discussion was to arrange the Weimar Triangle Summit to be held in 2018. The discussions also concerned the EU Common Security and Defence Policy, including tools to increase its efficiency. Minister Czaputowicz emphasised, in particular, France's involvement in the Eastern Flank of NATO and stressed Poland's commitment to all activities aimed at strengthening military (especially operational) cooperation with France. The meeting in Paris was also an opportunity to discuss the prospects for developing bilateral relations—also in the context of the 100th anniversary of Poland's regaining independence and the celebration of the centenary of diplomatic relations with France in 2019. On the occasion of the visit, Czaputowicz gave an interview for the *Le Figaro* daily, presenting, among other things, the main differences in the prospects for the future of European integration between Poland and France.¹³ He also stressed that Poland, just like France, is opting for a very strong European Union, both economically and in terms of military potential.

The subsequent bilateral meeting was a two-day visit to Paris by the Head of the Cabinet of the President of the Republic of Poland Krzysztof Szczerski on 20–21 April.¹⁴ The minister met President Macron's diplomatic adviser, Philippe Étienne, and the European Affairs adviser, Clément Beaun. The main objective was consultations on the reconstruction of cooperation within the Weimar Triangle. This was relevant to the previous meeting between President Duda and Chancellor Angela Merkel in March 2018 in Warsaw, where one of the main issues was the schedule to resume summits at the highest level. Minister Szczerski's discussions with the French partners also concerned the most important issues of Polish-French and European cooperation in the context of the upcoming EP elections.

¹² "Wizyta szefa polskiej dyplomacji w Paryżu," MSZ, 5 April 2018, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja.

¹³ "Jacek Czaputowicz: ...," *op. cit.*

¹⁴ "Wizyta ministra Krzysztofa Szczerskiego w Paryżu," *Prezydent.pl*, 21 April 2018, www.prezydent.pl.

On 28 June, in Brussels, a meeting of the Visegrad Group leaders with President Macron was held to coincide with the summit of the European Council.¹⁵ The main topic was the EU's migration policy. The Central European countries agreed with the French president that the final decisions on this issue must allow the members of the Union to be flexible in terms of solidarity towards the most affected countries, such as Italy or Greece.

The Weimar consultations were held in Paris¹⁶ on 30 October 2018 on the Polish initiative, with the participation of the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Bartosz Cichocki. The meeting was hosted by Maurice Gourdault-Montagne, Secretary General of the French MFA, and the German side was represented by Andreas Michaelis, Secretary of State at the MFA. Among the main issues were European defence, Euro-Atlantic relations, the European Neighbourhood Policy and global challenges such as trade wars and climate change. The most important objective of the meeting was to discuss defence issues in Europe in the context of the deteriorating transatlantic relations during the presidency of Donald Trump. The adaptation process of NATO and the allied policy of deterrence, initiatives to strengthen European defence, and cooperation between defence industries were discussed in greater detail. Other important topics of discussion were the stabilisation and integration of the Western Balkans and the security situation in Ukraine, Syria, and Libya. Much attention was paid to the EU's economic relations with the U.S. and China and the future of the JCPOA agreement with Iran.

A particularly important event was the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the end of World War I. On 11 November 2018, delegates from 98 countries arrived in Paris, including more than 60 presidents and heads of government.¹⁷ The Polish delegation was headed by Minister Czaputowicz,¹⁸ who also participated in the inauguration of the Paris Forum for Peace, initiated by President Macron. Konrad Szymański, Poland's minister for European Affairs, also visited Paris (27–28 November),¹⁹ and attended a conference organised by Club Grande Europe at the EP representation office entitled “East-West division in Europe”. The aim

¹⁵ “Spotkanie francuskiego prezydenta z przywódcami Grupy Wyszehradzkiej,” KPRM, 28 June 2018, www.gov.pl/web/premier.

¹⁶ “Konsultacje weimarskie w Paryżu,” 31 October 2018, Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Paris, www.gov.pl/web/francja.

¹⁷ “Minister Spraw Zagranicznych Pan Jacek Czaputowicz na uroczystościach upamiętniających stulecie zakończenia I wojny światowej w Paryżu,” 12 November 2018, Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Paris, www.gov.pl/web/francja.

¹⁸ The Polish delegation was chaired by the head of diplomacy due to the celebrations of the 100th anniversary of Poland's regaining independence that were held at the same time.

¹⁹ “Wizyta Ministra Konrada Szymańskiego w Paryżu,” 28 November 2018, Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Paris, www.gov.pl/web/francja.

of the meeting was to convince French public opinion of the Polish vision of the future of European integration. In his speech, the minister emphasised that Poland is opposed to any mini-Schengen, mini-Union projects that, instead of strengthening or improving the Union, would weaken it.

Furthermore, an important visit to Paris was paid by the Speaker of the Polish Senate Stanisław Karczewski (30 November–3 December). He participated in ceremonies commemorating the 100th anniversary of Poland's regaining independence and held numerous meetings with the Polish community in France.

On 5 June 2018, a Polish-French seminar was held in the Senate of the Republic of Poland on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the Constitution of the V French Republic.²⁰ The organisational initiative was taken by Deputy Speaker Michał Seweryński and the Chairman of the Senate's Polish-French Group, Senator Aleksander Pociąg. The panellists on the French side were Senator Jean-Pierre Leleux, Chairman of the Senate Group of French-Polish Friendship, and Professor Anne Levade of Paris-Est-Créteil-Val-de-Marne University. The anniversary of the French Constitution served as grounds for a debate on the state of the rule of law in both countries.

Cooperation in the Field of Security Policy

The structures of the North Atlantic Alliance remained a fundamental area of military cooperation between the two countries. From 3 to 15 June 2018, the NATO military exercises *Saber Strike*²¹ were held in Poland and the Baltic States with the participation of more than 18,000 troops from 19 Alliance member states, including 300 French soldiers.

The new mechanisms within the EU, such as Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) and the European Defence Fund, opened up opportunities for military cooperation at the EU level. Poland and France (and other Member States depending on the project) participate in four PESCO projects launched in 2018: the Integrated Unmanned Ground System (UGS), European Secure Software defined Radio (ESSOR), cyber rapid-response teams and cybersecurity support, and a network of logistics centres in Europe and support for operations and military mobility. Poland did not join the European Intervention Initiative, which was launched in 2017 by President Macron and which, by virtue of a signed letter of intent of 28 June 2018, was joined by nine countries: Belgium, Denmark,

²⁰ "Polsko-francuskie seminarium z okazji 60-lecia uchwalenia konstytucji V Republiki Francuskiej," Kancelaria Senatu, 5 June 2018, www.senat.gov.pl.

²¹ "W Polsce i krajach bałtyckich rozpoczęły się ćwiczenia NATO Saber Strike," PAP, 3 June 2018, www.pap.pl.

Estonia, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, and the United Kingdom.²² The initiative is designed to be a forum for cooperation outside EU structures to allow decisions to be taken quickly and efficiently as intended by the French president. The objective is to create a coalition capable of responding to crises around the borders of the European Union independent of NATO or the United States. The Polish government expressed criticism of Macron's initiative for remaining both outside NATO and EU structures.

In 2018, another format of Polish-French cooperation was the UN Security Council. One example of this cooperation was the convening, at the request of the United Kingdom, Poland, France, the U.S., the Netherlands, Sweden, Kuwait, Peru, and Côte d'Ivoire, an urgent Council meeting to discuss reports of the use of chemical weapons in Syria. Eventually, the motion for a resolution was vetoed by Russia.²³

As regards the war on terrorism, an example of cooperation between the two countries was the participation of the Polish police delegation in French anti-terrorist exercises on 8-9 October 2018 in Lyon.²⁴ A three-person delegation from the police leadership attended a demonstration of the French model of action in the event of a terrorist attack. The main point of the programme was a simulation of a terrorist attack carried out in a sports stadium in Lyon.

Economic Relations

France was the fourth-largest recipient of Polish goods. The trade exchange in 2018 increased from €19.4 billion to €20.5 billion compared with the previous year. In 2018, the value of exports from Poland to France amounted to €12.244 billion, that is, €800 million higher than in the previous year. On the other hand, the imports from France to Poland amounted to €8.240 billion, which is €340 million more than in 2017. France ranked third, after the Netherlands and Germany, in foreign investment (up from fourth in the previous year) with a about €17.8 billion for 2017. France was also one of the largest foreign employers in Poland. On the Polish market, there were 1,092 companies with French capital employing nearly 200,000 people (data from 2017),²⁵ 10% of which were high-capital companies.

²² "Rusza Europejska Inicjatywa Interwencji. Z Francją i Niemcami, ale bez Polski," 28 June 2018, *Defence24*, 25 June 2018, www.defence24.pl

²³ "Polska wśród krajów domagających się pilnego posiedzenia Rady Bezpieczeństwa ONZ ws. Syrii," *Polsat News*, 8 April 2018, www.polsatnews.pl.

²⁴ "Ćwiczenia antyterrorystyczne w Lyonie," *Specjal OPS*, 9 October 2018, www.special-ops.pl.

²⁵ "Razem naprzeciw wyzwaniom jutra. Analiza sektorowa z okazji 25-lecia Francusko-Polskiej Izby Gospodarczej w Polsce," *Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie France Pologne*, 2019, p. 6, www.ccifp.pl.

In 2018, the French investments were mainly placed in the information and communication sector (48% of total French capital), industrial processing (16%), and trade and repair of motor vehicles (14.9%). Almost 80% of French capital was concentrated in the Mazowieckie Voivodship.²⁶

The largest foreign investors on the Polish Investment and Trade Agency list includes 124 French companies. They operated in many sectors: trade and distribution (Auchan, Carrefour, Leroy Merlin, Intermarche), industrial production (Peugeot, L'Oréal, Total Fina Elf), construction (Bouygues, VINCI Construction), financial and insurance services (BGŻ BNP Paribas, Crédit Agricole, Société Générale), hotel and catering (Accor, Sodexo Group), food sector (Bonduelle, Danone, Delifrance), telecommunications (Alcatel-Lucen, France Télécom), media (Canal Plus, Vivendi Universal), and energy (Electricité de France, or EDF). From this perspective, the result of the survey conducted among French investors in Poland²⁷ by the French-Polish Chamber of Commerce in Poland and KPMG was promising. The data show that 48% of French companies' income was reinvested in 2017. This was an announcement of larger investments of French capital in Poland, all the more so as 75% of the companies surveyed had high hopes for obtaining income in the country.²⁸ The French companies were primarily interested in Poland due to lower production costs, high level of staff qualifications, investment relief (in Special Economic Zones), geographical location (helpful in expansion to eastern markets), and membership of the Schengen area and available European funds. The French investments were located mainly in the information and communications sectors (47.7% of total French capital), industrial processing (17.4%), and trade and repair of motor vehicles (14.4%).

Polish investments in France were focused on construction (Fakro, Oknoplast), industry and industrial processing (Can-Pack, Suempol, Sanok-Rubber), IT (Comarch, MakoLab), transport (Wielton, Solaris Bus&Coach), household appliances (Amica Wronki), catering (Am-Rest), as well as the activities of combined Polish and foreign companies from the financial sector, such as Pekao and UniCredit. It is worth noting that in March 2018, the Polish company Comarch, a global producer of IT solutions, opened its first data processing centre in France, in Lezennes near Lille (Nord-Pas-de-Calais region). The Polish investments were focused on construction, transport and industry, as well as on the activities of combined Polish and foreign companies in the financial sector.

²⁶ "Dwustronna współpraca gospodarcza," MSZ, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja.

²⁷ 25 lat polsko-francuskiego partnerstwa Inwestycje francuskie w Polsce, KPMG, CCIFP, 2019, <https://assets.kpmg.com>.

²⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 6.

Comarch's investment worth about €10 million was to provide hosting services for business and for *smart cities*, more and more popular in the EU.²⁹

Poland and France had similar positions on increasing the funds of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). This was particularly important because the budget negotiations on the CAP began in May 2018. On 23–24 March, in this context, the European Agricultural Forum was held in Jasionka, near Rzeszów, and concerned mainly the architecture of the CAP after 2020.³⁰ Another important economic event was the conference “Friends of Industry”. (held on 18 December in Paris³¹), attended by ministers from 23 European Union Member States and representatives of the European Commission, including the Minister for Entrepreneurship and Technology Jadwiga Emilewicz. The event was hosted by the French Ministry of Economy and Finance and its objective was to agree guidelines for a common EU policy for industrial development. On the occasion of the conference, Minister Emilewicz met with her counterparts from France and Germany within the Weimar Triangle format.

Social and Cultural Relations

University cooperation, including scientific, plays a historically important role in Polish-French relations. The eighth edition of the catalogue of double Polish-French diplomas of 2018 announced the prospect of obtaining them in more than 70 faculties and 17 Erasmus-Mundus programmes in which universities from both countries participated.³² Furthermore, the fourth edition of the Polish-French Science Forum was held in 2018 (on 12 June, this time at the Warsaw University Library), an initiative of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education in cooperation with the French Embassy in Poland and the French Institute in Warsaw. The Forum was held as part of the celebration of the 60th anniversary of the Centre of French Culture and Francophone Studies of the University of Warsaw.³³ The Forum's organisers aimed to present French-Polish cooperation in the field of research and innovation as well as to emphasise the perspectives

²⁹ “25 lat polsko-francuskiego partnerstwa...,” *op.cit.* p. 29.

³⁰ “Dialog o rolnictwie w Jasionce,” Commission of European Union, <https://poland.representation.ec.europa.eu>.

³¹ “Konferencja Przyjaciół Przemysłu,” Mission Catholique Polonaise de France, 20 December 2018, <https://polskifr.fr>.

³² “Katalog podwójnych dyplomów polsko-francuskich 2018/2019,” 12 January 2018, Campus France Polska, www.institutfrancais.pl.

³³ “60-lecie powstania Ośrodka Kultury Francuskiej i Studiów Frankofońskich przy UW,” Embassy of France in Warsaw, 18 October 2018, <https://pl.ambafrance.org>.

provided by the European framework programme for science and innovation “Horizon 2020”.³⁴

French culture consistently attracts the attention of Poles. As in previous years, for several days (from 14 September to 1 October 2018), the French holiday in Poland—the so-called French Touch—was held.³⁵ This was the fourth edition of the event and the largest initiative promoting knowledge, skills, and products from France. Furthermore, the centenary celebrations in Paris of Poland's regaining independence included a performance of the Representative Choir of the Polish Army³⁶ and the inauguration of the Polish chapel featuring the icon of Our Lady of Częstochowa in Notre-Dame Cathedral.³⁷ The Pompidou Centre presented an exhibition devoted to artists Katarzyna Kobro and Władysław Strzemiński.³⁸

Assessment

In accordance with the objectives of Poland's policy towards France, their multi-billion-dollar trade exchange increased. The intensification of economic cooperation was more and more often related to new and prospective sectors, such as digitisation, energy efficiency, and electromobility. Although this was a positive dimension of Polish-French relations, one must conclude that the potential of French investment in Poland has still not been fully exploited.

Similar successes were not achieved in 2018 in the political dimension of relations. As far as European policy is concerned, the Polish government did not have enough support to block the Posted Workers Directive, which is unfavourable to Polish interests, or to stop France's flagship project to create a separate budget for the eurozone (even in limited form). Poland also failed to achieve its objectives in security policy. Despite the government's assumptions, no strengthening of defence cooperation proceeded. This was partly due to different perceptions of threats, a clear example of which was Poland's refusal to join the French European Intervention Initiative, perceived by the Polish government as a threat to NATO cohesion. Poland also failed to convince France to be more cautious about Russia

³⁴ “Czwarte Polsko-Francuskie Forum Nauki i Innowacji,” MNiSW, 29 May 2018, www.gov.pl/web/nauka.

³⁵ “#French Touch 2018, czyli Święto Francji w Polsce przez 2 tygodnie,” 23 September 2018, Instytut Francuski, www.institutfrancais.pl.

³⁶ “Koncert Chóru Reprezentacyjnego Zespołu Artystycznego Wojska Polskiego,” Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Paris, 5 October 2018, www.gov.pl/web/francja.

³⁷ “Inauguracja Polskiej Kaplicy z ikoną Matki Boskiej Częstochowskiej w katedrze Notre-Dame w Paryżu,” Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Paris, 3 December 2018, www.gov.pl/web/francja.

³⁸ “Kobro i Strzemiński w Paryżu: awangardowa para w Centrum Pompidou,” *Culture.pl*, 24 October 2018, <https://culture.pl>.

or to revitalise the Weimar Triangle. Although the format functioned at lower political levels (ministers and deputy ministers) and the initiative to convene a summit of the Triangle was on the French side, this has not changed the fact that Poland still could not benefit from this important instrument of foreign policy.

The celebration of the centenary of Poland's regaining independence provided an opportunity not only to present Polish history and culture but also enabled representatives of the Polish government to organise numerous meetings and visits, during which it was the French side that found itself in a more difficult situation. The disadvantage, however, was that many of these meetings did not result in any practical conclusions that would enable significant progress in bilateral relations. Considering that no visit at the highest level was made in 2018, one must conclude that even if the first signs of improvement appeared, relations between the two countries still remained at an impasse.

Poland's Policy Towards Russia

AGNIESZKA LEGUCKA

Background

The most important circumstances that influenced Poland's foreign policy towards Russia in 2018 remain unchanged. The Russian authorities' superpower ambitions to revise the international order resulted in a decrease in Poland's security. Russia has occupied part of Ukraine—the Crimean Peninsula—for four years now, while in the east of the country, in Donbas, it supported the so-called separatists militarily, financially, and politically. In March 2018, Russian military intelligence carried out a chemical/poisoning attack against former double agent Sergei Skripal on British territory. Throughout the year, Russian ships, in violation of the law of free navigation, blocked the entrance to the Kerch Strait, which separates Crimea from the Russian Federation. They also provoked tensions that escalated into an armed incident, when in November 2018 they torpedoed Ukrainian vessels, illegally arrested sailors, and obstructed Ukraine's access to the ports of the Sea of Azov, in fact expanding the occupied territory.¹ The Russian actions provoked negative reactions from the European Union and the U.S., and responses included the expulsion of diplomats and increased sanctions, which in turn translated into a decrease in the value of the rouble, as well as the implementation by the Russians of new restrictions on external trade, including on Polish farmers and businesses.

Dependence on Russian energy resources remained a determinant of Poland's policy. Although the share by percentage of Russia of Polish gas imports decreased year by year (in 2016, it was 74.3%; in 2017, 65.6%) and oil (2012, 95%; 2017, 79.9%),² Poland is still not free to choose the supplier due to infrastructural barriers and international obligations.³ According to the take-or-pay clause imposed by Russian Gazprom in the Yamal contract of 1996, by 2022 Poland must

¹ D. Bond, R. Olearchyk, M. Seddon, "Russian bridge to Crimea strangles Ukraine ports," *Financial Times*, 17 May 2019, www.ft.com.

² "Monitoring of supply security in the fuel market," ME, 2017, p. 3, "Results report from monitoring the security of gas fuels supply," ME, July 2018, p. 9, www.gov.pl/web/energia.

³ In 2018, Poland also imported natural gas from Germany, Qatar, Czechia, the U.S., and Norway, and oil from Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq, the UK, and the U.S.

import at least 8.7 bcm of natural gas annually.⁴ The Polish authorities realised that this unfavourable situation would only change with the appearance of alternative suppliers and sources of energy. Hence, appropriate infrastructure—namely the Świnoujście LNG terminal and the Baltic Pipe pipeline, which will supply raw materials from directions other than Russia—has become crucial for increasing energy security. These developments are intended to help give Poland a better position when negotiating the terms of future natural gas supplies from Russia.

A now permanent problem in Polish-Russian relations is the continued detention of the wreckage of the presidential aircraft that crashed near Smolensk on 10 April 2010. The Russians maintained that the plane must remain on Russian territory until their investigation is completed. The investigation has so far been extended 16 times, most recently in October 2017, despite the fact that the causes of the crash were made public by the Russian Interstate Aviation Committee (IAC) as recently as in January 2011.⁵ Russia has also failed to respond to requests made by the National Prosecutor's Office team investigating the crash.

Three new determinants of Polish-Russian relations also emerged in 2018. The first is of a political nature, the second of a social and cultural nature, and the third of an economic and strategic nature. On 1 January, Poland began its two-year term on the UN Security Council (UNSC), assumed the chairmanship of its deliberations in May, and then transferred it to Russia in June, according to protocol. Poland's presence on the UNSC helped promote Polish interests in the international arena and facilitated contacts with Russia as an experienced permanent member of the Council, as well as created space for diplomatic dialogue and international debate on issues important to Poland, which included security in the Central and Eastern European region, respect for international law, and the prevention of armed conflicts.⁶

In social and cultural aspects, Poland prepared for the football World Cup to be held in Russia (14 June – 15 July 2018). The tournament was prestigious for the Russian authorities, and for Poles it entailed both opportunities and challenges. Polish businesses and local authorities, especially in the Tricity (Gdańsk-Gdynia-Sopot), wanted to benefit from the organisation of the championship due to the underdeveloped tourist infrastructure of the Kaliningrad Oblast. However, the

⁴ The binding Yamal contract will end in 2022, but as the gas year lasts from 1 October to 30 September of the following year, it will actually be 2023.

⁵ "Raport Końcowy z Badania Zdarzenia Lotniczego," final translation, 10 January 2011, Międzypaństwowy Komitet Lotniczy Komisja Badań Wypadków Lotniczych, https://doc.rmfm.pl/rmf_fm/store/Tlumaczenie-finalne-projektu-raportu-koncowego.pdf.

⁶ R. Tarnogórski, Sz. Zaręba, "Poland on the UN Security Council," *PISM Bulletin*, no. 1 (1072), 3 January 2018, www.pism.pl.

Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs did not rule out risks associated with the event, including terrorist attacks in host cities.⁷

The third new determinant was the implementation of a special law on a cross-cut of the Vistula Spit by 2022.⁸ Eventually, this shipping channel through the Spit will be about 1 km long and allow access to the port of Elbląg, bypassing Russian territorial waters. The Polish authorities, for economic and strategic reasons, decided that Poland should become independent from the need to pass through the Pilawa Strait and be free to plan tourist traffic—in the 1990s, there were cases of the Russian side refusing to allow Polish vessels to pass through. The situation normalised after 2009⁹; however, the tensions in the Black Sea increased the concerns of the Polish authorities about the possibility of a repeat of the Kerch Strait scenario in Baltic waters.

Goals and Assumptions

The most important objective of the Polish government was to increase the security of the state against the aggressive actions of the Russian Federation. Minister of Foreign Affairs Jacek Czaputowicz, in the government's information on the trends in Poland's foreign policy (of 21 March 2018), stressed that Russia's policy was a threat to "building Poland's subjectivity in international relations".¹⁰ In his view, this was the result of that country's desire to change the political order existing in Europe after 1989. The minister argued that, in this situation, Poland should undertake a pragmatic political dialogue, based on respect for international law, and act within the framework of a "solidary, consistent policy of NATO and the European Union, as well as the Member States, i.e., our strategic

⁷ A communiqué issued on 29 May 2018 by the Foreign Ministry informed: "There is a threat of terrorist attacks in Russia. It may increase in connection with the World Cup, which will be held from 14.06 – 15.07. Attacks in the host cities of the tournament cannot be ruled out. Caution should be exercised in particular in and around stadiums and fan zones, as well as on public transport," MSZ, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja.

⁸ On 24 February 2017, the Sejm passed a law on investments in the construction of a waterway connecting the Vistula Spit with the Gulf of Gdansk, planning to complete the investment by 2022. For more, see: "The Act of 24 February 2017 on investments in the construction of a waterway connecting the Vistula Spit with the Gulf of Gdańsk," Dz.U. [Journal of Laws], 2017, item 820.

⁹ Simultaneously, in accordance with the Polish-Russian Agreement, each Party may introduce, if necessary, limitations regarding the number and size of the vessels of the other Party; "The Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Poland and the Government of the Russian Federation on navigation in the Vistula Lagoon (Kaliningradskij zaliw)," signed in Sopot on 1 September 2009, *Monitor Polski*, 2009, no. 78, item 975.

¹⁰ "Government information on Polish foreign policy in 2018 (presented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland Jacek Czaputowicz at a sitting of the Sejm on 21 March 2018)," see p. 11 in this volume.

partners". Poland therefore decided not to act alone in dialogue with Russia, but to use multilateral structures.

Another objective of Polish foreign policy was the recovery of the aircraft wreckage. The minister said that "we have repeatedly pointed out that there are no grounds for continuing to hold the wreckage of the Tu-154 aircraft and the black boxes. They are Polish property and their return is not only a legal but also a moral obligation".¹¹

The third objective was to reduce Russia's share in Poland's energy balance. The plans to reduce dependence on Russian energy resources were connected with efforts to strengthen the state's security. Minister Czaputowicz argued that the basis of Polish-Russian relations must be "realities in relation to transport, communication, and energy issues".¹² This meant recognising the limitations arising from energy conditions and the binding Yamal contract. In the draft Energy Policy of Poland until 2040, published on 23 November 2018, it was emphasised that although the Russian supplier still has a dominant position in shaping prices of raw material, it is undoubtedly desirable to diversify the directions and sources of oil and gas supply, which would positively influence the purchase costs of raw materials and the negotiating position of Polish companies.¹³

The government also intended to continue its efforts regarding the repatriation of Poles from the East. There are no large Polish communities in Russia and, compared to other countries, Poles constitute a small group (47,000 according to the Russian census, 300,000 according to Polish estimates).¹⁴ Since 2008, people of Polish origin have been able to obtain the Pole's Card, which enables them to take up employment, education and medical treatment in Poland. However, the Polish authorities wanted to speed up the procedure for their return.

Political Relations

Bilateral Relations. In 2018, the Polish-Russian contacts were reduced to the required minimum. The meetings with representatives of the Russian side were held at lower levels—including the minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland with the Russian ambassador (7 February), the deputy minister of Foreign Affairs with the Russian ambassador (17 April), the director of the Territorial Department

¹¹ *Ibidem.*

¹² *Ibidem.*

¹³ "Polityka energetyczna Polski do 2040 Roku (PEP2040)," ME, 2018, p. 25, www.gov.pl/web/energia.

¹⁴ Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Moscow, www.gov.pl/web/rosja/ambasada-rp-w-moskwie.

with the Russian ambassador (14 February, 7 June).¹⁵ Each time, the issue of returning Polish property—the wreckage of TU-154—was raised. The Russians, in turn, each time stressed the problem of destroying monuments and obelisks commemorating Soviet soldiers, which Poland considered to be an element of propagation of communism and totalitarian systems and passed a law on their liquidation.¹⁶ This did not apply to cemeteries, which are protected by Polish-Russian agreements from the 1990s. Poland considered that it fulfilled its obligations by taking care of the burial places of 1.2 million Red Army soldiers who died on Polish territory during the Polish-Bolshevik war and World War II.¹⁷

The problems were also related to the functioning of the Polish-Russian Group on Difficult Matters, revived a year earlier on Poland's initiative. The Group was to comprise Polish and Russian scientists and experts and address issues related to the problematic and differently perceived history.¹⁸ The Polish part of the group met several times, including on 13 March, on the occasion of the promotion of teaching aids for history teachers, developed jointly by historians and experts from Poland and Russia (the project was financed by the National Science Centre). Later, however, the chairman, Prof. Mirosław Filipowicz, withdrew from the group.¹⁹ The main problem was the lack of consent from the Russian side to

¹⁵ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also provided support in organising the visit of representatives of the National Prosecutor's Office to the crash site in order to carry out additional examination of structural elements of the aircraft. On 3-7 September, an additional examination of material evidence in the presence of Poland's representatives was scheduled.

¹⁶ "The ACT of 14 December 2017 on amending the Act on prohibition of propagation of communism or other totalitarian systems through names of organisational units, auxiliary units of municipality, buildings, objects and public utility devices and monuments and the Act on amending the Act on prohibition of propagation of communism or other totalitarian systems through names of buildings, objects and public utility devices," *Dz.U. [Journal of Laws]*, 2017, item 2495.

¹⁷ A. Siwek (ed.), A. Kosztowy, A. Wicka, T. Krząstek, "Graves and Cemeteries of Russian and Soviet Soldiers from the 19th and 20th Centuries in Poland. Selected Examples," Centre for Eastern Studies, University of Warsaw, Warsaw, 2016.

¹⁸ The group was established in 2002 as an advisory initiative for the governments of Poland and Russia. In 2015, after the resignation of its chairman from the Polish side, Adam Rotfeld, the work was suspended. The Polish members of the group were seeking the disclosure of documents relating to the so-called Augustow Manhunt, the liquidation of the Polish underground movement by the NKVD in 1945. Thanks to the Group for Difficult Matters, a historic meeting was held between Metropolitan Kirill of Moscow and Archbishop Józef Michalik, the chairman of the Polish Bishops' Conference. On 9-10 March 2017, the activities of the group resumed. For more, see: "Wznowienie działalności Polsko-Rosyjskiej Grupy ds. Trudnych," *MSZ*, 12 April 2018, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja.

¹⁹ Rotfeld's withdrawal from the Group on Difficult Matters was due to changes at the Institute of Central and Eastern Europe and the establishment of the Institute of Central Europe in its place by the Act of 9 November 2018, with the task of supporting cooperation in the Central European region, in particular the Three Seas Initiative, A. Gmiterek-Zabłocka, "Rozpada się Polsko-Rosyjska Grupa do Spraw Trudnych. Z zespołu odchodzą naukowcy," *Tok Fm*, 13 February 2019, www.tokfm.pl;

participate in the Group, as a result of which it was not fully composed. Russian Ambassador Sergei Andreyev pointed to the irrelevance of its existence, arguing that there is “no respect for Soviet soldiers” in Poland because, in his opinion, “the liberators are called occupants”.²⁰

A major topic of discussion, however, was the Vistula Spit cross-cut. At the end of the year, Minister of Natural Resources and Ecology Dmitry Kobylnik expressed his concern about the Polish plans. The Russian side reacted with reluctance to the idea, drawing attention, in particular, to the environmental and ecological issues of the Baltic Sea. On 4 December, on the occasion of the UN conference on climate change (COP24) hosted by Poland, the environment ministers of Poland and Russia held a working meeting. The discussions focused on climate protection issues, but also on the Vistula Spit. According to the Russians, Poland, as a party to the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (HELCOM), should fulfil all the requirements for protecting the unique environment and biodiversity in this waters. Minister Henryk Kowalczyk assured that such requirements would be met.²¹

Multilateral Relations. Poland's foreign policy towards Russia was dominated by the need to ensure national security. This was to be achieved through efforts within NATO, supplemented by bilateral cooperation with the United States to strengthen the Alliance's Eastern Flank. Political dialogue with Russia was conducted, among others, within the NATO-Russia Council (31 May, 31 October), discussing the situation of Ukraine, as well as the outcomes of Russia's violation of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF).²² The Polish government wanted the treaty to continue functioning, but showed understanding for the U.S. announcement of its withdrawal in the face of Russia's violation of the treaty.²³

On 26 November, during the extraordinary UN Security Council meeting on the events in the Sea of Azov, the Polish delegation argued that the UN system should monitor closely the Russian militarisation of these waters. It also

“The Act of 9 November 2018 on the Institute of Central Europe,” 2018, item 2270, Kancelaria Sejmu, www.sejm.gov.pl.

²⁰ “Posoł Rossii w Warszawie: Moskwa nie zainteresowana w wosstanowlenii Gruppy po słożnym woprosam,” *Kommiersant*, 8 November 2018, www.kommersant.ru.

²¹ “Dmitrij Kobyłkin w Katowice pieriedał biespokojstwo Rossii odnositielno planow Polszy po sooruzheniju sudochnodnogo kanała czeriez Bałtijskuju (Wislińskuju) kosu,” Ministerstwo prirodných riesursow i ekołogii Rossijskoj Fiedieracyi, 4 December 2018, www.mnr.gov.ru.

²² A. Kacprzyk, “NATO's Stance in the INF Treaty Crisis,” *PISM Bulletin*, no. 164 (1235), 6 December 2018, www.pism.pl.

²³ “Czaputowicz: Polska wyraża zrozumienie dla działań USA ws. INF,” PAP, 22 October 2018, www.pap.pl.

stressed that Russia brought a new aspect to the conflict with Ukraine, and that the UN should not disengage from its involvement in this matter just because a permanent member of the Security Council is a party to the conflict. In this way, Russia undermines the security of the Eastern Europe.²⁴

Also at the European Union forum, during the debate on Russia at the Foreign Affairs Council on 16 April 2018, Poland postulated maintaining a firm approach towards the policy of the Russian authorities and argued that a necessary condition for any progress in the EU's relations with Russia should be, for example, strengthening the ability of Member States and external partners to counteract hybrid threats from Russia.²⁵ Poland actively supported the adoption of further restrictive measures and sanctions against Russia. It also supported (on 31 July) the introduction of six companies to the sanctions list that were involved in the construction of the bridge to Crimea across the Kerch Strait, and (on 10 December) nine individuals responsible for organising the illegal "elections" in Donbas in November 2018. Poland also supported the extension of sanctions adopted in 2014 in response to the annexation of Crimea, including personal sanctions (visa bans, asset freeze) in September 2018, and sectoral sanctions in December 2018.²⁶

Poland decided to internationalise the issue of the wreckage of the TU-154 aircraft. This was intended to put pressure on Russia and to bring about a change in its position. In April 2018, Polish embassies and permanent representations dispatched information to various diplomatic missions containing a summary of the actions taken so far and the international legal arguments regarding the return of the wreckage, free access to the crash site, and commemoration of the victims.

On 17 May, at a meeting of the UN Security Council, President Andrzej Duda referred to the Smolensk air crash and explanation of its causes. He argued that international law cannot be a tool against justice.²⁷

Poland's position was confirmed in Resolution 2246 of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe of 12 October 2018, which stated that the

²⁴ "An account of the debate at the Polish representation to the UN," Permanent Representation of the Republic of Poland to the United Nations in New York, *Twitter*, 26 November 2018,

²⁵ "Information for the Sejm and Senate of the Republic of Poland on the participation of the Republic of Poland in the work of the European Union in January-June 2018. (Bulgarian Presidency of the Council of the European Union)," Sejm RP, 9 July 2018, p. 45.

²⁶ "Information for the Sejm and Senate of the Republic of Poland on the participation of the Republic of Poland in the work of the European Union in the period July-December 2018. (Austrian Presidency of the Council of the European Union)," Sejm RP, Warsaw, 10 January 2019, p. 56.

²⁷ "An address by the President of the Republic of Poland at the UN Security Council High-Level Debate," *Prezydent.pl*, 17 May 2018, www.prezydent.pl.

prolonged detention of the Tu-154M wreckage on Russian territory is illegal. The resolution called on Russia to promptly return the wreckage to the relevant Polish authorities in a manner that will not damage potential evidence; ensure, prior to the transfer of the wreckage, that it is adequately protected in a manner agreed with Polish experts; and refrain from taking actions that could be perceived as desecration of the crash site, considering its deep emotional significance for many Poles.²⁸ The resolution was based on a report by rapporteur Pieter Omtzigt from the Netherlands.²⁹ However, the Russian Federation decided not to abide the decision of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, as its voting rights had been suspended.³⁰

Economic Relations

The trade turnover of Poland and Russia in 2018 increased by 26% compared to 2017 and amounted to PLN 99.5 billion.³¹ This was the result of growing demand for Russian energy resources, while the importance of the Russian market for Polish exports was declining (3% of the total). Poland sold more goods in 2018 to Czechia, for example, and earned twice as much there (PLN 58 billion) compared the Polish exports to Russia (PLN 28 billion). In 2018, due to increased Russian pressure on the Belarusian and Serbian authorities, the channel of transport of some Polish goods (e.g., apples) through these countries was restricted.³² The Russians detected and destroyed transports of Polish food and agricultural products in order to implement counter-sanctions.

Poland's negative trade balance, which amounted to PLN 41 billion in 2018 (compared to PLN 30 billion in 2017), was the result of growing imports of Russian energy resources, base metals, and base metal articles.³³ This was influenced, among others, by higher demand for Russian natural gas (by 6.6%), but, above all, by the increase in hard coal imported from Russia (13.5 million

²⁸ "The crash of Polish Air Force Tu-154M transporting the Polish State delegation, on 10 April 2010 on the Russian Federation's Territory," Resolution 2246, Parliamentary Assembly, Council of Europe, 12 October 2018, <http://semantic-pace.net>.

²⁹ "Apel Strasburga do Rosji: Oddajcie Polsce wrak Tu-154M," *Rzeczpospolita*, 12 October 2018, www.rp.pl.

³⁰ The decision to suspend the voting rights of the Russian delegation was taken on 10 April 2014 in response to Russia's aggression against Ukraine, annexation of Crimea, and military action in eastern Ukraine.

³¹ "Foreign trade," database, GUS, <http://swaid.stat.gov.pl>.

³² A. Gwara-Tarczyńska, "Tempo wzrostu eksportu jabłek niewystarczające, aby rozwiązać problem niskich cen," *Sady Ogrody*, 26 April 2019, www.sadyogrody.pl.

³³ Furthermore, the imports of works of art, collectors' objects, and antiques also increased by 10%.

tonnes of 19.6 million tonnes total imported raw material).³⁴ It had been “the best year for Russian producers for many years—in 2016, the Polish importers paid USD 282 million, and in 2017 less than USD 500 million”.³⁵ Most of the coal purchased in Russia went to households and the municipal sector. High-calorific coal (so-called anthracite) mined in Ukraine (in Donbas) and illegally granted shipping permits in Russia and then labelled as Russian coal, was imported to Poland by private companies.³⁶ Some of this raw material was re-exported by Polish importers to other EU countries, which was highly criticised at home and abroad. In January and February 2018, the U.S. State Department imposed sanctions against a company registered in Poland (Doncoaltrade) in connection with the war in Donbas. In Poland, anthracite is used for, among other things, the manufacture of diodes and electrodes, as well as products for the metallurgical industry, such as carbonators and slag frothers.³⁷

The largest surplus in trade with Russia was recorded in Poland's sales of mechanical machinery and equipment, electrical equipment, and sound recording and reproducing equipment. The export value of these goods amounted to PLN 8.8 billion, which, compared to 2017, meant sales increased by 25%. Polish manufacturers recorded a small surplus in the sales of plastics and rubber (0.4% increase compared to 2017), while leather and saddlery products were better compared to the previous year (26% increase). Sales of textile materials and articles were also higher, by 21%. Due to the effects of a storm in northwestern Poland in August 2017, timber and timber articles were sold to Russia (sales increased by 12% compared to the previous year).³⁸

Polish-Russian economic relations also had a regional dimension. The organisation of four matches in Kaliningrad during the World Cup was expected to boost sports tourism to Gdańsk, Sopot and Gdynia, located 160–200 km away. Because of the high prices of hotel services in Russia during the games, Polish local authorities had the idea to launch rail transport to allow faster border crossings. On 5 January, the Polish company Przewozy Regionalne and the Kaliningrad branch of Russian Railways RZD tested a rail connection between Kaliningrad

³⁴ “Rachunek za importowany węgiel wyniósł w 2018 r. ok 7 mld zł,” *Wysokienapiecie.pl*, 19 April 2018, <https://wysokienapiecie.pl>.

³⁵ *Ibidem*.

³⁶ “Antracytowe FAQ. O co chodzi w aferze z donbaskim węglem?,” *Gazeta Prawna*, 12 August 2018, www.gazetaprawna.pl.

³⁷ K. Baca-Pogorzelska, M. Potocki, “Przez 10 ostatnich miesięcy, czyli o paserstwie antracytowym,” *Dziennik*, 8 August 2018, www.wiadomosci.dziennik.pl.

³⁸ “Imports and exports by country including sections CN/SITC/PKWiu/BEC,” GUS, <https://stat.gov.pl>.

and Gdynia with a change in Braniewo, which then was very popular.³⁹ The governor of the Kaliningrad Oblast, Anton Alyokhanov, also stressed the need for such a connection, which had been suspended in 2013. Eventually, though, an agreement with Russian Railways was not reached due to technical and commercial issues. As a result, the fans travelled to the matches using car and bus transport.

Polish-Russian cross-border cooperation also received support from the European Union. On 9 October, the first call for applications for regular projects under the Poland-Russia Cross-border Cooperation Programme 2014–2020 was held. A total of 118 project applications were submitted with three thematic objectives: heritage, environment, and accessibility. On 1 November, the Financial Agreement between Poland, the Russian Federation, and the European Commission concerning the implementation of the programme entered into force, which would enable the financing of three major infrastructure projects: 1) the development of recreational and water tourism potential in the towns of Svetlyj and Malbork, 2) cross-border cycling routes for sustainable development and preservation of cultural heritage, and 3) the construction of a new section of provincial road No. 512 together with the construction of a bridge crossing over the Lyna River in Bartoszyce.⁴⁰ About €12.5 million of European Union funding and €3.4 million of financial contributions from the Russian Federation will be allocated to the implementation of these projects.

Social and Cultural Relations

The Polish government focused on helping Poles in Russia and continued the repatriation programme. In 2018, 923 Pole's Cards were granted in the Russian Federation.⁴¹ The increase of more than double the previous year's number of applications for the Pole's Card and repatriation visas was due to legislative facilitations adopted in 2017.⁴²

³⁹ F. Fyrydkiewicz, "Pociąg na próbę: Kaliningrad–Gdynia," *Rzeczpospolita*, 8 January 2018.

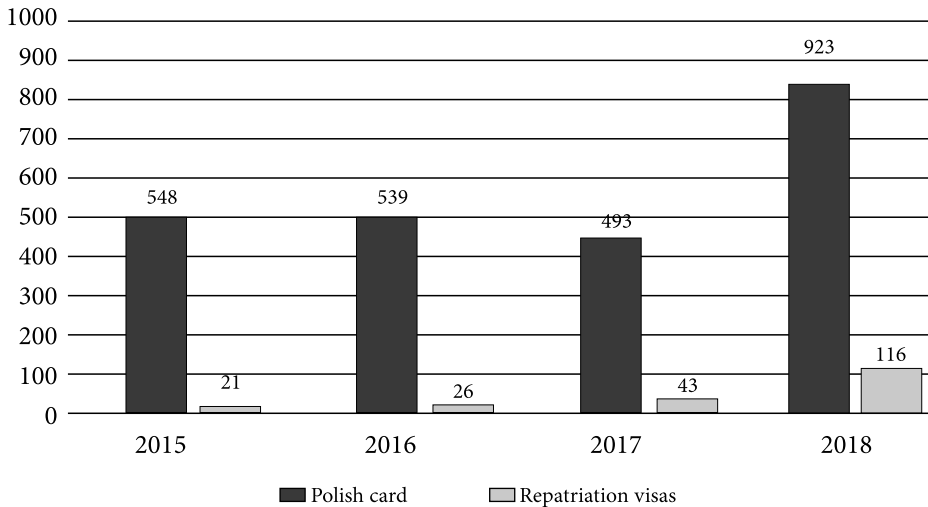
⁴⁰ "Duże projekty infrastrukturalne zatwierdzone przez Komisję Europejską," Program Współpracy Transgranicznej POLSKA–ROSJA 2014–2020, 18 December 2018, www.plru.eu.

⁴¹ MFA data.

⁴² "The Act on amending the Act on repatriation, the Act on the Card of the Pole, and the Act on foreigners of 24 November 2017," *Dz.U. [Journal of Laws]*, 2017, item 2282, Kancelaria Sejmu, <http://prawo.sejm.gov.pl>.

Figure 1.

Applications for the Pole's Card on the Territory of the Russian Federation, 2015–2018



Source: Author's own compilation based on data from the Polish MFA.

Poland remained an attractive travel and shopping destination for Russians despite the withdrawal by the Polish side in 2016 from local border traffic with the Kaliningrad Oblast. It was important, especially for the Polish border towns, that the number of Russian tourists remained at a similar level: in 2018, 1,093 Russian tourists came to Poland, in 2017, 1,230, in 2016, 1,104, and in 2015, 1,322.⁴³ In March 2018, the Polish Tourist Organisation (PTO) was awarded Best Destination Promotion in Russia 2018, while in September, at a Kaliningrad fair, the PTO was the winner of the ATOR Travel Awards in the category “For a creative approach in tourism”.⁴⁴

However, the overall number of people crossing the Polish-Russian border on both sides decreased in 2018. The 10% decrease in the number of border crossings by Russians can be explained by the fall in the value of the rouble and small profits from border trade.⁴⁵ The number of Poles travelling to Russia decreased by 8% compared to the previous year (by 30% to 2016). The statistics were improved

⁴³ Data for the period 2018–2015: “Czисло wyjezdnych turystycznych pojazdów (tysiąc),” Federalna Służba Gosudarstvennoy Statistiki, www.gks.ru.

⁴⁴ “Polska turystyka wciąż cieszy się dużym uznaniem Rosji,” *Horeca*, 12 September 2018, www.horecabc.pl.

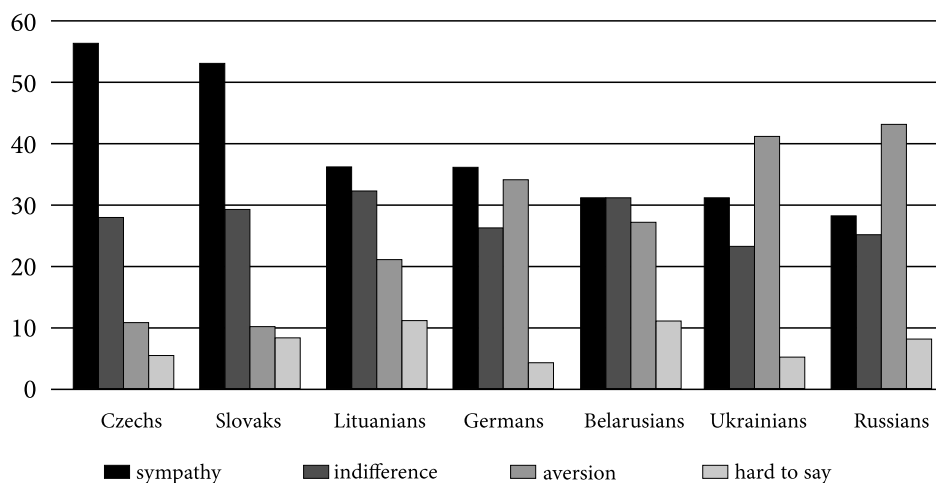
⁴⁵ *Ibidem*.

by the Polish fans attending football events in Russia (about 16,000 individual trips to Russia). Poles comprised the 11th most numerous group by nation visiting Russia during the championship. In total, Russia issued 980,000 “fan passports”, most of them (468,000) were granted to Russians.⁴⁶

The World Cup and media coverage of the championship had an impact on changing the attitude of some Poles towards Russians, which, according to polling statistics, the highest improvement in the image of Russians by Poles in Poland occurred during and just after the World Cup (average increase by 40%). In January 2019, 28% of the surveyed Poles indicated fondness for Russians, while dislike was 43%; before the championship, in March 2018, fondness for Russians was expressed by only 18% and dislike by 49%.⁴⁷ Nevertheless, from among all our neighbours, the Poles still treat the Russians with the greatest distance.⁴⁸

Figure 2.

“Poles, how would you describe your attitude towards other nations?” (2019)



Source: “CBOS Research Announcement, Attitude towards other nations,” no. 17/2019, 10–17 January 2019.

⁴⁶ Apart from the hosts, the most numerous football fans were Americans and Chinese, who ordered 39,000 “passports” each, while from European countries the most numerous were Germans (21,000) and Poles; see: “Mundial 2018. ‘Paszporty kibica’ na mundial zamówiło 16 tysięcy Polaków,” *TVP Sport*, 1 June 2018, <https://sport.tvp.pl>.

⁴⁷ “Attitudes towards other nationalities,” *CBOS Report*, no. 37/2018, CBOS, www.cbos.pl.

⁴⁸ The poll was conducted using computer-aided “face-to-face” interviews (CAPI) in the period 10–17 January 2019 on a representative, random population sample of 928 adults in Poland. For more, see: “Attitudes towards other nationalities,” *CBOS Report*, no. 17/2019, CBOS, www.cbos.pl.

Polish-Russian cultural contacts in 2018 focused primarily on the celebrations of the centenary of Poland's regaining independence. The Polish embassy and consulates in Russia and Polish community organisations prepared many events, exhibitions, and lectures promoting Polish culture, history, and memories of Polish historical figures on this occasion. Such undertakings included the publication on YouTube of a series of films about traces of Poles in the Russian capital.⁴⁹ As well, trolleybus No. 66 travelled around Moscow with posters depicting great figures and Polish cities.⁵⁰ From 7 July, the All-Russian Museum of Decorative, Applied, and Folk Art in Moscow opened the exhibition "Poland in the drawings of children of Warsaw in the 1930s".

The Polish Institute in Moscow, the Polish Institute in Saint Petersburg, the Adam Mickiewicz Institute, and the Centre for Polish-Russian Dialogue and Understanding in Warsaw all play an important role in promoting Polish culture and art. On their initiative or with their support, cultural events promoting Polish theatre and film, literature, language, Polish artists, and youth exchange were organised.⁵¹ The Polish Music Festival, organised by the Cracow Industrial Society with the support of the Polish Institute in Moscow, was held in Moscow for the eighth time on 6–14 November. In December, the Institute organised a festival of Polish culture with a programme that included literature, theatre, and film. And with support from the Polish Institute in Saint Petersburg, festivals of cinema, music competitions and theatrical performances were held, introducing the work of Polish writers, composers, and musicians. The Polish-Russian Centre for Dialogue and Understanding, apart from its broad promotional activity, co-financed 18 out of 56 youth exchange projects for a total amount of PLN 99,642.28. All projects were implemented and 494 pupils and students and 104 teachers from Poland and Russia participated in them.⁵² Furthermore, the Academic Exchange Agency joined in the promotion and organised "Summer Courses of Polish Language and Culture 2018".

A regular cultural event remains the Wiśła Film Festival. Its 11th edition was held on 17–18 May in Moscow where 49 Polish films were presented. Then, until November, they were screened in other Russian cities, including Yekaterinburg, Barnaul, Novorossiysk, Tver, Rostov-on-Don, Krasnodar, Orenburg, Nizhny

⁴⁹ "Polacy w Moskwie Odcinek 4: Adam Mickiewicz w Moskwie (cz. 2)," Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Moscow, *YouTube*, 17 December 2018, www.youtube.com.

⁵⁰ "Rocznikowy polski trolejbus w Moskwie," Polskij Kulturnyj Centr, 7 March 2018, www.kulturapolshi.ru.

⁵¹ "Studenci UMFC zdobywają publiczność moskiewską," Uniwersytet Muzyczny Fryderyka Chopina, 28 May 2018, www.chopin.edu.pl.

⁵² Data from the Centre for Polish-Russian Dialogue and Understanding (CPRDiU), <http://cprdip.pl>.

Novgorod, Veliky Novgorod, Torzhok, Petrozavodsk, Vysokhovsk, and Biysk.⁵³ Apart from film screenings, the organisers prepared a programme of cultural events that allowed the audience to get to know Polish culture better. Russian viewers could see Polish productions during the festival of Polish cinema in Saint Petersburg (22–26 August). In turn, Varsovians watched Russian productions during the twinned festival Sputnik nad Wisłą (8–18 November).

Throughout the year, days of Polish culture were organised in Russia: in Saint Petersburg at the University of Economics (3–4 April), in Kuban (1–27 May), in Arkhangelsk (2–14 April), as well as a festival of Polish culture in Kaliningrad called Drugie bieriega–Polsza (29 September). In Krasnodar, for the eighth time, Polonia⁵⁴ organised the Festival of Polonia Groups from Southern Russia.

Assessment

The year 2018 did not bring a fundamental change in Poland's policy towards Russia. This was influenced both by international determinants, including the persistent state of tension in Poland's neighbourhood caused by revisionist Russian policy, and by internal determinants, namely the recognition by key political forces that Russia is a challenge to Poland's security because it violates the norms of international law. The implementation of objectives with regard to Polish foreign policy on Russia was therefore hampered⁵⁵ and bilateral contacts were held on an occasional basis and at a lower level. No official visit by a Polish politician to Moscow was made and only the Russian minister of environment came to Poland, and only on the occasion of the COP24 climate conference in Katowice. The Polish-Russian Group on Difficult Matters, which was reactivated on Poland's initiative a year earlier, did not meet as a full panel even once. The low number of contacts showed the state of poor relations between the countries.

Achievement of the first objective, that is, ensuring Poland's security, can be assessed in two ways. On the one hand, a dialogue was conducted with Russia on the international forum within the NATO-Russia Council, as well as through Poland's participation in the United Nations Security Council. Poland managed

⁵³ Gienieralne konsultstwo Rzespubliki Polska w Kaliningradie, *Twitter*, 4 October 2018, <https://twitter.com>.

⁵⁴ On 7 November 2018, the Union of Polish Organizations "Jedność" was registered. The founding members were the Krasnodar Regional Organization of the Polish National and Cultural Center "Jedność" and the Rostov City Organization of the National and Cultural Autonomy "Union of Poles of the Don".

⁵⁵ The expert circle was divided on this issue. See the dialogue of K. Pełczyńska-Nałęcz, "Polska wobec Rosji. Radykalizm bez polityki" and E. Wyciskiewicz, "Polska wobec Rosji: Mniej znaczy więcej," *Sprawy Międzynarodowe*, 2018, no. 3, pp. 31–50.

to bring into the international debate the issues important for regional stability and security, such as the question of the Kerch Strait and Russia's violation of international law. This resulted in decisions by the North Atlantic Alliance to further strengthen NATO's Eastern Flank, which increased Poland's defence potential. On the other hand, Russia's aggressive actions in foreign policy persisted, which was not favourable to increasing Poland's regional security.

Poland failed to achieve its second objective, namely recovering the wreckage of the TU-154 aircraft. On the positive side, however, is the resolution of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, which was favourable to Poland and called on Russia to transfer the wreckage to the appropriate Polish authorities without delay. The internationalisation of this issue was an important demonstration of pressure on the Russian side, but achieving this objective, even with international support, will be difficult. This is because Russia rejects all resolutions of the Parliamentary Assembly from the period when its delegation was excluded from the proceedings due to sanctions.

The achievement of the third objective in 2018 regarding independence from energy resources from Russia was limited. The existing infrastructure allowed for a partial reduction in the amount of imported natural gas. However, Polish businesses purchased a lot of Russian coal, which had an impact on the increase in trade turnover with Russia and its negative balance for Poland. If the objective was to become independent from energy resources from Russia as a means of increasing state security, it was not achieved.

An increase in the number of persons returning to Poland can be regarded as a success, which was influenced by legislative and administrative facilitations concerning the Pole's Card and repatriation visas. This was in line with the policy of support for Poles in the East that had been conducted for several years. Furthermore, Poles began to perceive Russians more positively in 2018 due to the football championships, which were also held in Kaliningrad Oblast. The Polish local authorities benefited from the increased tourism. No additional rail connections were activated, however, but further infrastructure development is scheduled for the coming years thanks to, among others, EU support under the Poland-Russia Cross-Border Cooperation Programme 2014–2020.

Despite poor political relations between Poland and Russia, cultural contacts were maintained. Permanent elements of cooperation, including film festivals, concerts, language courses, and youth exchanges, as well as the celebrations of the 100th anniversary of Poland's regaining independence and related events, played an important role. The social contacts between Poles and Russians improved, although the number of trips in both directions is decreasing every year.

Poland's Policy Towards the People's Republic of China

JUSTYNA SZCZUDLIK

Background

Since 2017, Poland's attitude towards China has become more cautious¹, which resulted from assessment of the state of bilateral relations, the Poland's EU membership, the changing EU policy towards China, as well as from global circumstances, mainly associated with the US attitude. Changing the approach was the most important determinant of Poland's policy towards China in 2018.

In 2017, the representatives of the Polish administration openly indicated that China did not implement bilateral strategic partnership, which, as a result, did not bring Poland the expected benefits. This was despite Poland's involvement in Chinese initiatives such as 16+1, Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) or membership in the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, which were to be Poland's appreciation of Chinese sensitivity and an example of fulfilling the strategic partnership. However, unsatisfactory trade statistics, in particular, still growing deficit on the Polish side, reflected China's lesser involvement in the implementation of the declaration regarding the strategic partnership. The Chinese investments in Europe, mainly in high-tech companies (e.g. in Germany), the takeover of the port of Piraeus in Greece by a Chinese investor, or infrastructure projects (e.g. in the Balkans) using loans from Chinese banks started to raise doubts and concerns. The Polish authorities stressed that "capital has nationality" and investments cannot be fully controlled by foreign investors. It was argued that Poland is interested in participation of Chinese investors in the construction of e.g. the Central Transportation Port, but as partners sharing *know-how* and not as contractors of the whole investment². Poland also negatively assessed an economic and political outcomes of the 16+1 format and the BRI, as well as the growing difficulties on the Chinese side in maintaining the high-level bilateral

¹ M. Przychodniak, "Poland's policy towards China," *Yearbook of Polish Foreign Policy 2017*, PISM, Warsaw, 2019.

² "Wild: nie przyjechalismy do Chin po pieniadze na Centralny Port Komunikacyjny," *Forsal*, 15 May 2017, www.forsal.pl; "Henryk Kowalczyk o wspolpracy z Chinami. Co ze wzrokiem eksportu i inwestycjami w Polsce?," *Money.pl*, 1 June 2017, www.money.pl.

political dialogue (an example was, among other things, the long-awaited visit of the Chinese Foreign Minister to Poland).

Other factors influencing Poland's policy were associated with EU actions towards China. The works initiated in 2017 on the establishment of a community-level foreign investment screening mechanism (so-called *screening*) continued in 2018. Also works on the *connectivity* strategy continued, which was to be the EU's response to the BRI, caused by growing scepticism about the Initiative, in particular, regarding the ways in which infrastructure projects are implemented - e.g. the use of loans from Chinese banks, the requirement of state guarantees from the recipient party (which transfers risks and threatens to increase debt).

At the global level, the most important determinant in 2018 was the increasingly confrontational attitude of the US towards China, including the threat of a tariff war. As transatlantic relations were a priority for Poland, the Sino-US relations and the US approach to China influenced the Polish position. In 2018, the Polish authorities began to treat the PRC not only as a partner (which characterized Polish policy in 2008-2016), but also as a challenge and even a threat.

Poland's policy towards China in 2018 was therefore influenced by security issues (such as deterrence and protection against influence) related not only to Russia's assertive foreign policy but also to China's, as well as the cooperation between the two countries.

Goals and assumptions

Despite the modification of the approach, the Polish objectives regarding bilateral relations have not changed. At the political level, Poland's most important objective remained regular high-level dialogue (primarily between heads of state and government and foreign ministers), mainly through the mechanisms established by the strategic partnership declarations. These included, above all: strategic dialogue, i.e. annual meetings of vice-ministers of foreign affairs, and the Polish-Chinese Intergovernmental Committee, i.e. meetings of representatives of various ministries chaired by ministers of foreign affairs (which should be held every two years). Equally important were lower-level visits, also associated with the cooperation of local authorities. Importantly, as part of the shift in objectives, an emphasis was to be placed on bilateral cooperation with less attention paid to sub-regional multilateral formats, primarily 16+1.

In 2018, the Polish authorities announced the implementation of specific projects related to political dialogue. One of them was the organisation of the next Poland-China Forum of Regions in Chengdu, which was announced by Foreign

Minister, Jacek Czaputowicz during his speech on foreign policy directions³, and confirmed in an interview by Polish Ambassador to Beijing Wojciech Zajączkowski⁴. The visit of Prime Minister, Mateusz Morawiecki to China and the PRC Minister of Foreign Affairs to Poland were also announced.

At the economic level, the most important objective was still to reduce the trade deficit on the Polish side. The Polish authorities were interested in increasing exports to China (rather than reducing imports), which was to be achieved by convincing the partner to open the market more, mainly by removing non-tariff barriers. Since 2017, the trade deficit with China was treated as a political problem by the Polish authorities. The second objective was to attract Chinese direct investments, mainly of the greenfield type, and to encourage Chinese entrepreneurs to participate in tenders⁵. There were also plans to operate and profit from cargo railway connections between China and Europe. The profits from such activities are related to logistical services (e.g. car or railway transport to other countries in the region, provision of infrastructure) and packaging of goods (usually of high value, such as electronics, luxury goods) imported by trains starting and ending their route in Poland⁶.

Auxiliary to economic and political goals were promotion of Polish culture and language in China, broadening knowledge of Poland, popularising its good image and creating favourable associations. Furthermore, the aim was to increase the number of Chinese tourists and students visiting Poland, which, apart from promotional effects, was also of economic significance.

In 2018, the Polish authorities began to pay more attention to security issues in relations with China, which was related to the American context of Polish foreign policy. This was demonstrated by government officials' statements: in November, during the FOTAR conference in Hamburg, the Prime Minister, Morawiecki stressed: "We would like to have peaceful relations with everyone, including Russia and China, but we see problems on the side of China and Russia rather than the United States". The head of government indicated that "China is

³ "Minister Jacek Czaputowicz on the priorities of the Polish diplomacy in 2018," MSZ, 21 March 2018, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja.

⁴ „Many partnerships have already been established. An opportunity to review what is happening in cooperation at this level is the Poland-China Forum of Regions. It's fifth edition will be held in June this year in Chengdu”; „Ambasador RP w Pekinie: to co zostaje do zrobienia, to wypełnienie politycznego formatu treścią,” 24 April 2018, *Chińskie Radio Międzynarodowe, Sekcja Polska*, <https://polish.cri.cn>.

⁵ "Minister Jacek Czaputowicz...", *op. cit.*; „Jarosław Gowin na VII szczycie szefów rządów państw Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej i Chin w Sofii”, KPRM, 7 July 2018, www.premier.gov.pl; „Ambasador RP w Pekinie:...", *op. cit.*

⁶ "Minister Jacek Czaputowicz...", *op. cit.*

challenging the free world of democracy and the transatlantic alliance. We need to find a way to maintain the right level of deterrence, not against the forces of the free world, but against China and Russia.”⁷ The Minister of National Defence, Mariusz Blaszczak, stated during his visit to the US in November that Russia is building a coalition with China against the free world⁸, while in June, the Minister of Finance, Teresa Czerwinska, said in an interview that the BRI should not be a tool to control one country over another or a way to increase its power⁹.

Political relations

Bilateral dimension. The high-level political dialogue (heads of state, heads of government and foreign ministers) was not extensive in 2018. Despite the announcements and efforts of the Polish side, neither the visit of the Polish Prime Minister to China nor the PRC's Foreign Minister to Poland was held. The second meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee did not take place. The sixth session of the strategic dialogue at the level of deputy foreign ministers also failed to take place. The political dialogue mainly involved ministers or deputy ministers. In most cases, these were not strictly bilateral visits, but concerned participation in meetings of multilateral formats (e.g. 16+1) or conferences and exhibitions hosted by the Chinese side.

In February, Marian Banaś, the Deputy Minister of Finance and the Head of the National Tax Administration, paid a visit to China. The purpose was to participate in the Global Conference on Cross-border E-Commerce in Beijing, organized jointly by the General Administration of Customs of the PRC and the World Customs Organization. The deputy minister was accompanied by representatives of the Hatrans company which operates the Łódź-Chengdu railway connection. The discussions focused on customs issues and e-commerce. The deputy minister met with the vice head of customs administration of the PRC, Ni Yuefeng. They discussed trends in the development of Polish-Chinese customs cooperation, including training cooperation and the establishment of a Chinese customs attaché in Warsaw¹⁰.

⁷ “Premier Mateusz Morawiecki w Hamburgu: Polska jest jednocześnie proamerykańska i proeuropejska,” KPRM, 17 November 2018, www.premier.gov.pl.

⁸ “Fort Trump coraz bliżej?,” *Wiadomości*, 13 November 2018, www.wiadomosci.tvp.pl.

⁹ D.R. Chaudhury, “Belt and Road Initiative must not be a tool of increasing power and control by any country: Polish Finance Minister,” *The Economic Times*, 18 June 2018, <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com>.

¹⁰ “Wiceminister finansów na konferencji poświęconej handlowi elektronicznemu,” Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Beijing, 14 February 2018, www.gov.pl/web/chiny.

In March, Minister Xie Zhenhua, the PRC government plenipotentiary for climate change, visited Poland. The visit was related to Poland's preparations for the organisation of the COP24 climate summit in Katowice. The Chinese guest met with Deputy Minister of the Environment, Małgorzata Golińska, Director General of the State Forests, Andrzej Konieczny, with whom he discussed forestry cooperation, and with Minister of the Environment Henryk Kowalczyk¹¹.

In June, the Deputy Minister of Entrepreneurship and Technology (MPiT) Tadeusz Kościński and the Deputy President of the Polish Investment and Trade Agency (PAIH) Krzysztof Senger visited Ningbo. The visit was organised in connection with the Third Conference of Ministers for Trade and Investment of the 16+1 format (held every two years). Poland pointed out the need for facilitating market access, investment development and cooperation using e-commerce. The Chinese companies were encouraged to invest in Poland. Minister Kościński also met PRC Vice-Minister of Commerce Ren Hongbin, with whom he discussed the trade deficit on the Polish side¹².

In July, Michał Kurtyka, the Secretary of State at the Ministry of the Environment and plenipotentiary for the COP24 presidency, paid a visit to China. In Beijing, he met with Minister, Xie Zhenhua and PRC Deputy Minister of Ecology and Environment, Zhang Guotai. The discussions concerned the expected outcomes of the COP24. The ministers discussed the most important issues related to the climate negotiation process, including the Paris Agreement implementation package, the Talanoa Dialogue, financing, climate actions before 2020 and the role of forests in achieving climate goals¹³.

Also in July, the Deputy Prime Minister, Gowin represented Poland at the 7th summit of the 16+1 format in Sofia. The presence of the Deputy Prime Minister (and not Prime Minister Morawiecki) demonstrated the Polish side's dissatisfaction with the results of the 16+1 format and bilateral political dialogue, which was slowed down by the Chinese side. Mr. Gowin met with Chinese Prime Minister, Li Keqiang in Sofia. The meeting was held on the sidelines of the 16+1. Mr. Gowin stressed that Poland maintains interest in cooperation in this format, while expecting to intensify contacts and develop economic exchanges as part of a comprehensive strategic partnership. He stressed that "16+1 may be one of the instruments to build greater cohesion in the region together with the

¹¹ "Meeting with a Chinese delegation within the climate and forest cooperation," MŚ, 14 March 2018, www.gov.pl/web/srodowisko.

¹² "The 16+1 Trade and Investment Ministers' Conference in Ningbo," Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Beijing, 12 June 2018, www.gov.pl/web/chiny.

¹³ "Polish-Chinese climate consultations ahead of COP24 in Katowice," Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Beijing, 12 July 2018, www.gov.pl/web/chiny.

Visegrad Group or the Three Seas Initiative. It may also serve the development of geographically sustainable transport routes and logistical links between the European Union and China.”¹⁴.

In the same month, the Deputy Minister of Agriculture of the PRC, Yu Xinrong visited Poland. The discussions concerned the rural development and management, promotion of agricultural trade and investments, as well as cooperation in technology and agricultural science, including the establishment of stronger cooperation between research institutes¹⁵.

In November, the Polish government delegation visited China to attend the first edition of the China International Import Expo (CIIE) in Shanghai. As in the case of the 16+1 summit, Poland was not represented at a high level. The head of the Polish delegation was a minister in the Chancellery of the Prime Minister, Marek Suski. Among others, the delegation met with Han Changfu, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Affairs of the PRC, Ni Yuefeng, Minister of the General Administration of Customs of the PRC, Liu Dianxun, Director General of the China Investment Promotion Agency and He Baoxiang, the Deputy Governor of Hunan Province¹⁶.

At the end of November, Marek Gróbarczyk, the Minister of Maritime Economy and Inland Navigation, paid a visit to China. In Beijing he met with Minister of Transport, Li Xiaopeng, Minister of Water Resources, E Jingping and Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Rural Areas, Qu Dongyu. Minister Gróbarczyk also paid a visit to the PRC Water Resources and Hydropower Research Institute, supervised by the Ministry of Water Resources and Hydro-energetics¹⁷.

In mid-November, the Deputy Minister of the International Department of the CCP, Qian Hongshan, paid a visit to Poland. He met with the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Maciej Lang¹⁸.

Subregional dimension (16+1). Poland participated in most of the meetings of the 16+1 format. The III Conference of Trade and Investment Ministers, held in Ningbo and attended by the Deputy Minister, Kościński¹⁹, and the VII Summit of

¹⁴ “Jarosław Gowin...,” *op. cit.*

¹⁵ “The Polish-Chinese dialogue,” MRiRW, 27 July 2018, www.gov.pl/web/rolnictwo.

¹⁶ “Polska na Chińskiej Międzynarodowej Wystawie Importowej w Szanghaju,” Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Beijing, 8 November 2018, www.gov.pl/web/chiny; “Pierwsza Chińska Wystawa Targowa Import Expo (CIIE),” Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Shanghai, 16 November 2018, www.gov.pl/web/chiny.

¹⁷ “Wizyta ministra Marka Gróbarczyka w Chinach,” Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Beijing, 4 December 2018, www.gov.pl/web/chiny.

¹⁸ MSZ, *Twitter*, 15 November 2018, [www.twitter.com](https://twitter.com).

¹⁹ See above on Ningbo conference and participation of the Polish representatives.

Prime Ministers with the participation of the Deputy Prime Minister, Gowin (in Sofia) should be considered as the two most important events in 2018.

During the meeting in Ningbo, while discussing the customs declaration submitted to participants for signature by the Chinese side, it turned out that the countries attending the meeting were not members of the format nor its observers, such as Russia and Kazakhstan. This aroused opposition from some of the “16” countries, including Poland. The Chinese side was accused of adding other countries to the format without prior information and consultation. For Poland, it was also a demonstration of China’s disregard for Polish sensitivities related to concerns over Russia’s aggressive policy. Both this incident and China’s proposals that other EU countries, including Germany, should also take part in the Sofia summit (such a declaration was made by the Prime Minister Li Keqiang during his visit to Berlin in May 2018, when he also proposed Germany-China-Central Europe trilateral cooperation²⁰), were met with dissatisfaction by the “Sixteen” countries. Poland did not allow non-members and observers of the 16+1 to sign the customs declaration²¹.

Dissatisfaction with China’s non-transparent actions and a more assertive stance on the Polish side were reflected in the process of negotiating the Sofia Guidelines. Poland wanted the joint document to include a reference to the need for prior consultations and subsequent agreement by all members of the format regarding third-country participation in the 16+1. Poland and other states in the region also wanted the document to clearly outline the problems faced by the 16+1, primarily the trade deficit and difficult access to the Chinese market, including the investment market. Eventually, this phrases were included in the Guidelines. However, due to insistence of the Chinese side, their tone was softened by not directly referring to the trade deficit, but to the “need to develop a more balanced economic relationship”. The issues of market access were defined as a necessity of a *level-playing field*, i.e. the EU terminology promoted by the “16”. The Central European countries, including Poland, did not allow a slogan in the Guidelines *community of shared destiny for mankind* (Chinese: *renlei mingyun gongtongti*), which in 2018 was one of the most important slogans promoted by the Chinese side in international relations - the PRC government tried (partly successfully) for it to be included also in the UN documents²². The European side argued that they could not support an unclear term²³. The specificity of the Guidelines is

²⁰ “Wang Yi huiying ouzhou dui ‘16+1 hezuo’ de danyou [Wang Yi addresses the concerns related to 16+1],” *Xinhua*, 31 May 2018, www.xinhuanet.com.

²¹ Author’s conversation with a representative of the Polish administration, June 2018.

²² See: J. Szczudlik, “Tell China’s Stories Well: Implications for the Western Narrative,” *PISM Policy Paper*, no. 9 (169), September 2018, www.pism.pl.

²³ Full Text: “The Sofia Guidelines for Cooperation between China and Central and Eastern European Countries,” The State Council the People’s Republic of China, 16 July 2018, www.gov.cn.

that slogans, proposals, mechanisms or solutions entered once become an integral part of 16+1 and are repeated in subsequent documents.

In December 2018, the 12th meeting of the coordinators of the 16+1 format was held in Beijing ahead of the planned 8th summit of prime ministers in Croatia in 2019. Poland was represented at this meeting by Ambassador Zajączkowski rather than the national coordinator, who was the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs for Asia. The meeting included a review of the Budapest Guidelines and the Sofia Guidelines and discussions on preparations for the summit in Croatia. Ambassador Zajączkowski stressed that Poland values cooperation within the 16+1 mechanism as an important supplement and support to the EU-China comprehensive strategic partnership²⁴.

The EU dimension. The works on the EU Foreign Investment Screening Mechanism and the EU *Connectivity* Strategy should be considered the two most important processes in the EU in 2018. These mechanisms were a response to China's operations, including the acquisition of European high-tech companies, investments in critical infrastructure and the implementation of the BRI projects using loans, among other things. Poland supported the EU initiatives.

With regard to *connectivity*, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs emphasised (in information to the Sejm and Senate on Poland's participation in EU works) that during the Bulgarian presidency (January-June 2018) Poland actively participated in the EU discussion. It was noted that Poland pointed out the need for synergies of the EU *connectivity* strategy with other projects and forms of transnational cooperation in Europe, such as the development of the TEN-T network or the Eastern Partnership²⁵. During the Austrian presidency (July-December), the Polish position on this issue did not change²⁶. Also in the case of the screening, "Poland actively supported works on the adoption of the project in question"²⁷. In

²⁴ "XII Spotkanie Koordynatorów Narodowych 16+1 w Pekinie," Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Beijing, 20 December 2018, www.gov.pl/web/chiny.

²⁵ "Informacja dla Sejmu i Senatu RP o udziale Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej w pracach Unii Europejskiej w okresie styczeń-czerwiec 2018 r. (przewodnictwo Bułgarii w Radzie Unii Europejskiej)," Kancelaria Sejmu, no. 2728, 9 July 2018, p. 47; "Contribution of the Government of the Republic of Poland to the Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council – Elements for an EU Strategy on connecting Europe and Asia EaP connectivity agenda. A key to safeguard EU's interests in Eurasia," Commission of the European Union, 5 March 2018, www.ec.europa.eu.

²⁶ "Informacja dla Sejmu i Senatu RP o udziale Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej w pracach Unii Europejskiej w okresie lipiec-grudzień 2018 r. (przewodnictwo Austrii w Radzie Unii Europejskiej)," Kancelaria Sejmu, no. 3145, 10 January 2019, p. 57.

²⁷ "Informacja dla Sejmu i Senatu RP o udziale Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej w pracach Unii Europejskiej w okresie styczeń-czerwiec 2018 r....," *op. cit.*, p. 47, 79; "Informacja dla Sejmu i Senatu RP w udziale Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej w pracach Unii Europejskiej w okresie lipiec-grudzień 2018 r....," *op. cit.*, p. 40.

2018, the bilateral investment agreement negotiated since 2014 was also important at the EU level in relations with China. In this regard, Poland supported the acceleration of the negotiations of this agreement²⁸.

Other activities of the Polish administration. In April, the 11th meeting of the Interministerial Team for the Coordination of Activities for the Development of the Strategic Partnership between Poland and China (this is an advisory body to the government which has been in existence since December 2012) was held. It was chaired by the Deputy Foreign Minister, Marek Magierowski. The trade deficit was discussed and cooperation mechanisms were reviewed in connection with the bilateral visits scheduled for 2018²⁹.

In July, Minister Czaputowicz established the Asia-Pacific Council. Its task was to present recommendations regarding the long-term schedule for Poland's involvement in the Asia-Pacific region and to provide opinions on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' documents setting out the priorities of Polish missions in the region. The Council consisted of nine members: experts and former diplomats, experts on the region with many years of experience in cooperation with Asian partners³⁰.

The Polish administration also undertook other measures, which were part of a more assertive stance towards China. One such measure was the change (in June) of the name of the Polish representation in Taiwan from the Warsaw Trade Office to the Polish Office in Taipei. Considering the sensitivity of the Chinese side with regard to contacts with Taiwan of countries maintaining diplomatic relations with the PRC, the change of the name of the office to one containing a direct reference to the Polish state could have been perceived as a sign of Poland's assertiveness. A similar tone was conveyed when the Ministry of Foreign Affairs published on its twitter a statement regarding industrial cyber espionage (December). The statement reads: "Poland shares concerns about cases of industrial cyber espionage, including actions attributed by our partners to China. They are in violation of the international order and undermine the stability of cyberspace. We will continue to promote responsible states' behaviour in cyberspace."³¹.

²⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 48.

²⁹ "11th session of the Interministerial Panel on Strategic Partnership with China," MSZ, 6 April 2018, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja.

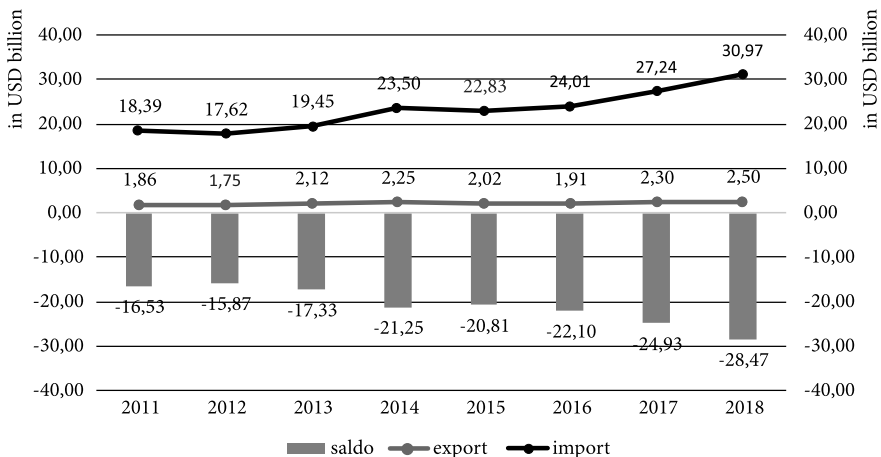
³⁰ "The Asian debate and the establishment of the Asia-Pacific Council," MSZ, 11 July 2018, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja.

³¹ "The position of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on industrial cyber espionage," MSZ, *Twitter*, 21 December 2018, https://twitter.com/MSZ_RP.

Economic relations

Trade. In 2018, the trade volume reached USD 33 billion. The deficit on the Polish side also increased (to USD 28.5 billion). China was Poland's second largest trading partner after Germany.

The commodity structure of Polish exports in 2018 was as follows: the highest growth (approx. 20%) compared to 2017 was recorded in the commodity group of machinery and mechanical equipment and electrical equipment. These products accounted for nearly 30% of all Polish exports to China. The second such group was base metals accounting for approx. 26% of exports. This group recorded a decline by over 6%. The other significant groups of goods are: plastics and miscellaneous industrial articles accounting respectively for approx. 8 and 7% of the Polish exports. As regards both groups, an increase in exports of approx. 14% was recorded. However, in the case of imports from the PRC, the three most important commodity groups were machinery and mechanical equipment and electronic equipment (50% share in total imports from China) - an increase by 11% in 2018; textile materials and articles (10.1%)—an increase by 10.5% and miscellaneous industrial articles (10% share)—an increase by 8.5%³².



Prepared by Bartłomiej Znojek based on CSO data.

Investments. In 2018, there was no significant increase in Chinese investments in Poland. However, at least three *greenfield* investments were reported being part of the Polish economic and technological development agenda (e.g. electromobility).

³² Prepared by Oskar Pietrewicz based on CSO data.

The largest *greenfield* investment was announced in May by a Chinese tycoon producing battery elements for electric cars, the Guatou-Huarong company. The company announced the construction of a production plant in Godzikowice within the Wałbrzych Special Economic Zone. The Guotai-Huarong is one of the three largest electrolyte suppliers in the world. The annual production volume of the factory will make it possible to supply electrolyte cartridges for lithium batteries to 1 million electric cars per year. At the beginning 60 people will find employment there, eventually approx. 100. The investment is to be located in Poland thanks to its location in the centre of Europe, well-developed transport infrastructure and access to qualified workers. The company will employ Polish workers and is going to cooperate with Polish universities³³.

Another significant investment was the new Nuctech production plant in Kobyłka near Warsaw, the construction of which was announced in 2017. A letter of intent was signed then and the cornerstone was laid. The Chinese investor, who has been present in Kobyłka for 14 years, manufactures industrial scanners for screening cargo. The new factory will manufacture X-ray scanners for trucks and railway cars, security control devices used at airports, mainly for the European market³⁴.

Another Chinese investment in Poland in 2018 was a research and development centre in Warsaw opened by TCL, a TV manufacturer that has been investing in Żyrardów since 2007. Polish mathematicians and programmers involved in research on artificial intelligence are to find employment there. "The specialists working in the Polish capital will study how AI algorithms can be used to achieve the best quality of image and to provide state-of-the-art functionality in electronic devices. The experts will also work on optimising AI algorithms so that they can be used directly in devices rather than in the so-called cloud"³⁵.

Apart from the aforementioned investments considered as beneficial, there was a controversial investment in 2018. They were connected with the threat to European producers of fruit concentrate, which could be replaced by Chinese - cheaper and of lower quality³⁶. In June, the acquisition of Appol by the Chinese company SDIC Zhonglu Fruit Juice was finalised. The acquisition of Appol Group was the first M&A transaction in the food processing sector in Poland made

³³ "Interview with Yuan Xiangyun – CEO and Board Member of Guotai-Huarong (Poland)," Municipality Oława, 5 July 2018, www.gminaolawa.pl.

³⁴ "Chińskie firmy zwiększają inwestycje w Polsce. Globalny producent skanerów cargo i innych używanych na lotniskach, uruchomił swoją nową fabrykę pod Warszawą," *Newseria Biznes*, 1 October 2018, www.biznes.newseria.pl.

³⁵ M. Kalwasiński, "Sztuczna inteligencja z Chin w Warszawie," *Bankier*, 3 September 2018, www.bankier.pl.

³⁶ J. Solska, "Konfitury dla Chińczyków," *Polityka*, no. 34 (3174), 22–28 August 2018, pp. 34–35.

directly by a Chinese investor. With the acquisition of Appol, SDIC gained its first manufacturing facilities outside of China, which was part of the investor's production globalisation strategy. The transaction may affect the balance of power in the Polish fruit concentrate market, which has so far been dominated by companies from Western Europe³⁷.

However, the most spectacular were three cases of tenders won by the Chinese investors, which were eventually annulled by the National Appeal Chamber (NAC). In July, the Chinese company Stecol Corporation won two tenders announced by the General Directorate for National Roads and Motorways (for the construction of Krakow's northern ring road and part of the Zakopianka road). In September, both decisions were questioned by the National Appeals Chamber. According to the GDDKiA, the two other bidders in the Cracow ring road procedure submitted appeals. The companies argued that one of the persons appearing in the documentation for the Chinese bid did not have the authorisations required by the Terms of Reference (ToR). The NAC agreed, pointing to irregularities in the tender documentation of the Chinese bidder, whose bid was annulled. Winning the tender for the construction of a part of the "zakopianka" road was questioned due to the bid's incompliance with the ToR³⁸.

In November, the Chinese company Shanghai Electric Power Construction was excluded from the tender for modernisation and expansion of the waste energy recovery system at the incineration plant in Warsaw's Targówek district. The NAC, annulling the selection of the Chinese company, stressed that the ILO in Warsaw had been misled by the Chinese bidder, who claimed to have the appropriate experience³⁹.

Unsuccessful were also the efforts of the Chinese company Sinohydro, which participated in the tender for the construction of three metro stations in Warsaw's Bemowo district. After losing the bid, the Chinese company appealed, arguing that the Italian winner was in financial trouble and should have been excluded. The NAC rejected Sinohydro's appeal⁴⁰.

Other economic activities. In November 2018, the first representative office of the Port of Gdansk in the PRC was opened in Shanghai in cooperation with

³⁷ "Sfinalizowano transakcję sprzedaży Appolu Chińczykom," *Sady Ogrody*, 18 June 2018, www.sadyogrody.pl.

³⁸ "Chińczycy wykluczeni z przetargu na północną obwodnicę Krakowa," *WNP*, 7 September 2018, www.wnp.pl/budownictwo.

³⁹ "Chińczycy wykluczeni z budowy spalarni w Warszawie. MPO zostało wprowadzone w błąd," *Portal Komunalny*, 28 November 2018, www.portalkomunalny.pl.

⁴⁰ "Budowa metra na Bemowo. Odwołanie Chińczyków oddalone," *TVN Warszawa*, 5 November 2018, www.tvnwarszawa.tvn24.pl.

PAIH. The objective was to encourage partners from China to invest in Poland. According to the Port of Gdansk authorities, the opening of the office in Shanghai became the first step in building a strong position for the company in Europe and the world. The cooperation was to create opportunities for increasing trade with China in the CEE and Scandinavia. The representative office of the Port of Gdańsk shared facilities with the Shanghai office of PAIH⁴¹.

Poland was also present at the China International Import Expo (CIIE). In 2018, it was one of the four most important international events organised in China as part of hosting diplomacy - an important dimension of PRC foreign policy under Xi Jinping's government (apart from the Boao Forum in Hainan, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Summit in Qingdao and the China-Africa Forum in Beijing⁴²). The Polish national stand at the CIIE was one of the largest among the EU countries. Poland was represented by over 86 companies and firms from the following sectors: agriculture and food, cosmetics, jewellery, automotive, aviation, machinery, logistics and transport. During the opening of the Polish pavilion, Minister Suski encouraged Chinese entrepreneurs to further cooperate with Polish companies, stressing that Poland's export potential is far from being fully exploited by Chinese customers⁴³.

In November, during his visit to Shanghai, Minister Gróbarczyk attended the 34th shareholders' meeting of Chipolbrok, a Polish-Chinese shipbuilding company, the first Chinese *joint-venture* to operate since the 1950s. The meeting was attended by PRC Deputy Minister of Transport He Jianzhong.

In November, the PAIH opened a Foreign Trade Office (FTO) in Chengdu. It was the second - after Shanghai - office of the PAIH in China. The reason for this decision was the cooperation of Sichuan province and the city of Chengdu with Polish local authorities, the existence of the Polish consulate there and the economic potential of the western part of China. A similar office was opened in September 2018 in Taipei, Taiwan.

Also worth mentioning is the handling of railway cargo transport between China and Poland. In 2018, the transshipment terminal (so-called dry port) in Małaszewicze (on the border with Belarus) handled 98% of containers going to and from China. The terminal will be expanded to increase its capacity (four times - by 2026), as confirmed by PKP Cargo CL Małaszewicze, the company managing the port. In August, the company signed a memorandum with Zhengzhou city

⁴¹ "Otwarcie przedstawicielstwa Portu Gdańsk w Szanghaju," Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Shanghai, 8 November 2018, www.gov.pl/web/chiny.

⁴² See: "Konferencja prasowa ministra spraw zagranicznych ChRL, Wang Yi, na marginesie 1. sesji Ogólnochińskiego Zgromadzenia Przedstawicieli Ludowych (OZPL) 13. kadencji," *Xinhua*, 8 March 2018, www.xinhuanet.com.

⁴³ "Polska na Chińskiej Międzynarodowej Wystawie Importowej w Szanghaju," *op. cit.*

authorities to develop cooperation using Małaszewicze. The PKP Cargo also wants to develop intermodal transport with China (involving several types of transport in the same transport unit, e.g. in a container), using Polish ports and ports of the Three Seas countries⁴⁴. During the year in question, however, no works began on the long-planned multimodal logistics terminal in Łódź or elsewhere.

Social relations

Culture. The promotion of Polish culture in China was carried out mainly by the Adam Mickiewicz Institute and the Polish Institute in Beijing (the cultural department of the Polish embassy). The most important areas promoted included music (classical, early and jazz), theatre, art, film and computer games⁴⁵. Many events were held as part of the celebrations of the 100th anniversary of Poland's regaining independence.

In January, the Podkarpacka Philharmonic Orchestra performed in Dalian, and in March in Beijing and Wuhan - Anna Maria Jopek. As part of the Early Music Season Festival in Beijing and Wuhan, the following artists performed: Olga Pasiecznik and her ensemble with the "Tre Donne" repertoire, Michał Świątkiewicz Ensemble, Michał Gondko with a lute concert, and La Morra early music ensemble. This was the fourth consecutive edition as part of IAM's collaboration with Beijing's Forbidden City Concert Hall. La Morra performed music by medieval Polish composer Piotr Wilhelmi from Grudziądz. Also in April, the concerts by post-rock band Tides from Nebula were held in Beijing and Shanghai as part of the Sound of the Xity Festival. In the same month, the rock band ROAN gave concerts in Kunshan, Ningbo, Hangzhou, Huangshan and Hefei. At the turn of May and June, the Stanisław Słowiński Quintet performed in China. The Cracow group performed 15 concerts as part of another Asian edition of the Jazz Po Polsku project, in Guangzhou, Beijing, Shenzhen, Shanghai and Xi'an. In June, the Polish string quartet NeoQuartet, specialising in contemporary music, played another series of concerts in Asia. The artists performed in concert halls in Nanning. The programme included the most outstanding works of Polish music composed at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries and works of Chinese composers. In July, Polish accordionist Maciej Frąckiewicz gave concerts in Beijing, Wuhan and Changsha. In autumn, Sinfonia Varsovia with German soloist

⁴⁴ "Warszewicz: Terminal w Małaszewiczach zwiększy przepustowość do 3 285 pociągów," *Rynek Kolejowy*, 12 April 2019, www.rynek-kolejowy.pl; "Z Chin, przez Małaszewicze, do Europy," *Portal Morski*, 6 August 2018, www.portalmorski.pl.

⁴⁵ The following information is based on the Asia Programme subpage of the Adam Mickiewicz Institute (<https://iam.pl/pl/programy/program-azja>) and the Polish Institute in Beijing (<https://instytutpolski.pl/beijing/pl>).

Anne-Sophie Mutter, conducted by Krzysztof Penderecki performed in eight Chinese cities. The tour honoured the celebrations of the centenary of Poland's regaining independence. In October, the pianist Katarzyna Borek gave concerts in Guangzhou and Shenzhen, presenting works by Paderewski, among others.

In April, the play „Album Karla Hoeckera” directed by Paul Bargetto and performed by the Trans-Atlantic Theatre from Warsaw was presented in Tianjin, while in Tianjin and Harbin the play „Kryjówka” directed by Paweł Passini and performed by NetTeatre was presented. In June, Beijing saw the premiere of the play „Ziemia obiecana” performed by the Kazimierz Dejmek's Teatr Nowy from Łódź, directed by Remigiusz Brzyk. It was yet another Polish performance following „Dziady” by Michał Zadara and „Król Lear” by Jan Klata, which was presented at the International Theatre Festival organised by the Beijing theatre. In August, the two plays were staged in Tianjin and Hangzhou by the Bielsko-Biala Polish Theatre: „Humanka” directed by Agata Puszcz and „Wujaszek Wania” by Waldemar Śmigasiewicz. In October, the Polish Dance Theatre group presented the performance of „Żniwa” in Shanghai. The event was part of the Polish presence at the China Shanghai International Arts Festival, organised to celebrate the centenary of Poland's regaining independence. Also in October, during the sixth edition of the International Theatre Festival in Wuzhen, a production by Nowy Teatr from Warsaw entitled „Jeden gest” was staged.

In May, a retrospective of Krzysztof Zanussi's films was held in Beijing. The screenings included „Barwy ochronne”, „Obce ciało”, „Życie za życie” oraz „Brat naszego Boga”. In November, seven Polish historical films were presented in Hangzhou, Beijing and Nantong, while at the turn of November and December the Polish documentaries were screened as part of the iDocs Film Festival in Beijing. Two Polish directors participated - Zofia Kowalewska with her 2017 Oscar-nominated film „Więzi” and Marta Prus with her feature film „Over the Limit”, which won numerous international awards. In December, Shanghai Pedagogical University hosted a screenwriting workshop with Krzysztof Piesiewicz.

In May, the exhibition „Kultura plakatu. Polski plakat z Poznania”. In July, the first individual exhibition of works by Katarzyna Kozyra opened in Beijing. In September, an exhibition of Polish amber was organised in Kunming. In October and November, the 3rd edition of the Polish Circles of Art Festival was held in China (Beijing, Shanghai, Changsha, Chengdu, Hangzhou, Jinan, Nanjing, Shenzhen). For over two months, the festival events included screenings of Polish films, art exhibitions, concerts, lectures and workshops, and presentations of the video game industry. In November, China hosted the 7th edition of the Polish Culture Festival connected with the celebrations of the 100th anniversary of Poland's regaining independence.

For the second time, the Polish game developers had the opportunity to present their productions at ChinaJoy, the largest trade event in China. In August, ChinaJoy (China Digital Entertainment Expo and Conference) was visited by representatives of the most interesting companies in the *game development* (*gamedev*) industry, who presented 14 new Polish games. In October, the Chinese game publishers (Tencent, NetEase, TapTap) participated in Poznań Game Arena (PGA) - one of the largest game fairs in the Central and Eastern Europe. In November, Polish gaming companies attended the WePlay games fair in Shanghai.

Education and tourism. In the 2017/2018 academic year, 1164 Chinese students studied in Poland, accounting for 2% of all foreign students⁴⁶. This is an increase compared to the 2016/2017 academic year when there were 917 of them.

The number of the Chinese tourists has also increased. In 2018, 135,000 of them came to Poland⁴⁷, mainly in organised groups, often as part of road trips in the Central Europe, which meant staying also in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia as well as in the Scandinavian and Baltic countries. In Poland, the Chinese usually visited Warsaw, Gdańsk, Kraków, Wrocław and Poznań. Very important destinations were the Auschwitz-Birkenau Museum and the "Wieliczka" Salt Mine⁴⁸.

At the turn of 2017 and 2018, the Consular Department of the Polish Embassy in Beijing opened 11 new Visa Application Reception Centres (the first centres were opened in 2016 in Beijing, Chengdu, Shanghai and Guangzhou) in the following cities: Changsha, Jinan, Shenyang, Xi'an, Hangzhou, Nanjing, Fuzhou, Shenzhen, Chongqing, Kunming and Wuhan⁴⁹.

Assessment

In 2018, no objectives of a political nature were achieved at bilateral level. No high-level visit was held despite Prime Minister Morawiecki's scheduled trip to Beijing and Minister Wang Yi's arrival in Warsaw⁵⁰, nor were meetings of bilateral formats held: strategic dialogue and intergovernmental committee. Cancellation

⁴⁶ "Studenci zagraniczni w Polsce 2018," *Forum Akademickie*, February 2019, www.forumakademickie.pl.

⁴⁷ M. Kalwasiński, "Rekordowa liczba turystów z Chin odwiedziła Polskę," *Bankier*, 18 January 2019, www.bankier.pl. As a comparison, in 2017 there were 130.000, in 2016, 82.000, and in 2015, 60.000.

⁴⁸ "Foreign Centre of the Polish Tourist Organization in Beijing, 2017 Report", pp. 5–6, 8, Polska Organizacja Turystyczna, www.pot.gov.pl.

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 10, 15.

⁵⁰ In 2018, Minister Wang Yi's visit was postponed four times and ultimately failed to materialise.

of the scheduled for June 2018, the Poland-China Forum of Regions in Chengdu was not favourable to the implementation of political goals either.

The implementation of policy objectives seemed to be better at the sub-regional level, especially in the 16+1 format. On the initiative of Poland, among others, the Sofia Guidelines included, for the first time, the obligation to inform and then agree of all format members on the plans to expand the formula, as well as information on the trade deficit and the need to remove investment barriers as problems in relations with China.

In 2018, the security issues began to play an increasingly important role in relations with China, including the fact that Poland considered the challenges arising from China's policy similarly to the EU and other member states, as well as the US. The following Polish actions were indicative: support for EU screening, *connectivity* strategy, declaration on cyber espionage and signalling to the PRC concerns about its good relations with Russia. The importance of the security issue was also evidenced by Poland's continued stance on investment (e.g. refusal to allow full control by a foreign investor), including caution over the participation of Chinese companies in tenders.

Poland has achieved its economic objectives to a limited extent. Although the volume of trade has increased, however, the growth in Polish exports has been insignificant, while imports from the PRC have grown significantly. As a result, the trade deficit, considered by the Polish government as the most important problem in bilateral relations, has increased once again. While the authorities do not have a direct influence on trade turnover, it is their responsibility to negotiate and exert pressure on the PRC to lift barriers to market access, especially non-tariff ones.

The Chinese *greenfield* investments of both manufacturing and research and development (R&D) nature, including high technologies, should be considered as partial fulfilment of economic objectives. Such investments include Guotai-Huarong, TCL or Nucotech. They are in line with Polish programmes such as electromobility and increasing innovation in the economy.

The objectives regarding social relations have been largely achieved by Poland. Maintaining promotional dynamics of Polish culture (not only in the largest and most important centres such as Beijing and Shanghai, but also in other cities), which contributed to greater recognition of Poland in China and an increase in the number of Chinese students and tourists, can be considered a success.

In 2018, the Polish diplomacy emphasised greater assertiveness in relations with China. This was evidenced not only by the rhetoric in which Poland expressed dissatisfaction with the state of relations, but also by specific actions. Poland's support for EU initiatives and statements by representatives of the Polish

government emphasising the importance of the Polish-American relations in the face of increasingly better Russian-Chinese relations indicate efforts to develop a policy towards China that is in line with both its relations with the US and within the EU. However, publicly calling the PRC a “threat to the free world”, including suggestions that it builds a coalition against NATO together with Russia, which was clearly in line with the rhetoric of the US administration, did not serve Polish policy objectives - e.g. maintaining regular dialogue at the highest level. This may result in a further decrease in the dynamics of bilateral relations.

Poland's Policy Towards Ukraine

DANIEL SZELIGOWSKI

Background

The main determinant of Poland's policy towards Ukraine in 2018 was the continuing dispute over historical issues.¹ In January 2018, it further escalated as a result of the adoption by the Polish Sejm of an amendment to the Law on the Institute of National Remembrance (IPN), which introduced provisions on "crimes of Ukrainian nationalists and members of Ukrainian formations collaborating with the German Third Reich".² The Ukrainian authorities criticised the law and demanded its revision, and the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance (UIPN) suspended the Ukrainian side's participation in the Polish-Ukrainian Historians' Forum. President Andrzej Duda signed the law and immediately submitted a request to the Constitutional Court to examine its compliance with the constitution, pointing to the imprecise nature of the legal act.³

The Polish side's dissatisfaction was triggered by the moratorium binding since April 2017 on the search and exhumation of the remains of Polish victims of wars and conflicts on Ukrainian territory. The Ukrainian side introduced it in response to the dismantling of the monument of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army in Hruszowice (Podkarpackie voivodeship), demanding its reconstruction. According to the Polish side, the monument was erected without the relevant permits, and its dismantling was carried out in accordance with the law. The Polish authorities unsuccessfully sought the lifting of the ban on exhumations, gradually becoming convinced that it was impossible to reach any agreement

¹ The tensions over historical issues between Poland and Ukraine erupted with new intensity in 2015 when the Ukrainian parliament recognised members of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army as fighters for Ukraine's independence, while providing for legal liability for publicly insulting or undermining the legitimacy of their actions.

² "Law of 26 January 2018 on amending the Law on the Institute of National Remembrance—Commission for the Prosecution of Crimes against the Polish Nation, the Law on graves and war cemeteries, the Law on museums and the Law on the responsibility of collective entities for acts prohibited under penalty," *Dz.U. [Journal of Laws]*, 2018, item 369.

³ "Nowelizacja ustawy o IPN skierowana do Trybunału Konstytucyjnego," *Prezydent.pl*, 15 February 2018, www.prezydent.pl. The Constitutional Court ruled in January 2019 that the new legislation in the part covering "Ukrainian nationalists" and "Eastern Lesser Poland" was unconstitutional.

on historical issues with the then Ukrainian authorities under the leadership of President Petro Poroshenko. Under these circumstances, the Polish government decided to postpone the settlement of historical issues, expecting that there would be a change of power as a result of the presidential elections scheduled for March 2019, and that the new Ukrainian president would take a more pragmatic stance.

The unfavourable climate in Polish-Ukrainian relations was further escalated by a number of incidents of an anti-Polish nature that took place in Ukraine in 2017–2018. These included the destruction of a monument to Poles murdered in 1944 in the village of Huta Pieniacka, the devastation of the Polish war cemetery in Bykivnia, the shooting of the building of the Polish Consulate General in Lutsk, the attempt to set fire to a Polish school in Mostyska, the damage of a Polish bus with an explosive charge near Lviv, the throwing of explosives into the area of the Cemetery of the Defenders of Lviv, as well as the burning of the Polish flag during a demonstration in front of the Polish embassy building in Kyiv. It was not possible to identify all the perpetrators of these incidents, some of which were probably Russian provocations aimed at causing additional tensions between Poland and Ukraine.

Poland's policy towards Ukraine continued to be determined by Russia's aggressive actions in the region, particularly its occupation of the Crimean Peninsula and parts of the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts. Despite the continuation of military operations by Russian forces in Donbas, the situation on the frontline was relatively stable. More than 300,000 ceasefire violations were recorded in 2018, a decrease by more than 20% compared to the previous year. At the same time, however, the situation in the Sea of Azov and in the Kerch Strait region escalated.⁴ In late November 2018, Russian ships attacked and intercepted Ukrainian vessels sailing towards these waters, taking Ukrainian sailors captive.⁵ The international negotiations on the settlement of the situation in Donbas, conducted within the framework of the Normandy Format (Germany, France, Ukraine and Russia) and directly between Russia and the United States, continued to be in deadlock and failed to produce tangible results. Due to the divergent positions taken by Ukraine and Russia, no compromise was reached on the introduction of UN peacekeeping forces into Donbas. A new factor in policy towards Ukraine was Poland's taking up of a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council. This allowed the Polish authorities to become directly involved in attempts to settle the conflict and to present their own proposals at the international forum.

⁴ D. Szeligowski, "Tensions in the Azov Sea," *PISM Bulletin*, no. 114 (1185), 23 August 2018, www.pism.pl.

⁵ A.M. Dyner, D. Szeligowski, "Political and Military Aspects of the Russia-Ukraine Kerch Strait Incident," *PISM Spotlight*, no. 79/2018, 27 November 2018, www.pism.pl.

In January 2018, there were changes in the Polish government in positions relevant to policy towards Ukraine. Jacek Czaputowicz became the minister of Foreign Affairs, replacing Witold Waszczykowski. The new head of Polish diplomacy used much less assertive rhetoric towards Ukraine than his predecessor, which helped to slightly reduce tensions in bilateral relations. Mariusz Błaszczak became the new minister of Defence, replacing Antoni Macierewicz. Unlike his predecessor's active involvement in the development of defence cooperation, for the new minister, relations with Ukraine were less important.

Cooperation with Ukraine was positively influenced by the sustained growth of the local economy since 2016. It amounted to 3.3% in 2018 and had been the highest rate of an economic development in Ukraine since 2011. This translated into a further strengthening of bilateral trade, which amounted to a record PLN 27.7 billion in 2017. Poland conventionally maintained a trade surplus with Ukraine; nevertheless, the importance of the Polish market for Ukrainian producers systematically increased.

Goals and Assumptions

The Polish government continued its previous policy towards Ukraine. Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki, in his exposé delivered in mid-December 2017, announced his intention to deepen relations with Ukraine and give them new meaning.⁶ During his speech at the Polish parliament in March 2018, Foreign Minister Czaputowicz recognised an independent, democratic and stable Ukraine as an essential element of order and security in Europe. At the same time, he stressed the importance of bilateral relations, pointing to the development of defence cooperation, transport links, and people-to-people contacts.⁷ Poland declared its continued support for Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic aspirations, advocating that the country should be granted EU and NATO membership perspective and that NATO should maintain its "open door" policy.⁸ It expressed its readiness to continue to support the Ukrainian authorities in the reform process and to deepen bilateral military cooperation, in particular between defence industries.⁹

⁶ "Exposé premiera Mateusza Morawieckiego – stenogram," KPRM, 12 December 2017, www.gov.pl/web/premier.

⁷ "Government information on Polish foreign policy in 2018 (presented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland Jacek Czaputowicz at a sitting of the Sejm on 21 March 2018)," see p. 11 in this volume.

⁸ "Wspólna deklaracja głów państw Bukareszteńskiej Dziewiątki," *Prezydent.pl*, 8 June 2018, www.prezydent.pl.

⁹ "Strategy of Polish Foreign Policy 2017–2021," MSZ, September 2017, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja.

It also intended to use its non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council to assist Ukraine in its fight against Russian aggression.

Historical issues were still to occupy an important place in Poland's policy towards Ukraine. Minister Czaputowicz announced further efforts to lift the moratorium on the search for and exhumation of the remains of Polish victims, considering the ban difficult to understand and obstructing the dialogue. At the same time, he proposed a joint celebration of the 100th anniversary of Polish and Ukrainian independence, as well as the 75th anniversary of the Volhynia massacre, which fell in 2018.

Political Relations

The introduction of a ban on exhumations by the Ukrainian side resulted in the largest impasse in bilateral relations after 1991. In December 2017, during a meeting in Kharkiv, the presidents Duda and Poroshenko agreed to continue dialogue on this issue at the level of deputy prime ministers.¹⁰ On 16 February 2018, a Ukrainian delegation led by Deputy Prime Minister Pavlo Rozenko visited Warsaw and met with a Polish delegation headed by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Culture and National Heritage Piotr Gliński. The discussions concerned search and exhumation works, the inventory of memorials and burial places of victims of war and repression and the legalisation of commemorations on the territory of both countries. The Ukrainian side also raised the issue of amending the IPN law. Deputy Prime Minister Gliński found the meeting difficult, although it was held in a good atmosphere. President Duda, however, expressed his disappointment that the issue of exhumation "was not discussed by the Ukrainian side" despite his earlier discussions with President Poroshenko.¹¹ The very next day, 17 February, there was a meeting between Prime Minister Morawiecki and the president of Ukraine on the sidelines of the Munich Security Conference. The subject of the discussions was again the issue of the ban on exhumations and the amendment of the IPN law. A week later, Deputy Prime Minister Rozenko stated in a TV interview that Polish search and exhumation work in Ukraine may be resumed on the condition that destroyed Ukrainian monuments in Poland¹² are restored, that the IPN law is amended, and that the ban on entry into Poland for

¹⁰ For more, see: D. Szeligowski, "Poland's Policy Towards Ukraine," *Yearbook of Polish Foreign Policy 2017*, PISM, Warsaw, 2020.

¹¹ "Prezydent: jestem rozczarowany, że temat ekshumacji nie został podjęty przez stronę ukraińską," *Prezydent.pl*, 17 February 2018, www.prezydent.pl.

¹² In 2014–2017, several Ukrainian monuments were destroyed on Polish territory.

representatives of Ukrainian institutions is revoked.¹³ The statement was criticised by the Deputy Prime Minister Gliński, who said that these issues should not be discussed through the media, but rather in bilateral dialogue. He added that some of them, such as the restoration of monuments and amending the IPN law, went beyond the scope agreed by the two presidents during their meeting in Kharkiv.¹⁴ Prime Minister Morawiecki had a telephone conversation with Ukrainian Prime Minister Volodymyr Hroysman on 28 March in which he expressed hope that Ukraine would lift the moratorium on search and exhumations.

In the mid-April, Deputy Prime Minister Rozenko announced that the Ukrainian authorities had approached Poland with a proposal to resume discussions on historical issues at the level of the ministries of culture and the relevant intergovernmental commissions, as well as between the Institutes of National Remembrance. The president of IPN, Jarosław Szarek, stated in his reply that the condition for the resumption of cooperation is the lifting of the ban on exhumations by Ukraine as well as the publication of the current output of meetings of the Polish-Ukrainian Historians Forum, the work of which was suspended when the Ukrainian side withdrew from participation due to the amendment of the IPN law.¹⁵

At the end of May, the Search and Identification Bureau of the IPN carried out archaeological works at the site of the dismantled monument to the Ukrainian Insurgent Army in Hruszowice in order to verify Ukrainian claims that remains of members of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army had been found there. The Ukrainian experts were invited as observers, including Svyatoslav Sheremeta, the secretary of the Ukrainian State Commission for the Commemoration of Victims of War and Political Repression, whose ban on entering Poland was revoked for this occasion. After the research was completed, the IPN management stated that there was no scientific basis for the claim that the site contained individual or mass graves of members of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army.¹⁶ However, the dispute could not be resolved because the Ukrainian side, led by Sheremeta, stated that the remains of at least three members of this formation were there, and then again demanded that the monument be rebuilt.

¹³ In November 2017, Svyatoslav Sheremeta, the Secretary of the Ukrainian State Commission for the Commemoration of Victims of War and Political Repression, co-responsible for issuing the exhumation ban, was denied entry to Poland.

¹⁴ "MKiDN: Wicepremier Gliński zaniepokojony wypowiedziami wicepremiera Ukrainy," *Dzieje*, 28 February 2018, www.dzieje.pl.

¹⁵ "Prezes IPN: Wznowienie współpracy z Ukrainą wymaga spełnienia kilku warunków," IPN, 12 April 2018, www.ipn.gov.pl.

¹⁶ "Jednoznaczne wyniki badań IPN: w miejscu prac archeologicznych na cmentarzu w Hruszowicach nie ma szczątków członków UPA," IPN, 12 June 2018, www.ipn.gov.pl.

The next stage of the dispute confirmed the Polish authorities' belief that settlement of the historical issues would only be possible after there was a change of president of Ukraine. It was believed that there was a lack of political will on his part that made agreement impossible. Until then, it was decided to limit the frequency of contacts at the highest level with the then Ukrainian authorities. By the end of the year, there had been no visits by presidents, prime ministers, or heads of parliament. Presidents Duda and Poroshenko met only on the occasion of multilateral events, such as the NATO summit in Brussels in July and the UN General Assembly meeting in New York in September. There was no joint celebration of the 75th anniversary of the Volhynia massacre. The Polish side rejected the Ukrainian proposal for a joint declaration on reconciliation, considering it as a manifestation of relativisation of the events in Volhynia. Eventually, the Polish authorities organised independent celebrations—President Duda visited Luts'k on 8 July where he participated in the celebrations on the anniversary of “Bloody Sunday”. On the same day, the Ukrainian president went to Sahryń (Lublin voivodeship) where he unveiled a monument devoted to the memory of Ukrainians killed in 1944 by units of the Bataliony Chłopskie (Peasant Battalions) and Armia Krajowa (Home Army).

The contacts were maintained mainly at the level of foreign ministers. In September, on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly meeting in New York, the ministers Czaputowicz and Klimkin discussed bilateral cooperation. In late October, Minister Klimkin made a working visit to Warsaw where he met with Minister Czaputowicz and the Head of the National Security Bureau Paweł Soloch. Minister Czaputowicz visited Kyiv between 30 November and 1 December and discussed bilateral relations with President Poroshenko, Prime Minister Hroysman, and Minister Klimkin. During the visit, the foreign ministers inaugurated a plenary session of the Polish-Ukrainian Partnership Forum. Furthermore, Minister Czaputowicz honoured the Ukrainian director Oleh Sentsov, a Crimean-born filmmaker imprisoned by Russia for political reasons, with the Polish Foreign Ministry's Pro Dignitate Humana award.

At the same time, the Polish authorities initiated a dialogue on the prospects of settling the Polish-Ukrainian historical dispute with the advisors of former Ukrainian Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko, who was leading in the polls at the time and considered by the Polish authorities to be a frontrunner in the presidential election. The conference “Ukraine: 4 Years after the Maidan”, organised by the Centre for European Policy Analysis (CEPA) in Warsaw in October, in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, was to serve this purpose. Representatives of the most important Ukrainian political

circles and leading Ukrainian experts specialising in bilateral relations were invited to attend.

Regardless of the tensions related to the dispute over historical issues, Poland continued cooperation with Ukraine in the area of security. On 7 March, Kurt Volker, U.S. Special Representative for Ukraine, visited Poland to conduct bilateral negotiations with Russia on the settlement of the situation in Donbas. The discussions with Foreign Minister Czaputowicz, Deputy Minister Bartosz Cichocki, and Head of the President's Office Krzysztof Szczerski concerned prospects for resolving the conflict. Three weeks later, on 26 March, Cichocki met in Kyiv with Ukrainian Deputy Foreign Ministers Vasyl Bodnar and Olena Zerkal. The situation in occupied Crimea and Donbas was discussed, as well as the scope of Polish support for Ukraine in the forums of international organisations. Meanwhile, the National Security Bureau head Soloch paid a visit to Kyiv in early October. Furthermore, following the Russian attack on Ukrainian vessels in the Kerch Strait region in late November 2018, telephone conversations between Presidents Duda and Poroshenko and Soloch, along with Secretary of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine Oleksandr Turchynov, were held.

At the same time, the Polish government tried to keep the issue of Russian aggression against Ukraine on the agenda of the most important international organisations. As part of its presidency of the UN Security Council, on 29 May Poland organised a briefing on the situation in Ukraine, putting forward a proposal to appoint a special UN envoy on Ukraine¹⁷; the idea, however, was not supported by other members of the Council. Poland was also the co-organisier of the Security Council briefing on the situation in Ukraine (30 October) concerning the illegal elections in occupied Donbas. On the Polish initiative, the situation in Ukraine was discussed at a meeting of the EU Foreign Affairs Council (19 November). On that occasion, Poland called for personal sanctions to be imposed on those responsible for the organisation of the election (less than a month later, they were included in the sanctions list). After the Russian attack on Ukrainian vessels, the Polish government lobbied for the extension of EU economic sanctions against Russia. Due to a lack of consensus on the issue among the Member States, only personal sanctions were imposed on those responsible for the incident.

Poland was among the group of countries that most strongly condemned the Russian aggression against Ukraine. On the occasion of the fourth anniversary of the illegal annexation of Crimea, Minister Czaputowicz, together with the heads of diplomacy of Denmark, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Sweden, and Ukraine, wrote an article that was published on the website of the EU

¹⁷ "Minister Jacek Czaputowicz poprowadził briefing Rady Bezpieczeństwa ONZ ws. Ukrainy," MSZ, 30 May 2018, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja.

Observer, indicating that this issue would not disappear from the attention of the international community.¹⁸ Poland then issued a special statement condemning Russia's construction of the bridge across the Kerch Strait, linking the annexed Crimea with Rostov Oblast. It pointed out that the construction was a violation of international law, done without the consent of the Ukrainian side and against the position of the UN General Assembly.¹⁹ Following an initiative by the U.S. State Department, the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a declaration in July on non-recognition of the annexation of Crimea.²⁰ In October, ahead of the UN Security Council briefing on Ukraine, the eight EU countries that served for three consecutive terms in the Security Council (2017–2020)—Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Sweden, the UK—issued a joint statement of full support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.²¹

Due to the dispute over historical issues, the contacts between Polish and Ukrainian parliamentarians were less intensive and held at a lower level than in the previous year. In March, a meeting was held in Lviv between Deputy Speaker of the Sejm Ryszard Terlecki and Deputy Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada Oksana Syroyid. The discussions concerned bilateral relations, including amendments to the IPN law. A few days later, Terlecki and Deputy Speaker of the Senate Maria Koc travelled to Kyiv where they attended the Interparliamentary Conference "Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine". The 10th meeting of the Polish-Ukrainian Parliamentary Assembly, chaired by Deputy Speaker Terlecki and Deputy Chair Syroyid, was held in Warsaw on 12–13 June. A delegation of Polish parliamentarians then visited Kyiv (5–6 November) where they met with Deputy Foreign Minister Vasyl Bodnar, deputies of the Verkhovna Rada, and the deputy head of the Presidential Administration for foreign policy, Kostyantyn Yeliseyev. On 13 November, another session of the Poland-Lithuania-Ukraine Parliamentary Assembly was held in Vilnius. In late November, Deputy Speaker Terlecki paid another visit to Kyiv on the occasion of the commemoration of the 85th anniversary of the Great Famine, discussing bilateral relations with, among others, Oksana Syroyid and Kostyantyn Yeliseyev.

It is noteworthy that the Polish Sejm on 15 June, by an overwhelming majority of 410 votes, adopted a resolution on the release of Ukrainian citizens detained

¹⁸ "Four years on—but we will not forget illegally-occupied Crimea," *EU Observer*, 16 March 2018, www.euobserver.com.

¹⁹ "Oświadczenie MSZ w związku z otwarciem mostu na Krym," MSZ, 16 May 2018, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja.

²⁰ "Deklaracja w sprawie nieuznania aneksji Krymu," MSZ, 25 July 2018, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja.

²¹ "EU8 Members Joint Statement on Ukraine," Government Offices of Sweden, 30 October 2018, www.government.se.

for political reasons in Russian prisons.²² The vote showed a consensus among all parties present in parliament to condemn Russia's aggressive policy in the region.

It is also noteworthy that on 4 December 2018, by the decision of President Duda, the Polish ambassador to Ukraine, Jan Piekło, who had held this position since October 2016, was dismissed.

Military Cooperation

Military cooperation again played an important role in the policy towards Ukraine. In early June, in Brussels, on the sidelines of the North Atlantic Council session, the defence minister of Poland and Ukraine, Błaszczak and Poltorak, met, as well as the members of the advisory group for reform of the defence sector in Ukraine, consisting of, apart from the Ukrainian side, the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Poland, and Lithuania. In late June, Deputy Minister of Defence Szatkowski visited Kyiv to discuss with Deputy Minister of Defence of Ukraine Petrenko the prospects for Polish-Ukrainian cooperation in the defence sphere and the security situation in the region. Both ministries also signed a cooperation plan.

Poland continued training support for the Ukrainian Armed Forces within the framework of the trilateral Lithuanian-Polish-Ukrainian brigade LITPOLUKRBRIG and the International Joint Training Group-Ukraine (at the training ground in Yavoriv near Lviv). Ukrainian military units participated in international exercises on Polish territory, for example, in the CWIX interoperability exercises in Bydgoszcz. The Polish instructors also trained units of the Military Order Service (Ukrainian military police) both on the territory of Poland and within the courses organised in Ukraine. Furthermore, dozens more Ukrainian soldiers (more than 200 in total since 2014) who had been injured during military operations in Donbas underwent rehabilitation in Poland.

Cooperation between the defence industries further intensified in 2018. In October, during an economic mission to Ukraine organised by the Polish Space Agency, the Polish Armament Group signed an agreement with the Ukrainian company Kiev Radio Plant on the development of rocket control actuator technology. Poland intends to use the experience of Ukrainian companies for the development and production of its own control actuator systems.

Economic Relations

²² "Resolution of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland of 15 June 2018 on the release of the Ukrainian citizens held in Russian prisons for political reasons."

The year 2018 saw the continuation of a positive trend in trade exchange. Thanks to the highest economic growth in Ukraine in almost a decade and further strengthening of the country's integration with the EU within the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) initiated in early 2016, bilateral trade exchange reached a record level of PLN 30 billion, an increase of more than 8% compared to the previous year. Polish exports to Ukraine increased by almost 4.5% and reached the highest level in history at PLN 19 billion. Nevertheless, only 2% of Polish exports reached the Ukrainian market and as a result, Ukraine fell from 14th to 15th on the list of recipients of Polish goods. In the structure of Polish export value, the dominant products were machines and mechanical devices, products of the chemical industry, plastics, vehicles, and base metals. Imports of Ukrainian goods to Poland grew much faster and their total value amounted to a record PLN 11 billion, which was an increase of almost 16% in comparison with the previous year. As a result, Poland became the second most important export market for Ukrainian businesses after Russia. The imports from Ukraine included mainly base metals, mineral products, wood, and wooden articles.

Table 1.

Poland-Ukraine Trade Exchange (in billions, PLN)

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Total	25.0	20.1	19.0	23.7	27.7	30.0
Export	18.0	13.1	12.4	15.1	18.2	19.0
Import	7.0	7.0	6.6	8.6	9.5	11.0
Balance	11.0	6.1	5.8	6.5	8.7	8.0

Source: Central Statistical Office (data do not include trade in services; value of imported goods by country of dispatch).

Simultaneously, the involvement of Polish businesses in the Ukrainian market increased. According to the State Statistics Service of Ukraine, the value of Polish direct investments in Ukraine at the end of 2018 amounted to \$593.9 million, just over \$20 million more than at the beginning of the year. However, it still accounted for less than 2.5% of total foreign direct investments in Ukraine.²³

²³ Data do not include areas outside the control of the government in Kyiv, i.e., the Crimean Peninsula annexed by Russia with the city of Sevastopol and the territories occupied by irregular Russian armed units in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

Due to a change in the methodology used by the Ukrainian side, the data on the value of Polish investments in Ukraine in 2018 differed significantly from the information contained in previous editions of the *Yearbook of Polish Foreign Policy*, which makes comparison impossible. Therefore, the table below presents data on the value of Polish direct investments in this country in 2014–2018, obtained using the new methodology.

Table 2.

Value of Polish Foreign Direct Investments in Ukraine (millions, USD)

I 2014	I 2015	I 2016	I 2017	I 2018	XII 2018
819.8	708	679.4	509.1	571.3	593.9

Source: State Statistics Service of Ukraine (Data do not include the areas outside the control of the government in Kyiv, i.e., the Crimean Peninsula, annexed by Russia, with the city of Sevastopol, and the territories occupied by irregular Russian armed units in the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts).

The development of Polish-Ukrainian economic relations was discussed on 14 May 2018 on the occasion of the European Economic Congress in Katowice by Minister of Investment and Development Jerzy Kwieciński and the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Economic Development and Trade of Ukraine Stepan Kubiv. The meeting was mainly devoted to the works on the Carpathian Strategy, an EU macro-regional plan, the adoption of which the Ukrainian side is also interested in. On 23 June, on the occasion of the Regional Development Forum in Truskavets, Minister Kwieciński had a conversation with Deputy Prime Minister of Ukraine for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration Ivanna Klymush-Tsyntsadze. The work on the Carpathian Strategy were discussed again, as was energy cooperation, including joint opposition to the construction of the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline. At the beginning of September, during the Economic Forum in Krynica, the representatives of Poland, Ukraine, Slovakia, and Hungary signed a declaration of cooperation on developing the Carpathian Strategy. This made it possible to start work on a development plan for the region at the EU forum.

Meanwhile, bilateral discussions continued on the Polish-Ukrainian loan agreement signed in 2015. At that time, Poland provided Ukraine with support in the amount of €100 million for the development of border infrastructure. However, by the end of 2018, it was not possible to start implementing projects financed under this agreement mainly due to the lack of necessary legal changes in Ukraine.

Cooperation under the cross-border programme “Poland-Belarus-Ukraine” was more successful. In 2018, the second call for applications was held, with more than 250 entities submitting offers.

Poland continued to provide technical and financial support for Ukrainian reforms. Within the EU U-LEAD project on decentralisation in Ukraine. Poland was involved in the establishment of a network of volunteer fire brigades, for example. Between 12 and 17 November, a delegation of Ukrainian officials representing central and local government authorities visited Poland. The visit focused on the development and implementation of smart specialisations. In December in Kyiv, on the initiative of the Polish Investment and Trade Agency, the Polish-Ukrainian start-up competition Kyiv Tech Hub 2018 was held, thanks to which the Ukrainian authors of innovative projects could obtain funding. Ukraine was one of the priority countries within the Polish development aid in 2018. The amount of the Polish support amounted to more than €56.5 million—the highest among all Eastern Partnership countries.

Energy was an important area of economic cooperation. At the beginning of March, when Gazprom refused to start exporting raw material to the Ukrainian concern following the ruling of the Arbitration Court in Stockholm, PGNiG and Naftohaz signed a short-term contract for urgent gas supplies from Poland to Ukraine.²⁴ In September, PGNiG and the Ukrainian gas transmission operator Ukrtransgaz prolonged an agreement made a year earlier for PGNiG to use underground gas storage facilities in Ukraine, which enabled the Polish company to trade directly on the Ukrainian market.²⁵ A month later, PGNiG and the Ukrainian company Energy Resources of Ukraine concluded an agreement for the supply of gas from Poland to Ukraine.²⁶

Cooperation was also established in the space sector. On 8–12 October, the Polish Space Agency organised an economic mission of the Polish space sector to Ukraine, which included representatives of Polish industrial and scientific entities. A meeting with Deputy Minister of Economic Development and Trade of Ukraine Mykhailo Titarchuk, and discussions with representatives of the Ukrainian space sector were then held.²⁷ As a result, the national space agencies of both countries concluded an agreement to establish permanent cooperation,

²⁴ “PGNiG: pilne dostawy surowca dla Naftogazu,” PGNiG, 2 March 2018, www.pgnig.pl.

²⁵ “PGNiG przedłuża współpracę z Ukrtransgazem,” PGNiG, 11 September 2018, www.pgnig.pl.

²⁶ “Kolejny wspólny sukces PGNiG i ERU na Ukrainie,” PGNiG, 3 October 2018, www.pgnig.pl.

²⁷ “Polska misja gospodarcza na Ukrainę pod auspicjami PAK,” PAK, 15 October 2018, www.polsa.gov.pl.

including the exchange of information and experience, implementation of joint scientific and technical projects, and conducting training programmes.²⁸

Social and Cultural Relations

People-to-people contacts were an important element of Polish-Ukrainian relations this year. Despite the inclusion of Ukraine in the visa-free regime by the EU in mid-2017, Polish consular posts issued almost 900,000 visas to Ukrainian citizens in 2018 (a decrease of about 25% compared to the previous year),²⁹ the majority for the purpose of employment. Ukrainians were the most numerous group among foreign workers on the Polish market. In 2018, almost 1.45 million declarations of intent to entrust work in Poland were issued to citizens of Ukraine. This represented a decrease of about 270,000, resulting mainly from new regulations that were intended to limit the practice of issuing false declarations.³⁰ At the same time, however, more than 100,000 permits for seasonal work were issued to Ukrainian citizens—this was a new type of document introduced in 2018. Ukrainians employed in Poland transferred about \$3.6 billion to Ukraine in 2018, which accounted for more than a third of all foreign remittances at that time.³¹ The Ukrainians were again the most numerous group of foreign students at Polish universities. In the academic year 2017/2018, there were more than 38,000 of them, which was about 52% of the total number of foreign students.³² The intense scale of interpersonal contacts was accompanied by a slight increase in Poles' fondness for Ukrainians. The February 2019 CBOS poll showed that 31% of Poles declared fondness towards Ukrainians, while 41% expressed a dislike.³³ A year earlier, only 24% of Poles declared fondness, while 40% disliked them.³⁴ Presumably, this change was due to the softening of rhetoric on historical issues by representatives of both countries.

Poland and Ukraine continued active cultural cooperation in 2018. Thanks to financial support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, the Crimean Tatar Cultural Centre was opened in Drohobych and a series of films on the historical heritage of the Republic of Two Nations was filmed. Other

²⁸ "Z Ukraïncami w kosmos," *Rzeczpospolita*, 15 October 2018, www.rp.pl.

²⁹ "Ukraïnców wciąż przybywa," *Puls Biznesu*, 14 January 2019, www.pb.pl.

³⁰ "Trudniej o pracowników zza wschodniej granicy," *Rzeczpospolita*, 6 February 2019, www.rp.pl.

³¹ "Ukraïncy przyjeżdżają do Polski pracować i wysyłają pieniądze za Bug. Wiemy ile," *Puls HR*, 8 April 2019, www.pulshr.pl.

³² "Studenci zagraniczni w Polsce 2018," *Study in Poland*, www.studyinpoland.pl

³³ *Research Report*, no. 17/2019, CBOS, www.cbos.pl.

³⁴ "Attitudes towards other nations," *Research Report*, no. 37/2018, CBOS, www.cbos.pl.

editions included the Polish Theatre Spring in Lviv and the Polish Film Festival "Under the High Castle", held in Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, and Uzhhorod. In May, a celebration of the 250th anniversary of the Bar Confederation was organised in the city of Bar.

An important area of bilateral cooperation was once again Polish support for the protection of cultural heritage sites in Ukraine. The Ministry of Culture and National Heritage of the Republic of Poland co-financed, among others, restoration work at the Archcathedral Basilica of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Lviv and the Armenian Cathedral, conservation work at Lychakiv Cemetery in Lviv, and the renovation of the astronomical and meteorological observatory at the summit of Pop Ivan in the Ukrainian Carpathians.

Despite the suspension of work of the Polish-Ukrainian Historians Forum following the decision of the IPN law, the cooperation between historical circles remained dynamic. In March in Warsaw, IPN concluded an agreement with the State Regional Archives in Odessa, Vinnytsia and Khmelnytsky to make documents concerning NKVD crimes against Poles in the years 1937–1938 available to Polish archivists. In May in Kyiv, a promotion was held of the Polish-Ukrainian publication *Organizacja Ukraińskich Nacjonalistów w Polsce w latach 1944–1950. Likwidacja struktur kierowniczych*, which was developed in cooperation with Ukrainian partners. In October, scientific conferences devoted to the 360th anniversary of the Treaty of Hadyach were organised in Kyiv and Hadyach. In November, an international conference "Poland-Ukraine: For our freedom and yours! On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of regaining independence of both nations and the 98th anniversary of the Warsaw Agreement", dedicated to the Piłsudski-Petlura alliance.

Assessment

Compared to the previous year, the dichotomy between the tensions in bilateral relations and the Polish support in the international arena for Ukraine in the fight against Russian aggression became even more apparent in the policy towards Ukraine. Bilateral relations were again dominated by the dispute over historical issues, which remained unresolved.³⁵ The Polish efforts to make Ukraine lift the moratorium on the search for and exhumation of the remains of Polish victims of wars and conflicts on its territory have failed. This prevented a change of unfriendly climate in bilateral relations, and consequently the joint celebrations of the 100th anniversary of the independence of both countries as well as the 75th

³⁵ For more, see: D. Szeligowski, "Poland's policy towards Ukraine," *Yearbook of Polish Foreign Policy 2017*, PISM, Warsaw, 2020.

anniversary of the Volhynia massacre. Instead of giving relations a new quality, the Polish authorities became tired of contacts with Ukraine and waited for a new Ukrainian president; however, the Polish side's expectation that former Prime Minister Tymoshenko would win the election proved to be wrong. Both sides, however, softened their rhetoric on historical issues, which translated into a more positive perception of Ukrainians by Poles.

Regardless of the current state of bilateral relations, the Polish authorities continued to work to enhance Ukraine's stability and security in the face of Russian aggression, taking advantage of, among other things, its EU membership and non-permanent seat in the UN Security Council. Poland continued to provide training assistance to the Ukrainian armed forces. It successfully campaigned to keep the issue of the annexation of Crimea and the war in Donbas on the agenda of the most important international organisations. It was also one of the strongest supporters of the EU's stricter stance towards Russia, seeking the extension of economic sanctions against the country in connection with the attack on Ukrainian vessels near the Kerch Strait. Eventually, it could not succeed due to the sceptical stance of some Member States, mainly Germany and France, who were in favour of improving relations with Russia despite its continued aggressive policy in the region. The Polish efforts to appoint a UN special envoy for Ukraine were also unsuccessful, as the proposal did not gain the favour of all UN Security Council members. An important element of Polish support for Ukraine was the continuation of defence cooperation, including between the defence industries of both countries, which became one of Poland's foreign policy priorities.

Poland's Policy Towards Lithuania in 2017–2018

KINGA RAŚ

Background

A key determinant of the Poland's policy towards Lithuania in 2017–2018 and one that fostered closer cooperation was a shared sense of threat mainly resulting from Russia's aggressive policy. This coherent outlook translated into an identical attitude towards the actions of NATO and the U.S., for both countries the main partners in the context of security. The joint actions of Poland and Lithuania also resulted from Russia's efforts to strengthen its position in Europe as a gas exporter, primarily through the construction of the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline. This increasingly mobilised both countries to prioritise the energy sector, not only to counteract the construction of the German-Russian gas pipeline on the EU forum, but also to reduce Russian influence in the region. In particular, Russia continued reinforcement of the Kaliningrad Oblast in the military dimension and strengthened its position in neighbouring states, e.g. by building a nuclear power plant in Belarus. The concerns of Poland and Lithuania regarding Russia's policy were also based on conclusion that some of its steps were reaction to the unfavourable efforts of the Baltic states to synchronise their power systems¹ with the continental Europe as soon as possible (using the already existing Polish-Lithuanian LitPol Link).

Poland's policy towards Lithuania in 2017–2018 was determined by its immediate neighbourhood, whereas the factor determining Polish conduct was the impact of strong historical ties. The situation of the Polish minority in Lithuania, autochthonous residents of the country with Polish roots, still played an important role. Due to the lack of mutually satisfactory solutions, the diplomatic relations were still affected by the contentious issues. Lithuania, despite earlier declarations of changes in the controversial regulations for the Polish side (concerning, e.g. the spelling of surnames or education, including the reorganisation of schools

¹ Synchronisation of the Baltic States—the process of integrating the electricity networks of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia into the European networks system. So far, they had operated within the IPS/UPS system - within BRELL, managed by Russia; see: K. Raś, "Power Grid Upgrade: Baltic States Seek Security, Reduced Dependence on Russia," *PISM Bulletin*, no. 56 (1996), 9 June 2017, www.pism.pl.

also with the Polish language of instruction, and the reform changing the rules of conducting school-leaving examinations in the Lithuanian language, among other things), for years had not undertaken the actions expected both by the Polish minority and the Polish authorities². However, in view of the priority of regional circumstances for both countries, the bilateral disputes did not play a primary role.

Geographic proximity translated into similarity of interests in the region motivating Poland to strengthen sectoral cooperation and more effective implementation of priority projects, especially in the area of energy and infrastructure. Some of these projects were part of a broader dimension of Poland's foreign policy implemented within the Three Seas Initiative, among others, with the participation of Lithuania and other Baltic states.

The common membership of the European Union (EU) and a number of legal and institutional processes taking place within EU were also important factors influencing Poland's actions towards Lithuania. The EU continued to face a refugee and migration crisis and prolonged Brexit negotiations coinciding with a heated discussion on the shape of the future EU budget. To Poland and Lithuania, the exit of the United Kingdom from the EU could not only bring the risk of reduced EU funding, but also the loss of an important partner with a similarly liberal approach towards economy or the Eastern and EU policymaking.

Poland's relations with Lithuania were also determined by domestic politics. During the analysed period, Poland was ruled by the Law and Justice Party (PiS) with the support of Porozumienie and Solidarna Polska. Beata Szydło was a prime minister until December 2017, followed by Mateusz Morawiecki. Minister of Foreign Affairs, Witold Waszczykowski was then replaced by Jacek Czaputowicz. In Lithuania, the Prime Minister Saulius Skvernelis took office in December 2016 leading a coalition cabinet of the Lithuanian Farmers and Greens Union and the Lithuanian Social Democratic Party. Linas Linkevičius, representing the Social Democrats, remained the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The new configuration of political forces in Lithuania - the government was formed by centrist and populist groups - was perceived by the Polish authorities as an opportunity to improve relations³. Furthermore, the prospects for improving relations were fostered by favourable circumstances - the opportunity to cooperate during the celebrations of the 100th anniversary of the independence of both countries.

² K. Raś, "Poland's policy towards the Baltic States 2011–2015," *Yearbook of the Polish Foreign Policy 2011–2015*, PISM, 2019.

³ *Ibidem*.

Goals and assumptions

In 2017–2018, the security issues were of fundamental importance in the Poland's policy towards Lithuania, in particular, the continuation of efforts to strengthen NATO's Eastern Flank in accordance with the decisions of the Alliance's summits in Newport (2014) and Warsaw (2016). The Polish Foreign Policy Strategy 2017–2021 comprehensively defines related tasks, also at the EU and regional level, including cooperation with Lithuania⁴.

On the EU forum, the objectives of the Polish policy towards Lithuania included closer cooperation in the EU Eastern policy (under the European Neighbourhood Policy, including the Eastern Partnership), EU-NATO cooperation, crisis response and energy security. Poland also sought Lithuania's support during the negotiations on the exit of the United Kingdom from the EU, the shape of the multiannual EU budget (Multiannual Financial Framework) and the future of the reforms as a result of the migration crisis determining the changes in the EU asylum policy and influencing the prospects for deeper integration. Furthermore, Poland relied on Lithuania's support in its dispute with the European Commission (EC) on the violation of the rule of law and Article 7 of the TEU.

These assumptions were confirmed by both ministers in the information on Poland's foreign policy priorities presented annually. Minister Waszczykowski in 2017 pointed out, among other things, that an important goal is the implementation of the Three Seas Initiative, which is to act for the development of the Central Europe⁵, by, as Minister Czaputowicz subsequently emphasised, implementing infrastructure projects⁶ and increasing the competitiveness of the region⁷.

The Polish government consistently declared its support for the Poles abroad, including in Lithuania. Minister Waszczykowski announced that the Polish authorities would continue to “pursue respect for the rights entitled [...] to Polish minorities in the East”. The teaching of Polish language and knowledge of Poland, as well as supporting Polish education abroad, were also the objectives. The minister promised to develop new initiatives to strengthen cooperation and

⁴ *Ibidem*, s. 7.

⁵ “Government information on Polish foreign policy in 2017 (presented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland Witold Waszczykowski at a sitting of the Sejm on 9 February 2017),” MSZ, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja.

⁶ “Government information on Polish foreign policy in 2018 (presented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland Jacek Czaputowicz at a sitting of the Sejm on 21 March 2018),” see p. 11 in this volume.

⁷ “The Three Seas Initiative Summit. The key information,” *Prezydent.pl*, 7 July 2017, www.prezydent.pl.

dialogue. Minister Czaputowicz also addressed this issue, indicating that “the issues of the rights of the Polish minority in Lithuania are a constant concern for the government and [...] will be the subject of joint work of both our governments”⁸.

Political relations

In 2017–2018, there was an apparent intensification of political relations between Poland and Lithuania. Due to the priority given to broadly defined security, Poland in cooperation with Lithuania worked to strengthen NATO’s eastern flank, through the development of relations with the U.S., as well as engagement at the EU forum, among other things. Cooperation in the energy sector was also increasingly important from this point of view.

These issues were raised with increased intensity at the multilateral level and then bilaterally. Hence, the meetings of the European Council and NATO summits played an important role. Discussions, in the so-called three Baltic states and Poland’s format, as well as within the Baltic Sea cooperation, were also held. The platform of the enhanced Visegrad Group, i.e. the so-called V4+ formula, was also developed with the participation of Lithuania and the other Baltic states⁹. In May 2017, Beata Szydło paid an official visit to Tallinn for a meeting with the prime ministers of the three Baltic states. The main topic of discussion was regional security, including energy security in view of the development of an action plan for the synchronisation of these three countries. Discussions in this group were held again on 5 September 2017 in Warsaw. The Prime Minister Skvernelis also met with Jarosław Kaczyński, the Chairman of the Law and Justice party. The politicians’ conversation concerned, among other things, the Polish minority in Lithuania whose problems had not been resolved over the years¹⁰.

Bilateral dialogue was gradually intensified, especially in 2018. Already on 20 January 2017, Warsaw was visited by the minister of foreign affairs of the newly sworn-in Lithuanian government. At the press conference, the Polish MFA confirmed the existence of a broad catalogue of common interests (security, energy, infrastructure, eastern policy)¹¹. At that time, it was important for Poland to receive support from Lithuania at the EU forum, which was manifested by communiqué of the Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, among other things, informing that

⁸ “Government information on Polish foreign policy in 2018...,” *op. cit.*

⁹ “Szefowie MSZ państw V4, państw nordyckich i bałtyckich m.in. o bezpieczeństwie w regionie,” PAP, 30 May 2017, www.pap.pl.

¹⁰ Skvernelis stressed that Lithuania has the largest network of Polish schools outside the borders of the Republic of Poland to provide education in Polish from kindergarten to higher education.

¹¹ “W piątek w Warszawie spotkanie szefów MSZ Polski i Litwy,” MSZ, 19 January 2017, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja.

Lithuania opposes the EC's pressure on Poland¹². Furthermore, in November 2017, Lithuanian MPs adopted a declaration expressing support and solidarity with Poland regarding the allegations arising in Poland's dispute with the EC¹³.

In September 2017, in Krynica, Lithuanian Prime Minister, Skvernelis met with the head of the Polish government Beata Szydło, followed by delegations from the other Baltic states. They discussed current European issues¹⁴. In the following year the Lithuanian Prime Minister was awarded the Man of the Year Award¹⁵.

One of the many visits confirming the improvement of relations between Poland and Lithuania was President Andrzej Duda's official trip to Vilnius in February 2018. The presidential couple participated in the celebrations of the 100th anniversary of the reconstruction of the Lithuanian state. A significant point of the official programme was a meeting with local Poles, during which the President handed out awards to individuals for their merit in activities for the Polish minority¹⁶. Duda assured that "Polish-Lithuanian relations at the political level are currently going in the right direction" and expressed hope that they would translate into improvement of the situation of Poles in Lithuania. On the other hand, his counterpart Dalia Grybauskaitė expressed her belief that political friendliness would allow to solve all minority issues¹⁷.

Also important was Prime Minister Morawiecki's visit to Vilnius less than a month later, in early March 2018, as part of a multilateral meeting between the Polish delegation and representatives of the Baltic states at the EU¹⁸. This was followed by Minister Czaputowicz's first visit to Vilnius on 13 September 2018,

¹² M. Potocki, "Szef MSZ Litwy: Jestem przeciwny naciskom na Polskę w sprawie praworządności [INTERVIEW]," *Dziennik Gazeta Prawna*, 25 October 2018, www.gazetaprawna.pl.

¹³ "Sejm Litwy solidaryzuje się z Polską," *Kurier Wileński*, 17 November 2017, <https://kurierwilenski.lt>.

¹⁴ "Skvernelis w Warszawie: spotkanie z Beatą Szydło i Jarosławem Kaczyńskim," *Kurier Wileński*, 5 September 2017, <https://kurierwilenski.lt>. After the meeting, the head of the Lithuanian government said that there are new opportunities for the development of economic relations between Lithuania and Poland. He said that it is possible that one of the Polish store chains will invest in Lithuania. However, the Prime Minister did not say which chain of stores he meant.

¹⁵ "Saulius Skvernelis Człowiekiem Roku XXVIII Forum Ekonomicznego w Krynicy," Forum Ekonomiczne, 5 September 2018, www.forum-ekonomiczne.pl.

¹⁶ "Prezydent: Dziękuję za polskość," *Prezydent.pl*, 15 February 2018, www.prezydent.pl.

¹⁷ "Prezydent Duda w Wilnie: Jestem przekonany, że ta dzisiejsza wizyta zbliża nas do realizacji dobrosąsiedzkich relacji," *W Polityce*, 17 February 2018, www.wpolityce.pl.

¹⁸ "Premier Mateusz Morawiecki: To spotkanie pokazało jak bardzo podobnie myślimy w wielu zasadniczych sprawach," Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Vilnius, 12 March 2018, www.gov.pl/web/litwa/ambasada.

where he attended, among other things, the grand opening of the new seat of the Polish Embassy and the Polish Institute in the Pac's family Palace¹⁹.

In November 2018, the Defence Minister, Mariusz Błaszczak signed a declaration on Poland's accession to the Cyber Rapid Response Teams programme implemented within the PESCO, of which Lithuania was the framework state²⁰. The declaration not only confirmed the strengthening of bilateral cooperation, but also emphasised the common perspective of security cooperation in the EU.

Furthermore, the parliamentary cooperation was intensified in 2017–2018. In autumn 2017, Lithuania was visited by the Speaker of the Sejm Marek Kuchciński²¹, who participated in the celebrations of the 630th anniversary of the Baptism of Lithuania and delivered a speech at the Lithuanian Parliament. On the other hand, the President of Seimas Viktoras Pranckietis visited Warsaw in March 2018. The focal point of his visit was a speech in the Plenary Hall of the Sejm²². Then, the Deputy Speaker of the Sejm Beata Mazurek participated in the joint celebrations of the 227th anniversary of the adoption of the May 3rd Constitution in Vilnius. The resumption of the Polish-Lithuanian Parliamentary Assembly did not take place at that time, however, a Polish-Lithuanian-Ukrainian trilateral meeting was held (the IX session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Sejm and the Senate of the Republic of Poland, the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania and the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine began in Vilnius on 12 November 2018)²³.

Situation of the Polish minority in Lithuania

Poland and Lithuania continued their dialogue on the situation of the Polish minority in Lithuania involving not only the Ministry of Foreign Affairs but also the Ministry of National Education. The intensification of bilateral relations fostered the effectiveness of the dialogue. The topic of Poles in Lithuania appeared

¹⁹ "MSZ: Minister Jacek Czaputowicz z wizytą w Wilnie (komunikat)," Centrum Prasowe PAP, 12 September 2018, <http://centrumprasowe.pap.pl>.

²⁰ "Bezpieczeństwo na flance wschodniej wspólnym celem Polski i Litwy," MON, 24 November 2018, www.gov.pl/web/obrona-narodowa.

²¹ "630. rocznica chrztu Litwy. Uroczystości w Wilnie z udziałem Marszałka Sejmu – relacja," Kancelaria Sejmu, 23 September 2017, www.sejm.gov.pl.

²² "Otwieramy nową kartę w historii Litwy i Polski. Przewodniczący Seimasu z wizytą w Sejmie – relacja," Kancelaria Sejmu, 1 March 2018, www.sejm.gov.pl.

²³ "IX sesja trójstronnego Zgromadzenia Parlamentarnego Polska–Litwa–Ukraina w Wilnie," Kancelaria Senatu, 12 November 2018, www.senat.gov.pl. The plenary sessions of the Assembly are held once a year, in each country in turn. In 2017. The Assembly convened in the Polish Senate. The Presidium of the Assembly meets twice a year. The Assembly comprises three committees: for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine, for Trade and Economic Development, Regional and Local Cooperation, for Social and Cultural Cooperation.

on almost every occasion. During his visit to Vilnius (February 2018), President Duda stressed his belief by saying that “slowly, step by step, it will be possible to discuss all these issues within the joint Polish-Lithuanian commission²⁴, as well as within the relations between the presidents”²⁵. Representatives of the Ministry of National Education held dialogue with representatives of the Lithuanian Ministry about improving the conditions for the functioning of the Polish education system in Lithuania, i.e. the possibility of teaching individual subjects in the mother tongue. However, the Lithuanian government has not taken any specific decisions on this matter. The key issue was, among other things, no legislation on the protection of minorities, which limited an efficient action for the improvement of the situation regarding Lithuanian Poles.

At the same time, the Polish authorities committed to direct assistance to the Poles, both in organisational and financial terms, e.g. to maintain and develop knowledge of the Polish language. As of May 2018, the transmission of five TVP channels in the Vilnius Region was activated, which was to contribute to strengthening the Polish identity, but also to reduce the impact of Russian disinformation (there, the access to Russian-language media was common). Furthermore, the plans of launching an independent TVP Wilno studio were also made.

The Minister of National Education Anna Zalewska and the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Andrzej Papierz²⁶, officially handed out school sets to students of Polish schools in Lithuania during a two-day visit to Vilnius, which started on 31 August 2018. The school sets funded by the Foundation “Pomoc Polakom na Wschodzie” as part of the “Bon Pierwszaka” campaign and by the Polish Senate, were given to 982 students. Discussions with the Minister of Education and Science of Lithuania Jurgita Petrauskienė were also held, concerning Lithuanian and Polish language exams, the problem with textbooks as well as difficulties in the training of teachers²⁷. Zalewska said that an agreement had been reached on the development of appropriate solutions by experts from Poland and Lithuania to the problems of Polish education in Lithuania and Lithuanian education in Poland, by December.

²⁴ Polish-Lithuanian Bilateral Expert Commission responsible for studying the problems of history and geography teaching.

²⁵ “Prezydent Duda w Wilnie...,” *op. cit.*

²⁶ Apart from Minister Anna Zalewska and Deputy Minister Andrzej Papierz, the meeting was attended by Mikołaj Falkowski, President of the Foundation “Pomoc Polakom na Wschodzie” and Rafał Dzieciołowski, the Deputy President of the Foundation, representatives of the “Wspólnota Polska” Association and Ambassador, Urszula Doroszewska.

²⁷ “Minister edukacji Anna Zalewska w Wilnie. O polskiej oświacie na Litwie i litewskiej w Polsce,” *Suwałki*24, 1 September 2018, www.suwalki24.pl.

In November 2018, a declaration on cooperation between the Polish Centre for Education Development and the Lithuanian Centre for Education Development was signed at the Lithuanian Ministry of Education and Science to foster, among other things, the work towards solving the problems of Polish education in Lithuania. Cooperation of both institutions was to enable the exchange of experience and good practices in the area of improving education systems and enhancing the quality of education. The signing of the declaration was combined with session of the newly established 20-person team for education of the Polish minority in the Republic of Lithuania and the Lithuanian minority in the Republic of Poland²⁸.

Economic and sectoral cooperation

The flagship projects, which were to become “a catalyst for cooperation between the Baltic, Carpathian states, the Visegrad Group, Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia and the south of the continent”²⁹, were gas interconnectors, the Via Carpatia route and the TEN-T Baltic-Adriatic base network corridor connecting Polish seaports with ports on the Adriatic Sea.

Poland and Lithuania cooperated most intensively in implementing energy projects, prioritised as making both countries independent from Russian gas supplies. Furthermore, Poland supported the desynchronisation of the Baltic states from the post-Soviet electricity infrastructure (the so-called BRELL). This was confirmed by Energy Minister Krzysztof Tchórzewski’s visit to Vilnius (the Polish delegation was then headed by Prime Minister Morawiecki) in March 2018. Various aspects of the common energy policy were discussed, including the electricity sector, primarily the synchronisation of network systems, as well as the security of gas systems or the development of renewable energy. An important point of the discussion was the amendment to the EU Gas Directive and opposition to the construction of Nord Stream 2. The Minister emphasised that Poland opposes the offshore gas pipelines connecting the Union with third countries operate according to different principles than onshore pipelines. Lithuania shared Poland’s opposition to the Nord Stream 2 project. During the visit, Mr Tchórzewski and the Lithuanian Energy Minister Žygimantas Vaičiūnas signed a memorandum of enhanced strategic cooperation in the field of energy

²⁸ I. Lewandowska, “Polsko-litewska współpraca w dziedzinie oświaty,” *Kurier Wileński*, 26 November 2018, <https://kurierwilenski.lt>.

²⁹ “Government information on Polish foreign policy in 2018...,” *op. cit.*

and ports cooperation and the launch of the Szczecin-Klaipeda ferry link³⁰. The agreement was the confirmation of conducting an intensive dialogue manifested by cyclical meetings of the working group for energy cooperation at the level of deputy ministers for energy³¹. At the same time, the technical agreements for the expansion of the gas interconnector – GIPL—were successively implemented over the period 2017–2018³².

In September 2017, Vaičiūnas held a press conference at the European Economic Congress in Katowice. The Minister confirmed that for Lithuania and the other Baltic states synchronisation of their electricity networks with the European network system is a priority in energy policy. Efforts to connect the Baltic states to the European electricity networks through Poland were in progress: on 21 September 2018, Polskie Sieci Elektroenergetyczne (PSE) sent an appropriate request in this matter to the European Network of Transmission System Operators (ENTSO-E). Similar requests were sent to PSE by operators from the three Baltic countries³³.

In 2018, ORLEN Lietuva's³⁴ long-standing dispute with Lithuanian Railways ended successfully, while PKN ORLEN intensified its cooperation with the Lithuanian carrier. On 14 August 2018, the heads of both companies, Daniel Obajtek and Mantas Bartuska, in the presence of Lithuanian Transport Minister Rokas Masiulis, signed an agreement and inaugurated the reconstruction of the railway track on the Mažeikiai-Renge route³⁵.

Infrastructure projects, including transport, were an important element in the cooperation between Poland and Lithuania. Construction and modernisation of railway and road connections continued. In 2017, PKP Polskie Linie Kolejowe

³⁰ “Premierzy Litwy i Polski o strategicznym partnerstwie i współpracy,” *Wilnoteka*, 9 March 2018, www.wilnoteka.lt.

³¹ “Tchórzewski: Współpraca naszych państw w sektorze energetycznym to szansa na silny głos regionu na forum europejskim,” *MAP*, 9 March 2018, www.gov.pl/web/energia.

³² “Gaz-System i Amber Gird podjęły pozytywną decyzję inwestycyjną dotyczącą gazowego budowy gazowego połączenia Polska–Litwa,” *Gaz-System*, 24 May 2018, www.gaz-system.pl.

³³ At the beginning of September 2018, the regulatory authorities of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia signed a cost-sharing agreement for the synchronisation of electricity networks with the continental system. The total cost is more than EUR 1 billion. The EU can provide up to 75% funding for this project.

³⁴ ORLEN Lietuva is the largest company, exporter and taxpayer in Lithuania; see: “Orlen porozumiał się z Litwinami, kończąc trwający niemal dekadę spór,” *Wprost*, 28 June 2017, www.wprost.pl.

³⁵ At the same time, a commitment has been made to expand cooperation by transporting products towards the Polish border. The transport of ORLEN Lietuva products on this route will increase by several hundred thousand tonnes compared to the current approx. 600,000 tonnes. This would increase the operational flexibility of ORLEN Group and improve fuel security in the Baltic States and Poland.

completed the renovation of the Rail Baltica section between Warsaw and Sadowne. At the same time, the works began on the Sadowne-Czyżew section. Until 2025, PKP scheduled to rebuild the remaining part of the route located within the Polish borders. In 2018, the company announced a tender for modernisation of the section from Czyżew to Białystok.

Apart from railway projects, the works on the construction of Via Baltica route were carried out. In 2017, a tender was opened for the construction of the last two sections of the S61, concluding the route of an international expressway. The construction works on the Suwałki bypass also started, while on 11 October 2018 the contract for the last section of this connection (Łomża Zachód - Kolno junction) was signed. "The entire Via Baltica route, from Ostrów Mazowiecka to the Lithuanian border in Budzisko, should be operational by the end of 2021" - Minister Andrzej Adamczyk announced³⁶.

Despite significant disproportions in trade relations, resulting mainly from the difference in potentials, there was also progress in this dimension. In 2017, the Polish exports to Lithuania were worth PLN 12,657 million and imports PLN 6,941 million (Lithuania's share in Poland's total exports was 1.5% and in imports 0.8%)³⁷. In 2018, an upward trend continued with Polish exports to Lithuania reaching PLN 13,835 million and imports reaching PLN 7,845 million³⁸. The commodity content of Polish exports to Lithuania was dominated by electrical machinery products—approx. 27%, chemical products - approx. 20%, including plastics, agricultural and food products and metallurgical industry products - approx. 11%. Poland mainly imported mineral products (including fuels and oils) from Lithuania - they represented approx. 32% of the total volume of import, products of chemical industry - approx. 21%, agricultural and food products - approx. 16%, and products of electrical machinery industry—approx. 11%. The highest positive balance for Poland was observed in trade of the electrical machinery industry products and chemical industry products, agricultural and food products, and metallurgical products³⁹.

According to Lithuanian statistics, at the end of 2018, the value of Polish investments in Lithuania amounted to EUR 956 million (6.2% of total foreign

³⁶ "Via Baltica – droga ekspresowa S61. Na jakim etapie jest budowa szlaku w Polsce na poszczególnych odcinkach?," *MuratorPlus*, 14 October 2020, www.muratorplus.

³⁷ Mainly mechanical and electrical equipment were exported, as well as products of the chemical industry, precious metals and products made of them. The imports included mineral products, plastics, animals and animal products, see: "Mapa rynków eksportowych. Litwa," KUKI, www.mapa.kuke.com.pl/litwa.html.

³⁸ "Mały Rocznik Statystyczny Polski 2019," GUS, 2019, pp. 330–331.

³⁹ "Information on countries and economic cooperation with Poland," MRPI, www.gov.pl/web/rozwoj-praca-technologia.

investments in Lithuania) and was 7.3% higher than a year before, while Poland was the sixth largest investor. According to NBP data, at the end of 2017, Polish investments in Lithuania reached EUR 897 million and accounted for approx. 3.6% of Polish capital invested abroad (9th position for Polish investments). The main areas of activity are: oil processing, production of glass, rubber and plastic products, insurance, financial intermediation, trade, transport, food industry. According to the types of economic activity in the structure of Polish investments in Lithuania the processing industry dominated (53%) as well as finance and insurance (approx. 20%), mining industry, wholesale and retail trade, construction or real estate operations were also present.

In 2018, Vilnius hosted for the first time (on the initiative of the Giedroyc Forum) the Strategic Partnership Economic Forum, which was held on 25–26 April at the Palace of the Grand Dukes⁴⁰.

Social and cultural relations

As diplomatic relations intensified, a social and cultural cooperation progressed. This resulted in a number of initiatives in 2017 and 2018 - both in Lithuania and Poland.

The key cultural project was a joint Polish-Lithuanian exhibition *Czekając na kolejne nadejście*, presenting works by contemporary artists from Poland and Lithuania. The exhibition was arranged by Šiuolaikinio meno centras in Vilnius and the Centre for Contemporary Art Ujazdowski Castle in Warsaw. It was the first such large collective exhibition in the recent history of both countries. Another exhibition connected to historical issues and referring to Polish-Lithuanian relations was opened at the Palace of the Grand Dukes in Vilnius by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Culture and National Heritage, Piotr Gliński. The exhibition entitled: "Litwo, Ojczyzna moja... Adam Mickiewicz i jego poemat Pan Tadeusz" presented over 250 unique exhibits (including the manuscript of "Pan Tadeusz") from the collections of approx. 30 Polish and Lithuanian museum institutions.

On the occasion of the celebrations of the anniversary of the independence of Poland and Lithuania, there were also regular meetings devoted to the common history, many of which were sensitive issues. In December 2018, e.g., a debate

⁴⁰ One of the basic objectives of the forum was the need for discussion on the impact of state regulations on the operation and development of business and on the pace and quality of development. At the time, ORLEN Lietuva was awarded in the category "Investment of the Century"; see: A. Pieszko, "W Wilnie odbędzie się pierwsze polsko-litewskie forum ekonomiczne," *Kurier Wileński*, 23 April 2018, <https://kurierwilenski.lt>.

entitled “Bez emocji. Polsko-litewski dialog o 1938 roku”, which closed the conference on Józef Piłsudski inaugurated in previous year. The nature of these meetings were of public debates with the participation mainly of historians from Poland and Lithuania.

In 2018, the Polish Institute in Vilnius organized the 18th Polish Film Festival. This time the screenings were held in as many as five Lithuanian cities - Vilnius, Kaunas, Mažeikiai, Soleczniki and Vilkomierz. The leading idea of this edition was a slogan “100% kina – 100% wolności”, referring to the 100th anniversary of regaining independence by Poland and presenting Polish experience of the whole XX century⁴¹.

Recent years have also been marked by such cultural events as the staging of Tadeusz Słobodzianek's “Nasza Klasa” directed by Yana Ross at the Lithuanian National Drama Theatre in Vilnius and Thomas Bernhard's „Plac bohaterów” directed by Krystian Lupa, as well as “Dziady” directed by Eimuntas Nekrošius at the Warsaw National Theatre. The cultural relations in both Lithuania and Poland fostered the promotion of literature, art, music and film, e.g., thanks to the development of cooperation between the Polish and Lithuanian PEN Clubs, International Translation Seminars, presentation of Lithuanian artists' works in Poland (Tomas Venclova, Herkus Kunčius, Kornelijus Platelis, Leonidas Donskis, Kristina Sabaliauskaitė).

The Ministry of Culture and National Heritage also supported the renovation of Polish heritage in Lithuania, including the churches of the Holy Spirit and the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the chapel in the Gate of Dawn. Renovation of the Ross Cemetery was also the subject of discussions between Ministers of Culture of Poland and Lithuania - Gliński and Liana Ruokytė-Jonsson⁴².

Assessment

In 2017–2018, relations with Lithuania became increasingly important for the Polish government resulting in closer ties. This was mainly related to the change in the political balance of power in Lithuania, which was viewed as an opportunity for a breakthrough in bilateral relations. This resulted in the intensification of cooperation, desired by Poland, with the development of political dialogue. The change in the attitude of the Lithuanian government was all the more significant

⁴¹ M. Kozicz, “100% kina 100% wolności”—startuje 18. Festiwal Filmu Polskiego,” ZW, 16 August 2018, <https://zw.lt>.

⁴² “Wspólne dziedzictwo i współpraca na forum UE zdominowały spotkanie ministrów kultury Polski i Litwy,” MKiDN, 23 November 2018, www.gov.pl/web/kultura.

as President Dalia Grybauskaitė - so far in charge of creating Lithuanian foreign policy - had prioritised cooperation with the Nordic states, even at the expense of the relations with Poland. The new policy line of the Lithuanian government confirmed that Lithuania again started to perceive the cooperation with Poland as strategic.

Furthermore, the growing determination of both countries translated into NATO's decisions to increase its presence in the region and resulted in the growing involvement of the United States increasingly interested in, among other things, minimising the outcomes of Russia's aggressive policy. Additionally, Poland and Lithuania jointly worked to enhance security in the EU eastern neighbourhood and supported the Eastern Partnership initiative. However, the effectiveness in this regard was limited, mainly due to the declining interest of other EU Member States and EU institutions in the development of this initiative, especially at the time of the refugee and migration crisis and ongoing Brexit negotiations.

The activities in the energy sector should also be assessed positively. Poland successfully increased its independence from Russian supplies also through the implementation of successive stages of the construction of interconnectors, including the Polish-Lithuanian gas pipeline (GIPL). In 2017–2018, Poland and the Baltic states also managed to reach an agreement and compromise on the synchronisation of their transmission networks with the European system through the Polish-Lithuanian LitPolLink interconnection. This would increase the level of energy security in the region, while making the Baltic states independent from Russian supervision over the electricity network system.

In economic cooperation with Lithuania, an important success was the end of a long-standing dispute between ORLEN Lietuva and Lithuanian Railways. This increased the potential for further cooperation, the desire for which was declared by both sides. Overcoming an impasse in negotiations resulted, on the one hand, from a desire to limit Russia's influence in the energy sector and, on the other hand, from the Lithuanian partner's willingness to resolve a long-standing dispute.

The Polish authorities perceived the expansion and modernisation of railway and road connections, including the section with Lithuania, as key infrastructure projects, the final goal, however, was not achieved despite acceleration of works. This was mainly due to the high capital requirements for the scheduled projects and partly also to time-consuming procedures. The development of cooperation with Lithuania in this area, however, was favoured by the fact that the priority of the Polish authorities was to strengthen regional cooperation in order to increase competitiveness in the Central Europe (e.g. under the Three Seas Initiative), among other things.

And yet, Poland only partially succeeded in improving the situation of the Polish minority in Lithuania. While the involvement of the Polish authorities increased, including direct assistance offered e.g. to Polish organisations in Lithuania, the efforts of the Lithuanian authorities did not go beyond the sphere of declarations. However, the institutional cooperation was strengthened and resumed, which seems promising.

Poland's Policy Towards Belarus

ANNA MARIA DYNER

Background

The factors determining Poland's policy towards Belarus in 2018 include the common border and strong social, historical, cultural, and linguistic ties between the two countries. There is also the proximity to Russia, Russian policy towards the countries of the former USSR, including Belarus, and the existence of the Union State of Belarus and Russia. The fact that both countries belong to different political and military blocs (Poland to the EU and NATO, and Belarus to the Eurasian Economic Union, or EEU, and the Collective Security Treaty Organisation, CSTO) is also important.

In 2018, the security situation in Eastern Europe coarsened Polish-Belarusian relations and Poland's policy towards Belarus. This was primarily due to the consequences of the Russian aggression against Ukraine and the former's violation of international legal acts of key importance to the arms control regime in Europe (Vienna Document¹, the Open Skies Treaty²). Also important was Russia's threat to deploy forces in Belarus as a response to the strengthening of the Eastern Flank

¹ The Vienna Document on confidence-building and security measures provides for, among other things, the provision of annual information on conventional armed forces. The document introduced a system of prior notification of certain military activities and verification mechanisms through assessment visits to military units, inspections, and observation of military exercises; see: "Dokument Wiedeński 1999 r. o środkach budowy zaufania i bezpieczeństwa," MSZ, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja. For many years, Russia has been trying to avoid inspections by circumventing the provisions of the Vienna Document. The country organises exercises consisting of several parts, none of which exceeds the limits on participating troops and equipment used to require the invitation of international observers, and calls unannounced exercises (*snap exercises*). As early as 2015, Russia withdrew from another key European security treaty—the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe agreement.

² The aim of the Treaty on Open Skies is to increase openness and transparency in the military activities of the States Parties through aerial surveillance. The number of surveillance flights that a State Party is entitled to make over the territory of other countries and the number of those that it is obliged to accept over its own territory are determined annually; see: "Traktat o Otwartych Przestworzach (Treaty on Open Skies)," MSZ, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja. Russia not only makes it difficult to carry out surveillance flights but also its fighters often fly with their transponders switched off, making it difficult to locate the aircraft and, in extreme cases, posing a risk of collision with other aircraft. The Russians also often fly close to the air borders of other countries or even violate them, forcing a response by on-duty fighters.

of NATO and the rearming of Russia's Western and Southern Military Districts (MD).³ Another important determinant of Polish-Belarusian cooperation in the field of security was Russia's approach to the countries of the Eastern Flank of NATO. Every action to strengthen the Eastern Flank Russia saw as aggressive, forcing similar declarations from its allied countries, including Belarus. The situation of the Polish minority in Belarus remained a challenge for Poland's policy, including issues related to Polish language teaching and Polish education, as well as historical issues.

On the other hand, Polish-Belarusian relations, especially in the cross-border dimension, benefited from proper relations between Belarus and the European Union. Furthermore, the development of economic contacts was fostered by the cooperation of Poland and Belarus with China as part of its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

Goals and Assumptions

According to information from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the tasks of Polish foreign policy,⁴ the basic objectives of Poland's policy towards Belarus in 2018 were to maintain good neighbourly relations, strengthen Belarusian statehood, develop political contacts and economic cooperation, as well as support the Polish minority and guarantee their full rights, including teaching in the national language. Polish policy also aimed at supporting civil society in Belarus. In his speech to the Polish parliament on 21 March 2018, Minister of Foreign Affairs Jacek Czaputowicz pointed to the need to focus on issues related to the common border, the development of transport infrastructure, and the shortcomings of the legal and treaty base. He mentioned cross-border and cultural cooperation, which is implemented, among others, under the Poland-Belarus-Ukraine 2014–2020 Programme, as a matter of relevance for the implementation of the objectives regarding Poland's policy.

These assumptions correspond to the actions undertaken by Poland within the European Union. The aim of Poland's diplomacy was to support the strengthening of Belarusian relations with the EU, to which the Eastern Partnership would contribute, and to sign a document establishing "Partnership Priorities" (Single Support Framework) and a visa-facilitation agreement.

³ A.M. Dyner, "Russia Beefs Up Its Western Flank," *PISM Bulletin*, no. 173 (1244), 19 December 2018, www.pism.pl.

⁴ "Government information on Polish foreign policy in 2018 (presented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland Jacek Czaputowicz at a sitting of the Sejm on 21 March 2018)," see p. 11 in this volume.

Political Relations

The year 2018, like the previous year, was a time of numerous bilateral visits, including ministerial consultations and meetings of working groups.

In 2018, the ambassador of the Republic of Poland to Belarus was replaced by the former director of the Eastern Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, Artur Michalski.⁵ Belarus, on the other hand, closed its Consulate General in Gdańsk over cost savings.

On 7 April, the Ministries of Justice of Belarus and Poland signed a cooperation programme for 2018–2020 in Minsk. The document included the exchange of experience in the development of legislation, the enforcement of court judgments, and the development of mediation. On 29 May, the Polish Supreme Audit Office and the Belarusian State Audit Committee signed an updated cooperation agreement (the previous one was concluded in 2003), assuming mainly the exchange of experience in conducting audits. These were part of Polish activities addressed to Belarusian officials aimed at sharing experience in the field of good governance. They were also well-received by the Belarusian side.

On 21 May in Warsaw, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland Bartosz Cichocki met with several representatives of Belarusian non-governmental organisations. The main topic of the discussions was the continuation of Polish aid for projects implemented by these organisations.⁶ This was one of the stages of discussions aimed at facilitating the activities of Polish donors in Belarus, which Poland had sought in previous years.

On 27 June, Minister of Infrastructure of the Republic of Poland Andrzej Adamczyk and Belarusian Minister of Transport and Communications Anatol Sivak signed an agreement in Brest on the maintenance of border bridges. It was necessary in view of the growing movement of persons and goods across the border and related to measures to improve the functioning and capacity of border infrastructure.

On 29 June, Head of the Office of the President of the Republic of Poland Krzysztof Szczerski participated in ceremonies at the former Nazi German death camp at Mały Trościeniec,⁷ during which he read out a letter from President of the Republic of Poland Andrzej Duda. Szczerski also attended a meeting of the

⁵ On 12 June, Arthur Michalski submitted a copy of a letter of credence to the Belarusian MFA, accompanied by a meeting with Minister Makey. And on 26 June, the Polish ambassador forwarded a letter of credence to Alexander Lukashenka.

⁶ "Spotkanie z przedstawicielami białoruskich organizacji pozarządowych," MSZ, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja.

⁷ Mały Trościeniec is an extermination site of the Jewish population during World War II. In the camp, mainly citizens of the Republic of Poland were murdered along with the residents of the territory of modern-day Belarus, Lithuania, and Ukraine. For more, see: A.M. Dynier, Ł. Jasina, "The Unveiling

president of Belarus with the heads of delegations participating in the ceremonies: Austrian President Alexander Van der Bellen and German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier. Szczerski also laid flowers at the cemetery in Kuropaty⁸ where there are mass graves of victims shot by the NKVD in the years 1937–1941, including Poles and citizens of the Second Republic of Poland and other nationalities. This visit was one of the elements of the implementation of Polish historical policy and dialogue with Belarus related to this subject.

On 28 July in Minsk, President of the Council of the Republic (the upper house of the Belarusian parliament) Mikhail Myasnikovich met with Poland's Speaker of the Senate Stanisław Karczewski. The politicians discussed the opportunities for further development of political and economic relations. The plans for Myasnikovich's visit to Poland, which was to take place in October (the date was postponed to the first quarter of 2019), were also discussed. During his visit, Marshal Karczewski also participated in the celebrations of the 30th anniversary of the Union of Poles in Belarus. The arrival of the parliamentary delegation was part of Poland's efforts to maintain political dialogue with Belarus, but also an indication that Poland constantly monitors the situation of the Polish minority in that country.

On 9 September, Deputy Speaker of the Senate Maria Koc participated in the beginning of the school year at the Social School "Polska Macierz Szkolna"⁹ in Grodno. The meeting was an expression of Poland's support for entities teaching in Belarus in the Polish language and an emphasis that matters related to Polish education remain one of the priorities of Poland's policy towards Belarus. On the day of the beginning of the school year (1 September), it turned out that the local authorities in Vawkavysk had limited the number of children admitted to a school with instruction in Polish. Poland's Ministry of Foreign Affairs reacted

of the Monument to the Victims of the Maly Trostenets Death Camp," *PISM Spotlight*, no. 51/2018, 5 July 2018, www.pism.pl.

⁸ The place situated on the outskirts of Minsk where mass graves of people shot and killed by the NKVD in the years 1937–1941 were discovered, including citizens of the Second Republic of Poland (a written compilation of the names of these people is called the "Belarusian Katyn" list). At present, there is a cemetery there, covering only part of the burial sites. Therefore, there are disputes between the opposition and partly also religious associations (Catholic Church, Belarusian Orthodox Church) and the authorities regarding proper commemoration of the murdered. According to the findings of Polish researchers, 3,870 people may be buried near Minsk. For more, see: M. Wyrwa, "Nieodnalezione ofiary Katynia? Lista osób zaginionych na obszarze północno-wschodnich województw II RP od 17 września 1939 do czerwca 1940," CPRDiP, Warsaw, 2015.

⁹ Polska Macierz Szkolna was established in 1906 in Congress Poland, formally known as the Kingdom of Poland. In Belarus, it was reactivated on 3 December 1995 as a cultural and educational organisation. Its aim is to promote Polish language education in a national, Christian, and civic spirit. For more, see: Polska Macierz Szkolna, <http://pmsgrodno.org/>.

sharply to this decision. In a communiqué,¹⁰ it expressed the hope that the matter would be resolved through the political dialogue between the states.

Bilateral consultations of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs were held in Warsaw on 11–14 September 2018. The head of the Belarusian delegation was Deputy Foreign Minister Aleh Krauchanka. The subject of the discussions was political relations, economic and consular cooperation, development of the legal and treaty base, and cooperation between historians and archivists. During his visit, Deputy Minister Krauchanka met with Undersecretary Cichocki. He also participated in an expert meeting held at the Polish Institute of International Affairs (PISM). On 17–20 September, a group of Belarusian parliamentarians visited Warsaw and met with Deputy Speaker of the Sejm Ryszard Terlecki and Deputy Speaker of the Senate Maria Koc. The discussions were devoted to strengthening inter-parliamentary cooperation. At the invitation of the Belarusian minority in Poland, the MPs also visited Białystok and Supraśl. The aim of these meetings was not only to maintain dialogue at the political and parliamentary levels but also to raise difficult issues in bilateral relations. The subject matter of the discussions with Deputy Minister Krauchanka also showed the importance of historical issues for further development of mutual relations.

On 23–27 September, a group of Belarusian experts in the field of the labour market visited Lublin and Warsaw for a study visit. The delegation was headed by Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Welfare Andrei Lobovich. The visit was part of an OECD project to support the Belarusian authorities in their efforts to fill the gap between workers' skills and labour market needs.¹¹ This was an important undertaking on the Polish side, showing not only the involvement of international institutions in projects but also responding to the needs of the Belarusian side, which is very much interested in discussions related to the labour market.

On 1–2 November, as part of the meeting of the Main Group of the Munich Security Conference,¹² Foreign Minister Czaputowicz visited Belarus. During the

¹⁰ "Komunikat MSZ ws. decyzji władz Wołkowyska," MSZ, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja. The matter is all the more important as consultations were held in Belarus in 2018 before the introduction of changes to the education law ("Kodeks Republiki Białaruś ob obrazowaniu"). These included the need to teach at least four subjects (the number of which is decided by local authorities and there may be more, even all of them) in one of the state languages (Belarusian or Russian) and to pass all exams in the state language. In practice, this will greatly limit the possibility of teaching in Polish, which is contrary to the "Treaty on Good Neighbourhood and Friendly Cooperation of 1992," Dz.U. [Journal of Laws], 1993, no. 118, item 527, "Intergovernmental Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Culture, Science and Education of 1995," Dz.U. [Journal of Laws], 1996, no. 76, item 365 and the "Intergovernmental Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Education," *Monitor Polski*, 2017, item 49.

¹¹ "Wizyta studyjna OECD białoruskich ekspertów w Polsce – Lublin, Warszawa, 23–27.09.2018 r.," MSZ, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja.

¹² The Munich Security Conference is an annual meeting of heads of state, government and international organisations, as well as representatives of parliaments, the armed forces, science,

visit, he met with Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belarus Uladzimir Makey. Both politicians stressed the need to further develop political and economic relations. They also discussed the situation of the Polish minority, including the Union of Poles in Belarus, teaching of the Polish language, historical dialogue, and commemorations. Czaputowicz also met with representatives of civil society.¹³ The topics of the discussions and meetings reflected the priorities of Poland's policy towards Belarus.

On 6 November, diplomats from the EU, the U.S., and the Eastern Partnership countries commemorated the people murdered in Kuropaty. Poland's active participation in these ceremonies was an element of the implementation of historical policy and an indication of the significance of this aspect for the development of relations with Belarus.

On 22 November, during the Second Regional Conference in Minsk, the Deputy Minister of Health Marcin Czech presented the principles of Polish drug policy. The conference was held with the assistance of the UN, among others. The following day, Deputy Minister Aleh Krauchanka raised issues in cooperation between Belarus and Poland within the framework of the Eastern Partnership with the director of the Eastern Department of the MFA, Jan Hofmohl. On 30 November, Deputy Minister Krauchanka held a meeting with the ambassadors of the Visegrad Group countries. All these discussions were part of Poland's activities towards Belarus as part of multilateral diplomacy.

On 7 December, the 13th meeting of the Belarusian-Polish Interstate Coordination Commission for Cross-border Cooperation was held in Minsk. The Polish Ministry of Interior and Administration was represented by Deputy Minister Renata Szczech and the Belarusian side by Yauhen Szeshtakau, the deputy foreign minister. During the meeting, issues of cross-border cooperation were discussed, including the EU programme "Poland-Belarus-Ukraine 2014–2020". Minister Szeshtakau emphasised that representatives of both countries were working on 10 new documents in the area of cross-border cooperation. The implementation of the EU programme is an important impulse for the development of this cooperation, maintaining contacts at the level of local governments and authorities and increasing the security of border areas.

Ambassador Arthur Michalski had been very active in information policy since the beginning of his work in Belarus. He gave interviews to several of the most important Belarusian media outlets (both state and independent), presenting

civil society, business, and media. The meetings of the Main Group were initiated in 2009 as a continuation of the discussions started during the conference.

¹³ "In Minsk on Polish-Belarusian relations," MSZ, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja.

Poland's policy towards Belarus and stressing the importance of cooperation between the two countries and the ties that link them, and familiarised Belarusians with Polish historical and cultural traditions (including holidays).¹⁴ Ambassador Michalski also pointed to difficult issues in relations between the two countries, related, among others, to the teaching of the Polish language, the situation of the Polish minority, and historical issues, including the commemoration of burial sites.¹⁵

Military Cooperation

In 2018, the frequency of contacts in the security sphere was maintained. The contacts were correct and focused on providing information on the activities of the armed forces of both countries. As in previous years, as part of the activities provided for in the Vienna Document and in the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE), both countries participated in a number of military inspections on their territories. In March, the soldiers from Poland, France, Germany, and Turkey carried out an inspection, which included checking the condition of equipment and armaments in the 58th independent assault and landing brigade. On the other hand, on 23–26 April, the officers from Belarus inspected two Polish military units as part of the procedures provided for in the CFE. Another Belarusian inspection, as part of the implementation of the Vienna Document, was held on 6–8 June. On 19–21 June, in Minsk, the representatives of the Polish Armed Forces and the Belarusian Armed Forces held consultations on cooperation in the field of arms control provided for in the Vienna Document procedure. On 28–29 August, consultations between the ministries of defence of both countries were held in Brest, during which regional security challenges were discussed. On 12–16 November, the *Anaconda 2018* exercises taking place in Poland were observed by the Belarusian military, while on 20 December, the Polish side inspected the 6th Independent Mechanised Guard Brigade.

All these meetings and inspections allowed for the exchange of information and discussions on the security situation in the region. They also served to maintain a basic level of confidence in the area of security between Poland and Belarus. They also showed the practical importance for Poland and Belarus of international arms control documents.

¹⁴ "Arthur Michalski 'Chrezvychaynyy i Polnomochnyy Posol Respubliki Pol'sha v Respublike Belarus,'" *Bielaruskie Televidienie*, www.tvr.by.

¹⁵ "Artur Michalski: My jak susiedzi pawinni nanowa adkrywac' adno adnago," *Radio Racyja*, www.racyja.com.

Economic Relations and Development Aid

The correct political relations between Poland and Belarus translated into an increase in trade turnover in 2018, which reached almost PLN 11 billion (PLN 10.5 billion in previous year), including Polish exports of PLN 5.9 billion (PLN 300 million more than in 2017) and imports of about PLN 4.8 billion (its value practically has not changed).¹⁶ Thus, Belarus was ranked 24th on the list of Polish export markets and 33rd on the list of import markets. Poland was the third trade partner of Belarus among the countries of the European Union, after Germany and the UK.¹⁷

On 1 January 2018, there were 339 companies with Polish capital were registered in Belarus.¹⁸ In 2018, Poland was the sixth biggest foreign investor with a share of 3.4% (about \$289 million) in foreign direct investments¹⁹ and involvement in such sectors as construction, furniture, construction and finishing products, banking, IT, food, and plastic products.²⁰ The largest Polish investment in 2018 (the transaction took place in November) was the purchase of a chain of stores for children, Buslik, by CDRL S.A. for \$6.4 million.²¹

In February 2018, consultations between the PKP Group and Belarusian Railways were held. The opening of the Vysokaje-Czeremcha railway service was discussed. The Belarusian side was particularly interested in this and explained it by the need to relieve the existing railway crossing at Brest and the transshipment terminal at Małaszewicze. The investments were intended to increase the capacity of the freight routes, which will be necessary in view of the increasing transport of goods from China as part of the BRI.²² This issue was also discussed by representatives of the railways of seven countries (Belarus, China, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Germany, Poland, Russia) during a working meeting of the freight group held in Minsk in April. The consultations showed the growing importance of rail transport for the movement of goods from China, among others, and obstacles to its development due to insufficient and outdated railway infrastructure.

¹⁶ "Polsko-białoruskie rozmowy gospodarcze," MPiT, www.gov.pl/web/przedsiębiorczosc-technologie.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*.

¹⁸ "Bolszaja doja inwestycji w Białorus' prichoditsja na ofsory," *Tut.by*, <https://news.tut.by>.

¹⁹ "Rezultaty inwestycyjnej polityki," Ministerstwo Ekonomiki Respubliki Białorus', www.economy.gov.by.

²⁰ "Polsko-białoruskie rozmowy gospodarcze," MPiT, www.gov.pl/web/przedsiębiorczosc-technologie.

²¹ I. Trusewicz, "Białoruska sieć towarów dla dzieci w polskich rękach," *Rzeczpospolita*, 28 December 2018, www.rp.pl.

²² For more, see: A.M. Dynier, "The Importance of Cooperation with China for Belarus," *PISM Bulletin*, no. 106 (1177), 8 August 2018, www.pism.pl.

On 20 September in Sokółka, the Association of Polish Business in Belarus and the Polish-Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry signed a cooperation agreement. The Polish MFA also supported a conference on the development of business clusters²³ in Belarus, which was held in Gomel on 10 October. The seventh meeting of the Polish-Belarusian Group for Agriculture was held in Minsk on 21 September. On the Polish side, it was co-chaired by Secretary of State at the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development Szymon Giżyński and on the Belarusian side by Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Food Ivan Smilgiń. The Polish delegation presented proposals to facilitate access to the Belarusian market for livestock products, including beef and pork (quite often subject to sudden phytosanitary restrictions).

The Polish-Belarusian Business Forum was held on 24 October in Warsaw. During the Forum, the Association of Polish Business in Belarus and the Polish Chamber of Industry and Commerce signed a cooperation agreement. Both parties pointed out that this would increase assistance and access to information for investors from both countries.

On 27 November, Belarusian Minister for Antitrust and Trade Regulation Uladzimir Koltovich and the President of the Office of Competition and Consumer Protection Marek Niechciał signed a memorandum of cooperation in the field of competition policy and consumer rights protection in Warsaw. On the same day, a meeting of the Belarusian-Polish Commission for Economic Cooperation was held with the participation of Minister Kołtowiec and Minister for Entrepreneurship and Technology Jadwiga Emilewicz. The meeting was accompanied by a business forum and the subject of the discussions was economic and investment cooperation. A memorandum of mutual assistance was also signed by the National Marketing Centre at the MFA of Belarus and the Polish Trade and Investment Agency. On 28 November, the Belarusian-Polish economic forum "A Step Forward" was held in Vawkavysk. The aim of these meetings was to introduce further solutions favouring investors from both countries to increase investments and their security.

On 4 December, Minsk hosted the 10th Forum of Polish Investors in Belarus, titled "Polish-Belarusian cooperation today and tomorrow", which was attended by representatives of the Ministry of Economy of Belarus and the Association of Polish Business in Belarus, among others. At the same time, as part of a Polish-Belarusian forum devoted to the promotion of startups, IT, and innovative technologies, which was held at the Belarus High Technology Park, representatives of the Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Technology and other institutions

²³ A spatially (geographically) focused group of enterprises from the same or related sectors.

presented opportunities for startups in Poland. In the High Technology Park, the only resident with Polish capital so far had been Epol Soft. These meetings served, on the one hand, to attract Polish investors to Belarus and, on the other hand, give an opportunity to learn about the opportunities on the Belarusian market.

In 2018, the Belarusian National Bank started participating in an EU-funded twinning programme. Under the programme, the National Bank of Poland, the German Federal Bank, and the Bank of Lithuania conducted a series of training courses on the use of modern procedures, including those related to payment systems, banking supervision, and financial risk management. This project, implemented as part of the EU's activities, allowed for the introduction of EU standards by the National Bank of Belarus and was very positively perceived by the Belarusian side.

Official Polish Development Assistance for Belarus in 2018 amounted to PLN 157.59 million. Projects and technical assistance amounted to PLN 38.17 million, assistance through multilateral institutions (the UN and its agenda, European Endowment for Democracy) was PLN 0.88 million, scholarships were PLN 26.69 million, and education-related spending was PLN 91.85 million. In 2018, 70 initiatives of various types were implemented with different funding scales, including, apart from regular projects, scholarship programmes and multilateral contributions (without education costs and the so-called "other scholarships", which cannot be treated as separate projects).²⁴ These initiatives comprise a very important instrument for the implementation of Poland's objectives towards Belarus, which include improving the functioning of civil society, expanding cooperation with local authorities, and strengthening the positive image of Poland in this country.

Regional and Social Cooperation

Cross-border and regional cooperation remain important and developing elements of bilateral relations. According to the budgetary criterion, the "Poland-Belarus-Ukraine" programme for 2014–2020 (total budget of €170 million) was the largest cross-border programme in the European Union.

In February, both countries' customs services held consultations. The Belarusian side announced the introduction of additional monitoring systems at the border, which was to speed up clearance. This was part of Belarus's preparations to host the Second European Games in 2019. In May, however, the Polish Ministry of Investment and Development forwarded €228,000 to the Belarusian Customs

²⁴ Data from the Polish MFA.

Service for the installation of weighing equipment for vehicles at the Sławatycze-Domaczewo crossing.

On 26 April, during the III International Business Contacts Forum “Brest 2018”, the Marshal of Podlaskie Voivodeship and the President of Minsk District signed a cooperation agreement. It was yet another document confirming the development of cooperation between Polish local government and Belarusian local authorities. It will foster the implementation of bilateral projects between the two regions, the continuation of cross-border cooperation and further implementation of projects aimed, among others, at increasing social contacts.

On 16 July, a meeting of the Polish-Belarusian working group for water resources protection was held in Warsaw, during which both countries agreed to sign an agreement on the protection and management of transboundary waters. On 5 September, however, the Polish-Belarusian group for the development of the Augustów Canal, established in 2016, met in Belarus to promote its touristic attractions. The subject of the meeting was the construction of a cycling route along the canal and its inclusion into the European network of cycling paths. Those projects are to increase the tourist potential of the region.

Actions to improve the functioning of the border infrastructure, including the capacity of crossings, continued throughout 2018. They were implemented mainly through the funds of the “Poland-Belarus-Ukraine 2014–2020” programme. The EU allocated €1 million for the modernisation of the Bruzgi and Byerastavitsa crossings, among other things. This programme has also provided funding for 15 projects in the Brest region, among others, to increase border security (almost €20 million). A forum for organisations seeking partners in obtaining grants from this programme was also held on 21 August in Brest. On 17 October, in Grodno, the representatives of the Belarusian State Customs Committee and the Polish Customs Service, with the participation of the governor of Podlaskie Voivodeship, discussed the possibilities of increasing the transit capabilities of the Bruzgi and Kuźnica Białostocka border crossings. In November, a joint exercise was conducted by the fire brigades of both countries under the project “Security on the Belarusian-Polish border. Strengthening the potential of fire and rescue services”.

The development of border cooperation was also evidenced by regular meetings of the Polish-Belarusian Commission for Border Cooperation. After the December meeting in Minsk, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belarus Yauhen Shestakau announced that both countries were about to sign 10 border cooperation agreements. Deputy Minister Szczech, who attended the meeting, announced that Poland would support Belarus in its efforts to sign a visa-facilitation agreement with the EU.

Issues related to the development of border infrastructure are important in view of the persistently high number of border crossings. In 2018, almost 9 million crossings were recorded (down by about 3% compared to 2017). During this period, about 3.5 million Belarusian citizens entered Poland, the second most after Ukrainian citizens (almost 10 million people). The Polish Border Guard refused entry to 5,555 Belarusians, 1,782 of whom had no valid visa. Moreover, 332 Belarusians tried to cross the Polish border illegally. However, 42 Belarusian citizens applied for international protection. On the other hand, in 2018, the Polish Border Guard revealed 2,181 persons had illegally stayed in Poland and 370 Belarusians^{25,25} were illegally employed. Considering that Polish consular services issued 411,802 visas²⁶ to Belarusian citizens, the scale of violations of regulations related to crossing the Polish border or staying on the territory of the Republic of Poland is small.

In 2018, Belarusian citizens were the second-largest group of foreigners who legalised their stay in Poland. Their number increased from 4,700 in 2017 to 20,000²⁷ in 2018, they were also issued 5,000 temporary residence permits (out of a total of 200,000).²⁸

In the academic year 2017/2018, the second-largest group of foreign students was students from Belarus (6,000 thousand, or a decrease of 8.3%).²⁹ A total of 223 students from Belarus benefited from the four largest Polish scholarship programmes implemented by the Eastern Europe Studies at Warsaw University in 2018.³⁰

Visa-free travel is becoming increasingly popular with Polish citizens, particularly in the Brest and Grodno regions and for tourists crossing the border at Minsk–2 airport. Thanks to the introduction of visa-free travel, tourist traffic on the Augustów Canal has increased, and one of the three days of the Festival of National Cultures, organised every two years in Grodno, was held on the Canal.

Cultural Relations

²⁵ "BG statistics," Polish Border Guard, www.strazgraniczna.pl.

²⁶ Data from the Polish Embassy in Minsk.

²⁷ *Podsumowanie: legalizacja pobytu w 2018 r.*, Urząd ds. Cudzoziemców, 6 February 2019, <https://udsc.gov.pl>.

²⁸ *200 tys. ważnych zezwoleń na pobyt czasowy*, Urząd ds. Cudzoziemców, 11 December 2018, <https://udsc.gov.pl>.

²⁹ "Szkolnictwo wyższe w roku akademickim 2017/2018 (dane wstępne)," GUS, 15 June 2018, <https://stat.gov.pl>.

³⁰ Data: Centre for East European Studies at Warsaw University.

In 2018, cultural contacts, one of the most important elements and tools of Poland's foreign policy towards Belarus, developed. Such a dimension of relations allowed not only the presentation of Poland's cultural heritage, breaking stereotypes and promoting the country or showing the shared history of both countries, but also served to build contacts between societies.

In January, an exhibition of Kraków cribs was held in Vitebsk. It was one of the elements of the promotion of Kraków crib-making, which on 29 November 2018 was inscribed on the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of UNESCO.

In February, Polish publishers participated in the XXV International Book Fair in Minsk. In March, Polish theatres participated in the festival "M.@rt.kontakt-2018" held in Mahilioŭ. Thanks to the cooperation of the Hrodna Historical and Archaeological Museum and the Podlasie Museum in Białystok, the documents and archives of the Brigidine Sisters' convent in Grodno were restored. Both museums also cooperate in establishing regional research and monument protection centres under the "Poland-Ukraine-Belarus2014-2020" programme.

In March, the national archives of both countries exchanged digital documents. The Warsaw Archive of Historical Records received the Sobieski Archive from Oława, while the National Historical Archive of Belarus received documents from the Doria-Dernałowicz Archive, the Przeździecki Archive, the Prozor and Jelski Archives and the Tizengauz Archive. These resources are a common cultural asset of both countries.

In August, the Museum of the City of Minsk presented an exhibition devoted to Polish objects included in the UNESCO World Heritage List. On 5 August, Minsk also hosted the "Polish Day" festival. As part of the event, Polish dances, music, and cuisine were presented in Minsk's Old Town, and the "Never" theatre from Kraków presented a street performance, "Impresario". In September, Polish theatres participated in the VIII International Forum "Theatre". The national reading of Stefan Żeromski's "Przedwiośnie" was also presented this month, as well as a historical conference at Nesvizh Castle on the occasion of its 435th anniversary, attended by Polish historians. On 21 October, Minsk hosted the 7th Anna German Festival. In October, the representatives of the Polish and Belarusian handball federations discussed, at a meeting in Warsaw, the possibility of joint organisation of the World Cup in this discipline in 2026.

On 2 November, as part of the International Film Festival in Minsk, the film *Zimna Wojna* was screened. On 25 November, the children's "Eurovision" was held in Minsk. The winner was a participant from Poland, Roksana Węgiel. Eurovision

competitions are very popular in Belarus, and the victory of a young vocalist helped to promote Polish pop music there.

In November, in agreement with the local authorities, a month of Polish literature was held in Minsk. As part of the event, the Polish Institute organised a series of events. In November, Minsk also hosted a historical exhibition devoted to Polish money, "Independence signs. Polish money in the years 1915–1939". The exhibits were borrowed from the Historical Museum in Białystok.

On 5–9 December, Minsk hosted the "Wisła" Festival of Polish films and on 11 December, an exhibition of paintings by Ferdinand Ruszczyc opened at the National Museum in Minsk. A number of cultural activities were held thanks to grants from the "Poland-Belarus-Ukraine 2014–2020" programme. Also in 2018, the celebrations of the 100th anniversary of the Polska Macierz Szkolna were held.

Over the whole of 2018, renovation works were carried out on Polish cemeteries in Belarus. Mainly military quarters were renovated (Poland owns about 44 memorial sites in Belarus and Belarus about 18 in Poland). On 8 December, Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs Renata Szczęch presented the PRO PATRIA medals in Minsk for maintaining memorial sites in Belarus. They were given to Czesława Kniazewa, the president of the branch Union of Poles in Belarus in Kleck, Father Alfred Piechota from the town of Vidzy and Father Paweł Samsonow from Dunilavičy.

Many of the initiatives described above were part of Poland's efforts to promote Polish culture and common heritage in Belarus. The latter one served, among other things, to support Belarusian independence, which is one of the most important objectives of Poland's policy towards this country. A vital part of the cultural contacts, however, was the bottom-up initiative of the institutions that organised them, showing strong ties between them. A number of events also took place thanks to the development of cross-border cooperation, which fostered people-to-people contacts.

Assessment

2018 was another year of intense relations between Poland and Belarus. This was evidenced by numerous bilateral visits, an increase in trade exchange, a high number of visas issued by Poland, and an increasing number of Polish tourists enjoying visa-free travel. Cultural cooperation and people-to-people contacts were also developed. However, the effectiveness of Poland's policy towards Belarus depended on many factors, such as Russia's actions and its influence on decisions taken by the Belarusian authorities, which often adversely affected the possibility of achieving the objectives set by the Polish authorities. This mainly concerned matters relating to history and minorities and partly to security policy.

At the same time, most of the objectives relating to border cooperation have been achieved. However, it is still necessary to supplement the base of infrastructure agreements and to develop the cooperation of border services, whose task is not only to protect the common border but also to ensure the possibility of its efficient crossing. These measures will be of key importance for increasing trade, even more enhanced cross-border cooperation and people-to-people contacts.

The unresolved issues include settling the status of the Union of Poles in Belarus (UPB) and education in Polish. Despite bilateral consultations and declarations by the Belarusian authorities, nothing has changed in this respect in comparison with previous years, which demonstrated Belarus's unwillingness to reach an agreement due to, among other things, the need to withdraw from earlier actions and to settle the property situation of the UPB (a significant part of this property was forcibly transferred to the pro-government Union of Poles in 2010). Hence, the attitude of the Belarusian side hindered the fulfilment of one of the most important objectives of Poland's policy, which is to support the Polish minority and provide it with freedom in its activities.

Additionally, historical relations may become an element of the larger disputes, including issues related to the commemoration of victims (e.g., in Kurapaty) and the search for the so-called "Belarusian Katyń" list by Polish historians, as well as the perception of the operations conducted by the NKVD during World War II on the territory of the Second Republic of Poland (now western Belarus) such as the Augustów roundup. Not only can it be difficult to interpret common history differently but also some of the activities in this area are used by both countries in government policy.³¹

³¹ On the one hand, these are demonstrations by the Belarusian opposition in Kuropaty while, on the other hand, issues often raised in Belarus (by the parliament and others) are related to demonstrations by nationalist circles in Białystok in honour of the "cursed soldiers", above all by Romuald Rajs, aka "Bury", perceived as a murderer of Belarusians.

Due to the unstable security situation and different perceptions of threats in Europe, the possibility of military cooperation with Belarus is complicated. For Poland, the deployment of additional American and NATO forces on its territory strengthens the security of the countries of the Eastern Flank and is part of the policy of deterring Russia. For Belarus, this is an element of increasing tension in the region, which may hinder the policy of limited neutrality and make it necessary to agree to the deployment of a Russian military base. The disputes in this respect are evident not only during discussions among experts from both countries³² but are raised by the most prominent politicians, such as Lukashenko. Therefore, despite mutual efforts to develop military contacts, any actual cooperation in this area, including joint Belarusian and NATO exercises, is difficult to implement.

Due to Belarus's military, economic and political dependence on Russia, it is therefore impossible to fully achieve the objective of Poland's policy—strengthening Belarusian statehood. Considering current trends and Russian policy, this situation will continue in the coming years.

³² Security issues were also one of the topics of the Belarusian-Polish expert roundtable discussions, which were held by the Belarusian side "Miński Dialog / Minsk Dialogue" on 30 October, and the Polish side by the Polish Institute of International Affairs and the Centre for Eastern Studies.

Poland's Policy in the Visegrad Group

VERONIKA JÓŹWIAK, ŁUKASZ OGRODNIK

Background

In 2018, the Visegrad Group (V4) was the basic format of regional cooperation for Poland. The governments of the participating states were perceived by the Law and Justice-led government coalition as first-choice political partners in most EU affairs. This was because of, on the one hand, the convergence of views on many European issues and, on the other, to Poland's criticism of the position of Germany and France on the future of European integration. This resulted in a greater focus on cooperation in Central Europe.

Poland's activities in the V4 were still influenced by the debate on possible development trends in the EU that went together with the process of the UK's leaving the Union. This aspect was the most important area for joint political actions. The negotiations on the EU Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for 2021–2027, during which the V4 countries were united by the objective of balancing the economic and civilisation level with wealthier Member States, also provided an important context for Poland's Visegrad cooperation.

At the same time, all the V4 countries, although for different reasons and in different ways, found themselves under extraordinary supervision and pressure from EU institutions. The procedure of Article 7 of the TEU initiated in December 2017 by the European Commission (EC) against Poland, was still in progress. In September 2018, the European Parliament (EP) initiated a similar procedure against Hungary. Following the murder of the investigative journalist Ján Kuciak and his fiancée in February 2018, the EP sent a special mission to Slovakia and then (in April) adopted a resolution calling for, among other things, an in-depth investigation by the Slovak authorities. In December, on the other hand, the EP adopted a resolution finding a conflict of interest for Czech Prime Minister Andrej Babiš regarding the acquisition of EU subsidies.

There was a change of government in all V4 countries at the end of 2017 or the first half of 2018. As a result of the reconstruction of the Polish cabinet in December 2017, Mateusz Morawiecki replaced Beata Szydło as prime minister and Jacek Czaputowicz took on the portfolio of minister of foreign affairs from Witold Waszczykowski. In Slovakia, the political crisis caused by the

assassination of Kuciak ended with the reconstruction of the government in March and the replacement of Prime Minister Robert Fico by the former deputy prime minister for Investment and Computerisation, Peter Pellegrini, also from the Social Democratic Party Smer-Social Democracy.¹ In Hungary, in the April parliamentary elections, Fidesz won for the third time,² leading to the appointment of Viktor Orbán's fourth cabinet in May. In the Czech Republic, in December 2017, following the October elections, the first government of Babiš was formed. The prime minister resigned in January 2018, yet he continued to perform his duties as head of government, and in July, in the Chamber of Deputies, he won a vote of confidence for the minority government coalition of the Action of Dissatisfied Citizens (ANO) and the Czech Social Democratic Party (ČSSD).³ These changes did not fundamentally affect the intensity of V4 cooperation.

In the first half of 2018, the Visegrad Group was chaired by Hungary, and since 1 July, by Slovakia. The Hungarian priorities were focused on issues that were in line with the country's political interests, including migration and economic relations with non-European partners.⁴ Slovakia, on the other hand, aimed at closer political relations with Germany, France, and the EU institutions.⁵ Both these attitudes made it difficult for Poland to achieve its V4-related objectives.

Goals and Assumptions

The main objective of Poland in the Visegrad Group was to coordinate positions on EU issues. According to the Polish government, effective influence in the Union required support from the V4, therefore, reaching agreement on particular issues was emphasised by the decision-makers.⁶ Poland wanted to strengthen its position in the EU through a far-reaching convergence of positions within the V4, for example,

¹ Ł. Ogrodnik, T. Żornaczuk, "Resignation of the Government in Slovakia," *PISM Spotlight*, no. 20/2018, 16 March 2018, www.pism.pl.

² V. Jóźwiak, "Elections in Hungary: A Strong Mandate for Orbán," *PISM Spotlight*, no. 26/2018, 9 April 2018, www.pism.pl.

³ Ł. Ogrodnik, "New Government in the Czech Republic: Perspectives on Domestic and Foreign Policy," *PISM Bulletin*, no. 104 (1175), 6 August 2018, www.pism.pl.

⁴ V. Jóźwiak, "Hungarian Presidency of the Visegrad Group," *PISM Bulletin*, no. 77 (1017), 8 August 2017, www.pism.pl.

⁵ Ł. Ogrodnik, "A Dynamic Visegrad for Europe—Slovakia's V4 Presidency," *PISM Bulletin*, no. 111 (182), 20 August 2018, www.pism.pl.

⁶ Jacek Czaputowicz, among others, spoke about 'a far-reaching convergence of positions with regard to the migration crisis and the process of European integration' in the "Government information on Polish foreign policy in 2018 (presented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland Jacek Czaputowicz at a sitting of the Sejm on 21 March 2018)," see p. 11 in this volume.

on migration policy. The group was perceived by the government as a platform for opposing the system for accepting mandatory refugee quotas and a space for articulating demands such as more effective protection of the EU's external borders. Opposition from EU Member States, including the V4, contributed to ending the dispute over the idea of the mandatory distribution of refugees. At the same time, the implementation of economic objectives became a priority.

Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki pointed out that an objective of Poland's policy is to negotiate a favourable budget for Poland with the support of the Visegrad Group.⁷ The V4 was to be a group of the closest allies among the so-called "friends of cohesion"⁸ in its efforts to maintain funding for cohesion policy and the common agricultural policy at the level of 2014–2020. Some of Poland's strategic objectives were in line with regional challenges, to which Morawiecki—during a January debate with representatives of the V4 governments in Budapest—included the technological development of the region, building national champions, and faster development related to the four freedoms of the EU by counteracting the protectionist actions of other EU countries.⁹

The Visegrad Group gave way to the Bucharest Nine in defining objectives focused on state and regional security. Furthermore, Poland's objective in its bilateral contacts with its V4 partners was to encourage greater involvement in the Three Seas Initiative.¹⁰ Poland also consistently promoted joint infrastructure and energy projects on the EU's north-south axis.

Multilateral Relations

From Poland's perspective, the basis for Visegrad cooperation continued to be European affairs, especially EU economic policy. The most important topic in this respect was the MFF negotiations for 2021–2027. The V4 countries—also in the joint declaration from February¹¹—stressed the need to maintain cohesion policy funding at its current level. However, achieving this objective was difficult

⁷ "Premier Mateusz Morawiecki: 'Filary naszego programu to skuteczność, wiarygodność, europejskość i jedność,'" KPRM, 12 December 2018, www.gov.pl/web/premier.

⁸ Apart from the V4 countries, the so-called Friends of Cohesion include Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia and Spain.

⁹ "Premier Mateusz Morawiecki na panelu dyskusyjnym premierów V4," KPRM, 26 January 2018, www.gov.pl/web/premier.

¹⁰ For example, in the November discussions in Warsaw between Minister Czaputowicz and his Czech counterpart Tomáš Petříček, the politicians raised the issue of cooperation within the framework of the Three Seas Initiative. Czaputowicz appreciated the fact that the Czech Republic signed a letter of intent on the establishment of the Three Seas Initiative Fund.

¹¹ "Joint Statement of the Visegrad Group (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia) and Croatia," Visegrad Group, 3 February 2018, www.visegradgroup.eu.

because of the scheduled exit of the UK from the EU and associated prospect of a reduction in the EU budget. In a draft published in May, the EC proposed to reduce spending on cohesion and the common agricultural policy (CAP). In order to increase the chances of stopping this decision, the V4 countries—as proposed by the EC—expressed their willingness to increase their contributions to the EU budget to above 1% of Gross National Income (GNI).¹² Poland, Slovakia, and Hungary were ready to take on the increased contribution up to 1.2% of GNI.¹³ The disputes arose in connection with the EC's proposal to introduce budgetary sanctions for Member States not complying with the rule of law. Poland and Hungary, which were subject to the procedure under Article 7 TEU in 2018, rejected the introduction of such political conditionality.

In January, the agriculture ministers of the V4 and Croatia set out the objectives for the CAP after 2020 in a joint declaration.¹⁴ The document contained the priority of Poland, which was against the introduction of co-financing of direct payments from the CAP by Member States. During the Hungarian presidency, the BIOEAST initiative was introduced. It concerned macro-regional cooperation in the area of research and innovation in agriculture, which Poland started in 2016.¹⁵ The declaration of agriculture ministers of the V4 countries, Bulgaria, Croatia, Slovenia, and the Baltic States¹⁶ of June stressed, among other things, the need to increase their participation in the EU framework programmes for research and innovation, including Horizon 2020, through projects in the field of bio-economy.

In the debate on the future of the EU, the Visegrad Group expressed in two declarations by the Heads of Government in January¹⁷ and June¹⁸ a reserved attitude towards deepening European integration. The V4 opposed, for example, the establishment of a common budget for the eurozone, further integration in the

¹² *Ibidem*.

¹³ M. Szczepanik, "Central Europe in the Negotiations of the EU Multiannual Financial Framework," *PISM Bulletin*, no. 128 (1199), 19 September 2018, www.pism.pl.

¹⁴ "Joint declaration of the ministers of agriculture of the Visegrad Group and Croatia on the Commission Communication on the Future of Food and Farming," Visegrad Group, 25 January 2018, www.visegradgroup.eu.

¹⁵ The first joint declaration of the ministers of agriculture of the V4+Bulgaria, Romania and Slovenia concerning the bioeconomy was signed in October 2016 in Warsaw. The same issue was addressed in the conclusions of the meeting in Nadarzyn in June 2017.

¹⁶ "Joint declaration of the ministers of agriculture of the Visegrad Group, Bulgaria, Croatia, Slovenia and the Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania) on the Vision of the Central and Eastern European Initiative for Knowledge-based Agriculture, Aquaculture and Forestry in the Bioeconomy 'Bioeast,'" Visegrad Group, 13 June 2018, www.visegradgroup.eu.

¹⁷ "V4 Statement on the Future of Europe," Visegrad Group, 26 January 2018, www.visegradgroup.eu.

¹⁸ "Stronger Together—Joint Statement of the Prime Ministers of the Visegrad Group," Visegrad Group, 21 June 2018, www.visegradgroup.eu.

area of migration and asylum policy, as well as the community-level regulation of employment rights. At the same time, it stressed the need to improve the EU Single Market. It was a concept consistent with the views of the Polish government and closest to its considerations regarding the future of the EU among the ideas that emerged in the pan-European debate.

The V4 countries consistently opposed greater integration with regard to migration and asylum policy in the EU, including compulsory quotas for the reception of refugees. They emphasised strengthening the protection of external borders, preventing irregular migration, and reducing migration inflows into Europe through closer cooperation with their countries of origin and transit.¹⁹ At the same time, they did not support the reform of the European Border and Coastguard Agency (Frontex) proposed by the EC. The V4 countries opposed an increase in its competences and stressed the need to maintain the competences of the national services in protecting the state border. For the Visegrad Group, which had been associated in the EU with the opposition to the mandatory relocation of refugees since 2015, the provisions of the European Council summit of 28–29 June were crucial.²⁰ The adoption of the voluntary reception of refugees contributed to the reduction of tensions among the V4 and certain EU institutions and countries as well as to shift the emphasis towards political cooperation within the group. Migration was also discussed at the V4+France leaders' meeting on 28 June in Brussels before the European Council devoted to this issue. The discussions were initiated by the Hungarian presidency of the V4 after the meeting on migration held by the EC President Jean-Claude Juncker on 24 June, in which the Visegrad Group did not participate.

The V4 cooperation with the Western Balkan countries also focused on migration issues according to the priorities of the Hungarian presidency. The emphasis being placed on migration was not in line with the activity of certain EU institutions declaring in 2018 their willingness to become more involved in the enlargement to include the countries of the region.²¹ It also diverged from the objectives of Poland, which for several years had shown greater interest in the Western Balkans and committed itself to organize the Berlin Process Summit in 2019.²² In the declaration

¹⁹ "V4 Statement...", *op. cit.*

²⁰ J. Szymańska, "Efekty szczytu UE w sprawie migracji," *Komentarz PISM*, no. 50/2018, 2 July 2018, www.pism.pl.

²¹ T. Żornaczuk, "EU Enlargement in the Balkans: New Prospects for Resolving Old Challenges," *PISM Bulletin*, no. 39 (1110), 2 March 2018, www.pism.pl.

²² The Berlin Process is a coalition of ten EU countries (Austria, Croatia, Germany, Slovenia, France, Italy, the United Kingdom, Poland, Greece and Bulgaria) working with the countries of the Western Balkans for their development. It was initiated in Berlin in 2014.

of the Visegrad ministers of internal affairs²³ the Balkan countries were defined as key partners for controlling the Balkan migration route. The V4 ensured that technical assistance and support staff for local services were maintained. This was confirmed by the heads of governments of the V4 countries and Austria when they decided to establish a support mechanism to counteract irregular migration and human trafficking and to protect the borders of the Balkan countries.²⁴

However, at the May meeting of the foreign ministers of the V4, the Western Balkan countries, Croatia, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Romania, Cyprus, and at the Greek Cape, Sunion, the customary joint declaration of support for the Euro-Atlantic integration in the Balkans was missing. This was later expressed in the V4 Common Position of the Heads of Governments on the future of the EU²⁵ adopted in June, also praising the agreement between Macedonia and Greece regarding the name of the former. However, the value of this declaration was reduced by Hungary's inconsistent attitude towards the Western Balkans, including Orbán's appeal to block a compromise with Greece in this dispute²⁶ or to grant asylum to the former prime minister of Macedonia, Nikola Gruevski,²⁷ who was legally convicted in his country for abuse of power.

Hungary's foreign policy trends, which similarly weakened V4 cohesion, could also be seen in its approach towards Ukraine. Hungary continued (from September 2017) to block meetings of the NATO-Ukraine committees at the highest level. This was in contradiction with the aspirations of the other V4 countries, especially Poland, as well as with earlier Visegrad declarations of support for bringing the Eastern Partnership countries closer to the EU.

The ministers of foreign affairs of the V4, the Baltic and Nordic countries (V4+NB8) met for the sixth time in this format on 19 June in Stockholm. The aim of Poland, which in 2013, together with Sweden, initiated a dialogue in this configuration, was to strengthen regional cooperation on the north-south axis.²⁸

²³ "Joint Declaration of the Ministers of the Interior," Visegrad Group, 26 June 2018, www.visegradgroup.eu.

²⁴ "Visegrad Group And Austria Summit Declaration On 'Setting Up A Mechanism For Assistance In Protecting The Borders Of The Western Balkan Countries,'" Visegrad Group, 21 June 2018, www.visegradgroup.eu.

²⁵ "Stronger Together ...," *op. cit.*

²⁶ V. Jóźwiak, T. Żornaczuk, "Changes in Hungary's Policy towards the Western Balkans," *PISM Bulletin*, no. 144 (1215), 23 October 2018, www.pism.pl.

²⁷ T. Żornaczuk, "Political Effects of Hungary Granting Asylum to the Former Prime Minister of Macedonia," *PISM Bulletin*, no. 167 (1238), 10 December 2018, www.pism.pl.

²⁸ "Minister Jacek Czaputowicz na spotkaniu V4 – NB8 w Sztokholmie," Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Stockholm, 19 June 2018, www.gov.pl/web/szwecja/ambasada.

Among the issues that were addressed, linking the two regions, were relations with the EU's eastern neighbours, security policy, and energy security.

One of the priorities of the Hungarian presidency was to develop economic cooperation with non-European partners. Strengthening cooperation in the field of research and development was the topic of the V4+Australia format meeting of the ministers of economy (19 January in Budapest). The V4 expressed its support for the earliest possible start of dialogue on a free trade agreement between the EU and Australia. The first meeting of the V4 and the Central Asian countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan) at the level of ministers of foreign affairs on 27 February in Budapest also concerned the possibility of economic cooperation and their relations with the EU.²⁹ The EU special representative for the Central Asia region, Peter Burian, also participated in the discussions. Apart from Hungary, which delegated a minister, all the V4 countries were represented by deputy ministers, demonstrating less interest among the majority of the group in this policy direction. These meetings did not produce any tangible results unlike previous attempts to establish closer relations between the V4 as a grouping and non-European countries.

The V4 further strengthened parliamentary cooperation. The meetings of Speakers of Parliaments were held in Budapest in March and in Košice in October. The declaration adopted at the March summit³⁰ stressed the need to involve national parliaments in the dialogue on the future of the EU and to strengthen their role in the EU decision-making process. However, no suggestion was made of how to achieve this objective that would be compatible with the applicable EU treaties.

Thanks to, for example, the Świnoujście gas port and interconnectors with its neighbours, Poland gradually achieved the objective of becoming a regional gas hub. Another step in this direction, which also connects the Polish and Hungarian gas markets, was starting the construction of the Polish-Slovak gas interconnector in September. It was increasingly difficult for the Morawiecki government to convince its V4 partners (Czechia and Hungary) of the unfavourable outcomes of the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline for the region.

In view of infrastructure deficiencies on the north-south line, the V4 infrastructure ministers expressed their willingness to build a high-speed railway to connect Warsaw and Budapest via Bratislava and Brno. This was to be

²⁹ "Spotkanie szefów dyplomacji państw Grupy Wyszehradzkiej i Azji Centralnej w Budapeszcie," Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Budapest, 27 February 2018, www.gov.pl/web/wegry/ambasada.

³⁰ "Joint Statement on the Official Meeting of Speakers/Presidents of the Visegrad Group Parliaments," Visegrad Group, 2 March 2018, www.visegradgroup.eu.

coordinated by setting up a special working group.³¹ The Polish government also raised the issue of the construction of the Via Carpatia route during consultations with regional partners. It was the subject of bilateral discussions between Morawiecki, Pellegrini, and Orbán, as well as the meetings in the V4 format, for example, during the ministerial summit at the resort Štrbské Pleso. Although there is an agreement between the V4 countries over the need for this route, the results of intergovernmental consultations have not been significantly tangible.

The defence policy of the V4 countries was clearly part of NATO cooperation. This was confirmed by the statement of the V4 defence ministers on the sidelines of the NATO summit in Brussels,³² in June, where they reiterated their allied commitment to devote at least 2% of GDP to defence spending by 2024. A significant activity of the V4 as a member of NATO was the declaration of establishing the V4 Joint Logistics Support Group Headquarters (V4 JLSG HQ).³³ At the same time, the V4 countries supported the establishment of a permanent structural cooperation mechanism (PESCO) within the EU and security cooperation between the Alliance and the Union. A better coordination of troops, on the other hand, was to be achieved through exercises such as *Slovak Shield 2018*, conducted in September in the Slovak municipality of Lešť. About 1,500 troops from the V4 countries and the U.S. participated in the exercises.

Bilateral political relations

Polish-Czech relations. Both Poland and Czechia maintained good neighbourly relations in the year in which they celebrated the centenary of regaining their statehood. A symbolic gesture from the Czech side was the mention of Poland as a partner in NATO and the EU on the agenda of the new government of Andrej Babiš, or the invoking of Czech-Polish cooperation in defence, infrastructure, and other things during his speech in the Chamber of Deputies (11 July) before the vote of confidence in the new government.

³¹ "Declaration of Intent of the Ministers of the Visegrad Group countries for cooperation to develop a high-speed railway network in Central Europe," Visegrad Group, 1 October 2018, www.visegradgroup.eu.

³² "V4 Defence Ministers Adopted a Joint Statement on the Brussels NATO Summit," 13 July 2018, www.visegradgroup.eu.

³³ "V4 cooperation reinforces both the European Union and NATO," Magyarország Kormánya, 16 November 2018, www.kormany.hu.

Miloš Zeman, who won the January presidential elections,³⁴ continued to stand for closer bilateral relations and within the framework of the V4. He stressed this when visiting Poland on 9–11 May during his second foreign visit (after Slovakia) of the second term.

Bilateral relations were fostered by good relations between the prime ministers of both countries. Both were former finance ministers and knew each other from the sessions of the Economic and Financial Affairs Council (ECOFIN). The reception of Morawiecki in Karlovy Vary (6 July) was held a few days after the Czech government was sworn in. On 15 November, the Czech-Polish intergovernmental consultations were held in Prague with the participation of both prime ministers. Among the topics discussed were bilateral cooperation, the future EU budget, migration, and Brexit. The new Czech prime minister emphasised the importance of the Visegrad Group more clearly than his predecessor, Bohuslav Sobotka. This contradicted his earlier views, which were critical towards the functioning of the V4.

Interparliamentary cooperation included the visits of the Speaker of the Sejm Marek Kuchciński to Czechia (in May and September) and the President of the Czech Chamber of Deputies Radek Vondráček in Poland (June). These were complemented by a session of the presidiums of the Sejm and the Czech Chamber of Deputies, which was held in Jurata on 29 August. As with previous meetings in this format, it was an opportunity to discuss bilateral, regional, and EU-related issues.

Poland's diplomacy towards Czechia was weakened for most of the year due to the postponed appointment of a new ambassador in Prague. It was already September when Barbara Ćwioro became ambassador, replacing Grażyna Bernatowicz, who held this position until December 2017. The new ambassador not only stressed the need to implement the traditional objectives of the post in Prague, that is, the development of bilateral relations (including ministerial cooperation), the promotion of Poland in Czechia, and supporting the Polish minority, but also stressed the need to involve national parliaments, as well as the importance of military cooperation.³⁵

Although the Czech government did not support Poland in the procedure for the protection of the rule of law initiated by the EC, President Zeman symbolically supported the country in its dispute with the EC over logging in the forest of Białowieża. During his visit to Poland in May, the Czech president even visited

³⁴ Ł. Ogrodnik, "The Re-election of President Miloš Zeman: Consequences for Czech Domestic and Foreign Policy," *PISM Bulletin*, no. 19 (1090), 2 February 2018, www.pism.pl.

³⁵ "Zapis przebiegu posiedzenia Komisji Spraw Zagranicznych," Kancelaria Sejmu, 18 July 2018, www.sejm.gov.pl

this forest complex. Such gestures by the Czech head of state towards Poland served to strengthen its position with regard to logging in Czechia, for example, in the Šumava region, conducted with the aim of fighting bark beetle. The Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies Vondráček, on the other hand, expressed his opposition towards linking EU funds to the issue of the rule of law in the Member States, which was in line with the position of the Polish government.

Polish-Czech sectoral cooperation developed in a stable manner. In the development of road infrastructure, the construction of the S3 road on the Polish side and the D11 road on the Czech side, connecting Bolków with Hradec Králové, progressed simultaneously. The extension of the Czech section of the D1 motorway and the Polish A1 motorway improved connections between countries through the Moravian Gate. Both investments were the subject of bilateral consultations. Preparations for the Stork II gas interconnection also continued in 2018.

Poland welcomed Czechia's willingness to further engage in the operation of the Three Seas Initiative representing the 12 EU countries. Although, at the September summit in Bucharest, Czechia was represented by the Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies (eight countries were represented by presidents), it was one of the six Member states who, in their letter of intent, agreed to participate in the Three Seas initiative Investment Fund,³⁶ which was to provide co-financing for infrastructure investments.

Poland and Czechia increasingly differed in their approach toward building the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline. While the Polish government continued to declare its opposition to the pipeline, perceiving it as a politically motivated venture, the new Czech government expressed its support for the pipeline. At the level of the heads of state, there was also a different vision of cooperation with Russia.

Polish-Slovak Relations. Poland and Slovakia cooperated primarily in the field of infrastructure (gas and roads) in bilateral relations. They also tried to coordinate cooperation in the EU efficiently, also in the context of the Slovakian presidency of the V4. Slovakia continued its Visegrad cooperation, while developing relations with Germany and France and pursuing the policy of strengthening the EU's integration most strongly among the V4 countries.³⁷

The good relationship at the highest level was demonstrated by President Andrzej Duda's visit to Štrbské Pleso in Slovakia on 11–12 October. Apart from the four-party dimension (the V4 presidents meeting), the visit included bilateral discussions with President Andrei Kiska. Furthermore, foreign ministers Jacek

³⁶ "Działalność międzynarodowa BGK," BGK, www.bgk.pl.

³⁷ Ł. Ogrodnik, "Modifications to Slovakia's European Policy," *PISM Bulletin*, no. 70 (1141), 17 May 2018, www.pism.pl.

Czaputowicz and Miroslav Lajčák met in Bratislava in May and in Warsaw in December. Interparliamentary cooperation was marked by the February visit of Speaker Kuchciński to Slovakia at the invitation of the President of the National Council Andrej Danko. Thus, the dynamics of the visits from previous years was maintained.

As in the case of the Polish diplomatic representation in Czechia, there was a change in the position of the Polish ambassador in Bratislava. Since September, Krzysztof Strzałka held this position, replacing Leszek Soczewica. In his mission, Strzałka emphasised, among other things, efforts to improve the infrastructure connecting both countries, and local government and cultural cooperation.

The main event for bilateral relations was the inauguration of the construction of the gas interconnection between Strachocin and Veľké Kapušany on 18 September, which was to enable Slovakia to transfer gas from the LNG terminal in Świnoujście, on the one hand, and to give Poland the opportunity to obtain gas from southern Europe on the other. The target capacity of the interconnector from Slovakia to Poland is to be up to 5.7 bcm of gas per year, and in the other direction, 4.7 bcm. The event was attended by politicians, including Pellegrini and the Polish Government Plenipotentiary for Strategic Energy Infrastructure Piotr Naimski. Pellegrini's government maintained its opposition to the construction of the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline, indicating, in particular, the importance of gas transit and the economic losses that Slovakia would suffer as a result of the investment.

The agreement on the connection between the S19 and R4 expressways in the area of Barwinek and Vyšný Komárnik was to bring the Via Carpatia route closer to the Slovak-Polish border. On 16 July, together with the agreement on the construction of a road border bridge over the Jeleśnia stream, signed by Andrzej Adamczyk, Minister of Infrastructure, and Árpád Ersek, Minister of Transport and Construction of Slovakia.

Polish-Hungarian Relations. Poland's relations with Hungary were still determined by close political cooperation supported by the continuing similarities in the programmes of the Law and Justice and Fidesz governments. The Visegrad context was an important part of bilateral relations—Poland and Hungary addressed the issue of the EU's future, referring to stable governance and good economic potential in the countries of the Central European region, thereby giving their position particular importance. Furthermore, as the only EU

Member States under the procedure of Article 7 TEU,³⁸ they were natural allies for each other in preventing possible further steps in these proceedings.

As in previous years, numerous high-level bilateral meetings were held in 2018. Presidents Andrzej Duda and János Áder and their spouses met on 23–24 March as part of the Day of Polish-Hungarian Friendship celebrated annually since 2008, this time in Veszprém, Hungary. The Speakers of the Sejm Marek Kuchciński and the Senate Stanisław Karczewski received the highest state decoration from President Áder in March—the Order of Merit of the Kingdom of Hungary. Speaker Karczewski met once with the President of the Hungarian Országgyűlés (parliament) László Kövér as part of bilateral cooperation, and Speaker Kuchciński met with him three times. On 20 February, the Országgyűlés also adopted a resolution expressing solidarity³⁹ with Poland in connection with its inclusion by the EC in the procedure under Article 7 of the TEU⁴⁰. It also held a formal sitting with some Hungarian parliamentarians and Speaker Kuchciński, among others, on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of Poland regaining independence.

There were three bilateral meetings at the heads of government level. To emphasise the importance of bilateral relations, Prime Minister Morawiecki paid his first official foreign visit to Budapest (3 January) just after taking office, and on 14 May, Orbán paid his first visit to Warsaw after the swearing-in of his fourth government. The meetings of prime ministers were dominated by political declarations emphasising the symbolic dimension of relations and a coherent perspective on the future of the EU. These declarations often proved strong political hopes on the Polish part for Orbán's effectiveness in achieving common goals at the European level.⁴¹ The countries' convergent approach to most current EU affairs was emphasised, especially in migration policy.⁴² However, the dialogue

³⁸ V. Jóźwiak, "European Parliament Triggers Article 7 against Hungary," *PISM Spotlight*, no. 62/2018, 17 September 2018, www.pism.pl.

³⁹ For supporting Poland in this matter, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jacek Czaputowicz, among others, thanked Hungary in his speech to the Sejm about the priorities of Polish foreign policy.

⁴⁰ 2/2018. (II. 21.) "OGY határozat a Lengyelország melletti kiállásról Brüsszel nyomásgyakorlásával szemben," ["Parliament's resolution no. 2/2018 of 22 February expressing support for Poland in the face of Brussels' pressure"], Jogtár, net.jogtar.hu.

⁴¹ The Chancellery of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Poland informed that, for example, Prime Minister Morawiecki had stated that he was full of admiration, looking at the way Prime Minister Orbán is fighting for a better Hungary and Europe. He said: *I believe that a better, fairer, freer Europe can come out of Hungary*, "[...] I firmly believe that thanks to Viktor Orbán, the Hungarian nation and Polish-Hungarian friendship, we will win a better Europe." See: KPRM, 6 April 2018, www.gov.pl/web/premier.

⁴² "Premier Mateusz Morawiecki w Budapeszcie: Wierzymy w Europę i europejskie wartości," KPRM, 3 January 2018, www.gov.pl/web/premier.

did not bring about new arrangements in declarative areas of cooperation that are important for both sides—transport, energy, and other sectoral policies. The Polish prime minister also participated in the unveiling of a monument commemorating the victims of the Smolensk catastrophe on 6 April in Budapest. This ceremony was held two days before the parliamentary elections in Hungary, which made it part of the Fidesz election campaign.

Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs Péter Szijjártó paid three working visits to Warsaw (in February, May, and October), during which he met with the heads of the ministries of foreign affairs, internal affairs, infrastructure, entrepreneurship, and technology. The topics of these meetings included the MFF negotiations for 2021–2027, the procedure under Article 7 TEU, the roadmap for the construction of a high-speed railway line between Warsaw and Budapest, and migration issues. Poland and Hungary agreed to implement a joint programme to support Christian communities in the Middle East. As part of this initiative, Poland proposed PLN 48 million for humanitarian aid in Syria.⁴³ During the Warsaw Security Forum conference (25 October), bilateral discussions between Szijjártó and the Ukrainian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Paweł Klimkin, were also held. Thus, Poland contributed to the opening of the Hungarian-Ukrainian dialogue in the face of the dispute between these countries over the rights of the Hungarian minority in Zakarpattia. Although the day after taking office, the Polish foreign minister made his first telephone calls to the heads of diplomacy of Hungary and Ukraine,⁴⁴ he did not visit Budapest.

The points of contention not raised by Poland were Hungary's openness to political and economic cooperation with Russia (including a negative assessment of the impact of the sanctions imposed on this country) and the related ambiguous—and thus unreliable—approach to the diversification of gas supply sources and regional cooperation in this regard. This involved Hungary's support of the construction of the Nord Stream 2 and Turkish Stream gas pipelines with a declaratory interest in a large number of alternative projects, such as joining the construction of the LNG terminal on the island of Krk, completing the North-South gas corridor, purchasing gas from Romanian deposits in the Black Sea, or the Italy-Hungary gas interconnection.

⁴³ "Polska i Węgry wesprą chrześcijan na Bliskim Wschodzie," *TVP Info*, 25 April 2018, www.tvp.info.

⁴⁴ "Budapeszt i Kijów. Pierwsze rozmowy telefoniczne szefa MSZ," *TVN24*, 10 January 2018, www.tvn24.pl.

Economic relations

The value of Poland's trade with the Visegrad Group countries continued to grow, with a positive balance for Poland. For each of the Member States, both imports and exports increased. Polish exports to Slovakia increased rapidly (by about 9.5%) and to Hungary (by 8%). Czechia remained Poland's second most-important export market after Germany.⁴⁵

In 2018, for the second year in a row, Polish-Czech trade turnover exceeded €20 billion. Poland was Czechia's third trading partner (after Germany and China), slipping down one place from 2017. The Czech food market has unexploited potential for Polish products. The warnings given by the Czech Ministry of Agriculture in the mid-July to Polish food producers about the allegedly poor quality of products exported to Czechia did not serve to improve the situation. Among the Polish investors in Czechia are PKN Orlen S.A. (holding 100% of the shares of the petrochemical concern Unipetrol since October 2018) and PKP Cargo.

Poland was Slovakia's third-largest trading partner (after Germany and Czechia). Trade exchange increased by 7.7% in 2018. The largest Slovakian investors in Poland included HB Reavis, building the tallest office building in the EU at Varso Place in Warsaw, as well as ESET and IDC Holding. Polish investors in Slovakia included mBank and Mercury Market. The 17th Slovak-Polish Economic Forum, held in September in Poprad, contributed to the promotion of bilateral economic relations.

The Polish-Hungarian trade turnover in 2018 was €9.52 billion. The trade exchange increased by 9% compared to 2017. Polish exports to Hungary accounted for 2.6% of total Polish exports, and total turnover with Hungary amounted to 2.1% of Polish trade turnover. Poland maintained its position as the third-largest exporter to the Hungarian market (after Germany and Austria).⁴⁶ The development of Polish airlines on the Hungarian market was of significant importance from the point of view of Polish-Hungarian economic relations. In 2018, LOT launched direct flights from Budapest to New York and Chicago and planned other flights, including to London.

⁴⁵ "Bardzo dobre wyniki obrotów towarowych handlu zagranicznego w 2018 r.," MRPiT, 11 February 2019, www.gov.pl/web/rozwoj-praca-technologia.

⁴⁶ "A külkereskedelmi termékforgalom értéke euróban és értékindexei a fontosabb országok szerint," Központi Statisztikai Hivatal, www.ksh.hu.

Table 1.

Poland's Trade Exchange with Visegrad Group Countries (billions of euros)

Country	Trade flow	2016	2017	2018
Total (V4)	Export	21.6	23.54	25.62
	Import	13.4	14.41	15.33
	Balance	8.2	9.13	10.29
Czechia	Export	12.15	13.04	14.05
	Import	6.55	7.3	7.72
	Balance	5.6	5.74	6.33
Slovakia	Export	4.55	5.12	5.68
	Import	3.61	3.62	3.98
	Balance	0.94	1.5	1.7
Hungary	Export	4.9	5.38	5.89
	Import	3.24	3.49	3.63
	Balance	1.66	1.89	2.26

Source: *Author's compilation based on Central Statistical Office data and the "Synthetic Information on Polish Exports and Imports", MRPiT, www.gov.pl/web/rozwoj-praca-technologie*

Social and Cultural Relations

2018 was a year of celebrations marking the centenary of statehood in Poland, Czechia, and Slovakia. In relations with Czechia, the celebrations consisted both of gestures by state authorities, such as the laying of flowers by the Sejm Speaker Kuchciński at the monument of the first Czechoslovak president, Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, in Prague, and of initiatives such as the project "Świętujemy razem" (We celebrate together), prepared by the Polish Institute in Prague. In September, the project "sPOLeCZně" (*together*) started in Prague. "Polish-Czech anniversaries 1918–2018" was held under the auspices of the ministers of foreign affairs and speakers of the parliaments of both countries. It included vernissages, concerts, and film screenings. Both countries were also united by common tragedy—in

December, as a result of a methane explosion at the ČSM mine in Karviná, 12 Poles and one Czech were killed.

The 100th anniversary of Poland regaining its independence was commemorated by cultural events in Slovakia. These included a concert of Polish organ music arranged by the Club of the Polish Association of Poles and Their Friends in Slovakia on 18 November in St Emmeram's Cathedral in Nitra and a concert entitled "Na skrzydłach wolności" (On the wings of freedom) held by the Polish embassy in Bratislava on 8 November in the Slovak National Theatre in Bratislava.

An important event in Polish-Hungarian social and cultural relations was the establishment of the Waław Felczak Institute for Polish-Hungarian Cooperation in Warsaw. For the years 2018–2027, a maximum of PLN 60 million (PLN 6 million per year) was allocated for the institute's activities, thus significantly increasing funds for cooperation in the fields of science, education, culture, and other things. Apart from organising the inaugural Polish-Hungarian School of Leaders for about 200 students from Poland and Hungary in November 2018 in Krasiczyn in the Podkarpacie region, the institute's activities were focused on subsidising smaller initiatives of other institutions. The institute regularly commented on Hungarian political developments through its website. Frequently, these were reprints of articles presenting the Hungarian government's actions unilaterally, in a favourable light.⁴⁷ This gave the impression that the Felczak Institute was politicised and associated with the ruling parties in Poland and Hungary. The scope of activities undertaken by its sister institution, the Felczak Foundation in Budapest, which announced competitions for the financing of publications, language learning, and artistic scholarships, among other things, was wider.

Assessment

The Visegrad Group facilitated the implementation of the Polish government's European policy objectives. Poland, together with its V4 partners, managed to temporarily withdraw from the concepts for the EU of deeper integration and closer cooperation in migration and asylum policy.

Despite the convergent objective of maintaining high funding for traditional policies, no common negotiating position on the next MFF was reached in 2018. Although the V4 partners did not join voices criticising Poland, no Visegrad coalition against linking EU budgetary matters with the rule of law was formed.

⁴⁷ See, e.g.: A. Bryk, "Uderzenie unijnego establishmentu w niepokorne Węgry," *Rzeczpospolita*, 28 November 2018, www.rp.pl.

As a success, the Polish government considered the adoption of rules by the EU regarding the voluntary relocation of refugees,⁴⁸ which was the main position of the V4. The shift in the EU negotiations towards the external dimension of migration policy, including discussions on the establishment of asylum centres outside the EU, strengthened the V4's arguments. However, the group's position on Frontex was paradoxical. On the one hand, the Visegrad Group demanded the institutional strengthening of the EU's external borders, while, on the other hand, the group's countries opposed strengthening Frontex by increasing its competences and resources, instead emphasising the sovereignty of the states.

An important step towards integrating gas markets in the EU and increasing the security of supply in the region was the inauguration of the construction of the Poland-Slovakia gas pipeline. The development of the infrastructure was also to be supported by the Three Seas Initiative in operation since 2016 and intended to complement the V4 as a regional cooperation platform. The dialogue on this issue with partners from Czechia, Slovakia, and Hungary showed the Polish side's determination to deepen regional cooperation by means of a new tool. Nevertheless, planning the cooperation within the Three Seas Initiative did not occur at the expense of relations within the V4.

⁴⁸ "Morawiecki: nie ma przymusowych relokacji uchodźców; to gigantyczny sukces Polski," *Polsat News*, 29 June 2018, www.polsatnews.pl.

III.

SELECTED PROBLEMS OF POLAND'S FOREIGN POLICY

The Katowice Climate Summit: Preparations and Outcomes

MAREK WĄSIŃSKI

Poland is the only country to have hosted (three times) and chaired (four times) the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)¹. The climate summit in Katowice (COP24), held from 2–16 December 2018, was expected to be the most significant conference to date in Poland². The Paris Agreement's implementation depended on its outcomes - it was only at COP24³ that the details of the agreement were settled, including the extent to which its provisions would apply to all UNFCCC parties. Therefore, resolving most of the disputed issues in the package implementing the agreement can be regarded as a success. However, there are doubts as to what benefits Poland has gained from hosting the summit.

Background

The Kyoto Protocol, which obliged countries to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions, ended in 2012. The Doha Amendment, which was to extend this period to 2020, was not ratified by sufficient number of states and did not enter into force. It was not until the Paris Agreement, negotiated in 2015, that set a framework for global actions beyond 2020 and defined their objectives - to limit the increase in average temperatures at the end of the century by 2°C and to strive to limit them to 1.5°C. For the first time, it obliged all parties to counteract climate change and outlined a system to coordinate these efforts. However, the text of the

¹ In Germany, the Climate Summit has been held four times since Bonn is the seat of the UNFCCC. Only COP1 was held in Berlin (1995) and Germany was the organiser and chair at the time (Angela Merkel was president of the summit). In 1999, Poland chaired the proceedings held in Bonn, while in 2001 the so-called COP6 bis took place, due to the suspension of the proceedings in the previous year in Hague. In 2017, the summit was chaired by Fiji, with Germany covering organisation costs.

² The 14th Conference of the Parties (COP14) in Poznań in 2008 was to precede the negotiation of a climate agreement in Copenhagen by one year (which ultimately failed). The COP19 summit in Warsaw in 2013 was held two years before the Paris conference, where such an agreement was successfully negotiated.

³ At the same time, the COP24 was: the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP14) and the third part of the first session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA1.3). In further part of this article only the name COP24 is used. Similarly, I refer to CMA1.1 and CMA1.2 as COP22 and COP23 respectively.

agreement was quite general, which made it necessary to specify the rules for its implementation (the so-called *rulebook*⁴).

In line with the decisions of COP21 in Paris, the Ad Hoc Working Group on Paris Agreement (APA) was established in 2015 to start negotiations of rules to implement the agreement. In November 2016, at the COP22 in Marrakech, it was decided to conclude the discussions at the 24th Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC in 2018. The rulebook negotiation process involved detailing virtually all of the key elements of the agreement - from monitoring and reporting emissions, reporting reduction plans to financial issues.

The COP23 was held in October 2017 in Bonn (chaired by Fiji). Following its conclusion, delegations and observers were convinced that insufficient achievements had been made, and as a result, the next summit was considered crucial to agree on the principles for implementing the agreement⁵. The so-called mid-session in Bonn (during which primarily convene the subsidiary bodies of the Conference of the Parties) was held in April/May 2018. Although Poland was to officially take over the presidency on the opening day of the summit, 2 December 2018, it had to actively participate in bilateral and multilateral discussions as early as the beginning of the year in order to learn about delegations' expectations, their red lines and to conduct preliminary negotiations. A clear division into developed countries (demanding more detailed and equally inclusive commitments) and developing countries (seeking to secure less stringent rules), as well as a huge range of negotiations and points of contention prompted delegations to hold one more auxiliary session in Bangkok in September 2018 ahead of the COP24. The additional session also failed to make significant progress, although the heads of the subsidiary bodies refer to its importance in building trust among parties. At the end of October, the negotiating text of the *rulebook* contained almost 3000 so-called *brackets*, i.e. points of contention that had not yet been proposed for a compromise solution.

The political events preceding the Katowice Summit were not very optimistic as regards the outcome. In Brazil the presidential election was won by Jair Bolsonaro, who in the campaign announced an exit from the Paris Agreement. After his victory, a few days before the Katowice summit, the Brazilian government withdrew Brazil's official candidacy to host the COP in 2019. The U.S. President Donald Trump's

⁴ After the negotiation of the Paris Agreement, the name Paris rulebook came to be used to describe the rules for the implementation of the agreement, in short: rulebook. Officially, it was called the Paris Agreement Work Programme (PAWP). In order to promote the name with a Polish connotation, the COP24 presidency started using the term Katowice rulebook or Katowice rules.

⁵ M. Wąsiński, "Between Bonn and Katowice: The Challenges in Global Climate Negotiations," *PISM Bulletin*, no. 2 (1073), 4 January 2018, www.pism.pl.

stance of American withdrawal from the Paris Agreement hindered confidence-building between negotiators and froze an increase in climate aspirations. China, since Trump's election, has become more restrained in declaring new actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and focused on protecting economic growth at a time of rising protectionism. Already at the Bonn conference in 2017, the problem was the position of Germany, which supported the efforts to combat climate change while at the same time recording an actual increase in emissions due to the problems of phasing out coal-based energy. These conditions limited the negotiators' room for manoeuvre, reduced trust among them and thus undermined the prospects for a successful negotiation of the *rulebook* text.

The argument for the success of the negotiations in Katowice was the compatibility of interests - virtually all parties benefited from adopting the rules for implementing the Paris agreement. Poland needed success as an organiser, the EU as a leader of climate measures. The U.S. had nothing to lose, having previously announced its withdrawal from the agreement. The least developed countries and small island states, on the other hand, wanted financial resources, the flow of which would in the future be linked to the operation of the Paris Agreement. China and India, acting as leaders of developing countries, could not oppose such an approach, and at the same time, as major manufacturers of renewable energy source (RES) equipment, needed close cooperation with the EU – in case of China also due to the trade war with the U.S.⁶

Organisational matters

The Ministry of the Environment (MoE) of Poland was the main office responsible for conducting the negotiations and organising the climate summit. Initially, the president of the COP24 was to be Minister Jan Szyszko, who was officially mentioned in the final documents of the COP23 summit in Bonn. However, on 9 January 2018, Mr Szyszko was dismissed from his post and replaced by Henryk Kowalczyk - the person responsible for preparations of the conference. Nevertheless, it was Jan Szyszko who was nominated as president of the COP24. On 12 March 2018, the then deputy minister of the environment and government plenipotentiary for climate policy - Paweł Sałek - was also dismissed, but no one was appointed to replace him⁷. This situation did not have a good impact on the preparation of the summit supervised by Minister Kowalczyk and Deputy

⁶ M. Wąsiński, "COP24 Opens—the Last Chance for the Paris Agreement," *PISM Spotlight*, no. 82/2018, 30 November 2018, www.pism.pl.

⁷ "Odwołani ministrowie zostaną pełnomocnikami do smogu i szczytu klimatycznego?," *Biznes Alert*, 13 March 2018, <http://biznesalert.pl>.

Minister Sławomir Mazurek (who was responsible for, among other things, waste management) in terms of its merits. Applicable appointment of Jan Szyszko, then only a member of the Polish Sejm, as the future president of the COP24 meant, among other things, a lost opportunity to build the president's recognisability among negotiators and experts. It also raised concerns about the lack of sufficient legitimacy of the future president, as previous presidents of climate summits had held the position of at least deputy minister or government plenipotentiary. It was not until 27 April 2018 that speculation on the subject was ended with the appointment of Michał Kurtyka (Secretary of State at the Ministry of Energy responsible for the Electromobility Development Plan) as Plenipotentiary for the COP24 Presidency and Secretary of State at the Ministry of Environment⁸.

Due to the global scope of the event, the expected number of participants exceeding 20,000, and its significance for energy and economic policy, other state institutions were also involved in the preparatory works. Considering the necessity to guarantee security and significant expenses, the government decided to formalise the activities through the so-called "Special Act". The Act of 10 January 2018, "on special solutions related to the organisation in the Republic of Poland of a session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change" intended above all to establish a Team for the organisation of the conference⁹. It consisted of representatives of: The Ministry of the Environment, The Ministry of the Interior, The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Silesian Voivodeship, the Mayor of Katowice and the following services: the police, the fire brigade, the border guard and the Internal Security Agency. The team was headed by Rafał Bochenek since 28 March 2018, who was nominated as the Minister Plenipotentiary for the Organisation of the COP24.

Additional units were created in the Ministry of Environment, supporting the Department of Sustainable Development and International Cooperation and the Department of Air and Climate Protection, which dealt with issues related to international climate negotiations. Among the new units was the Department for the Organisation of the COP24 Conference, whose task was to provide organisational and logistical support for promotion, media activities and financial matters. The Department for the Presidency of the Conference of the Parties, on the other hand, was responsible for substantive support to the COP24 President and coordination of negotiations at the international forum. However, no decision was made to divide the expert team into one responsible for the position

⁸ "Michał Kurtyka – MKiŚ," www.gov.pl/web/klimat.

⁹ "Act of 10 January 2018 on special solutions related to the organisation in the Republic of Poland of a session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change," Sejm RP, www.sejm.gov.pl.

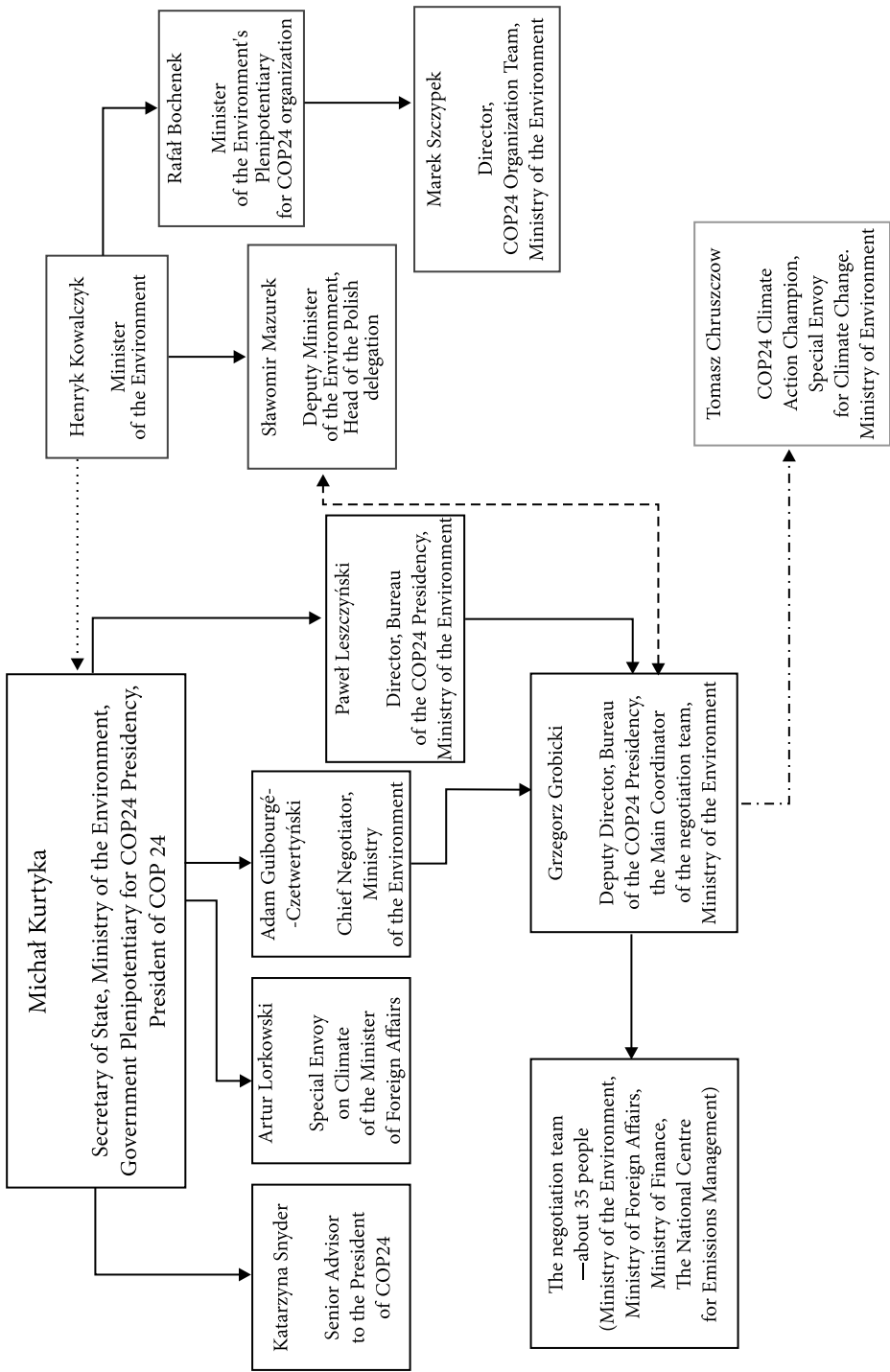
of Poland at the 24th Conference of the Parties and one handling the duties of the Presidency and the host¹⁰. The Polish delegation was formally headed by the Deputy Minister Sławomir Mazurek. Substantive assistance was also provided by experts from The National Centre for Emissions Management (KOBiZE), who had also participated in previous summits. At the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Economic Department of the European Union was responsible for substantive and organisational support, while at the Ministry of Finance, experts for finance climate commitments.

Michał Kurtyka appointed Adam Gouibourgé-Czetwertyński, head of the environmental policy department at the Permanent Representation of Poland to the EU and a member of the COP19 negotiating team in Warsaw, as Poland's chief negotiator. Mr Kurtyka appointed Katarzyna Snyder, Poland's chief climate negotiator in 2014–2015, as his most prominent advisor, and she could represent him in discussions with other delegations, relieving him of the burden of learning the parties' positions during bilateral meetings. Grzegorz Grobicki, the Deputy Director and Head of the Department for the Presidency of the Conference of the Parties, became the head of the expert team and the main participant in the meetings coordinating the EU position. Paweł Leszczyński, an advisor to Minister Kurtyka, was appointed director of this department. As a result of the amendment of the law of 10 January 2018, which was made in July 2018, one more position was created - the Special Envoy of the Minister of Foreign Affairs for Climate, who was appointed Artur Lorkowski, a former ambassador in Vienna and an employee of the Office of the Committee for European Integration, where he dealt with, among other things, energy and climate issues. The position of ambassador allowed him to represent Poland and the COP24 president in discussions with other delegations before and during the climate summit. Tomasz Chruszczow, who was elected as a high-level representative at the COP24, also had a prominent role in the international forum. His responsibility was to conduct dialogue with parties, civil society, business and other climate policy actors.

To promote the idea of a fair transition, Katowice was selected as the host city, an example of the shift from coal mining to innovative industry. In the so-called special act, the cost of organising the COP24 was estimated at PLN 127 million, but in July 2018, the amended act doubled this sum (to PLN 252 million)¹¹. In March 2019, Minister Kowalczyk made available calculations of the costs incurred, which at the time amounted to PLN 177 million, with expenses

¹⁰ "List ministra Kurtyki do marszałka Sejmu Marka Kuchcińskiego," Kancelaria Sejmu, 30 October 2018, www.sejm.gov.pl.

¹¹ "Sejm zgodził się na podwojenie kosztów COP24 w Katowicach," *Energetyka24*, 20 July 2018, www.energetyka24.com.



for the promotion of the summit's results still being incurred. This calculation did not include Poland's scheduled contribution to the green climate fund, which is to amount to PLN 30 million¹².

Preparations for the summit

The activities of the Polish delegation preceding the COP24 focused on bilateral and multilateral meetings with the most important parties to the negotiations, and on the organisation of additional events. On 22–24 October 2018, the Pre-COP was held in Cracow, i.e. a meeting of a part of the delegation (attended by representatives of 40 states) with the Polish presidency, aimed at the convergence of positions before the beginning of the two-week Conference. During the Pre-COP, the business community, non-governmental organisations and local governments, i.e. stakeholders in climate negotiations who were not parties to the negotiations also expressed their opinions.

Trade unions, on the other hand, held the Social PRE-COP24 conference in August 2018, which brought together representatives of trade unionists, employers from the mining and energy-intensive industries. The patronage of the event favouring the coal sector by the President of Poland was negatively perceived by foreign media involved in energy and climate issues, equating the Polish position with the statements from the conference¹³.

In the process of preparing for Poland's promotion at the summit, Jan Szyszko initially mentioned the issue of carbon sequestration by soil and forests. Poland was to propose research on capturing CO² to determine what is more effective: sequestration or reduction of emissions¹⁴. With the nomination of Michał Kurtyka as president of the COP24, the preparation of three political declarations began, which were to become the Polish negotiating contribution to climate protection by promoting beneficial solutions: a solidarity-based and fair transition, a partnership to promote electromobility, forests and natural carbon sequestration.

¹² The Green Climate Fund is an international financial institution serving the UNFCCC (and the Paris Agreement), established in 2010 to help raise \$100 billion per year for financial assistance (for climate protection activities) for developing countries; see: "Reply to parliamentary question no. 29388 on COP24", Kancelaria Sejmu, 21 March 2019, www.sejm.gov.pl.

¹³ M. Darby, "Unions tell Poland to push coal as UN climate host," *Euractiv*, 8 August 2018, www.euractiv.com; M. Darby, "Climate Weekly: Who will rescue the Green Climate Fund?," *Climate Change News*, 10 August 2018, www.climatechangenews.com.

¹⁴ "The parliamentary question no. 17305 on the 24th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP24)," Kancelaria Sejmu, 17 November 2017, www.sejm.gov.pl.

Summit objectives

By taking on the role of host and presidency of the COP24, Poland assumed responsibility for creating the conditions for negotiating and adopting the *rulebook*. The favourable outcome of the Katowice summit was to establish a global system in counteracting climate change in accordance with the guidelines of the Paris Agreement¹⁵. This is why the COP24 presidency coined the phrase “there is no Paris without Katowice”, which was to emphasise the importance of the summit, and indirectly of its organisation in Poland¹⁶.

Poland was not in favour of the European Union increasing its aspirations regarding climate actions when other countries, especially the largest emitters, were not reducing emissions. For this reason, its activity in global climate negotiations was aimed at creating as strong a system as possible to mobilise actions on a global scale, so that efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions were not limited to the EU (which adversely affected its economy).

Apart from the global purpose of the summit, the decision makers mentioned three objectives for the organisation of the COP24 in Poland:

1) Gaining greater influence in the implementation process of the Paris Agreement

Speaking at the Sejm in July 2018, the former environment minister Jan Szyszko (during his tenure Poland was proposed as the host of the COP24¹⁷) stated that the aim of organising the summit was to use the authority of the presidency to achieve influence on the final stage of negotiations of the package implementing the Paris Agreement¹⁸. The most elaborate argumentation on this issue was presented by the Deputy Minister of Environment Michał Kurtyka two months before the COP24. He stressed that the presidential position gives the country a stronger voice for two years (before and after the summit) and participation in the most important meetings on climate change¹⁹.

2) Strengthening Poland's position over issues related to climate policy at the EU forum

¹⁵ “Wizja polskiej Prezydencji COP24,” COP24 Katowice 2018, <https://cop24.gov.pl>.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*.

¹⁷ Climate summit hosts are selected by rotation from the five UN regional groups during the plenary meeting in the previous year. Poland submitted its candidacy during COP22 in Marrakech as the only one from the Central and Eastern European group. In 2017, the Bonn Summit endorsed this candidacy, by designating Katowice as the host city for the COP24

¹⁸ Record of proceedings of the committee, Kancelaria Sejmu, 18 July 2018, www.sejm.gov.pl.

¹⁹ “List ministra Kurtyki...,” *op. cit.*

The Polish authorities believed that the Presidency and the growing importance of Poland in global negotiations offered an opportunity to gain additional influence on negotiations in the forum of the EU concerning both climate policy issues (emission reduction goals until 2030, renewable energy sources) as well as a care for ensuring the competitiveness of the economy. Poland wanted to strengthen the voice raising awareness of the negative implications for European industry resulting from the increase in energy transition costs²⁰. During the session of the UNFCCC, the EU speaks on behalf of the member states, however, the UNFCCC presidency allowed Poland to speak on its own at the international forum.

3) Promotion of Poland's achievements in the area of climate and energy policy

The Presidency was also to provide Poland with an opportunity to present itself as a state involved in global climate policy negotiations and having actual transformational achievements. Another objective was to promote businesses, especially those operating in the field of green technologies. Poland wanted to popularise national solutions concerning adaptation to climate change, low- and zero-emission mobility, and the concept of forest carbon farms²¹. The promotion of transformational achievements was to show Poland as a country of great change, and not the one based on coal technology. The local communities were to gain from the organisation of the COP24 through hosting delegates. Ministry of Foreign Affairs emphasised the opportunities for economic promotion, especially of green technologies and demonstrating joint responsibility for global problems²².

Progress of the summit

Negotiations²³. With the start of the session on 2 December, the Secretary of State Michał Kurtyka, formally took over as President of the COP24²⁴, marking

²⁰ *Ibidem*.

²¹ "Parliamentary question No. 26729 on the government's position before the Parties to the Climate Convention at the COP24 Conference in Katowice," Poland, Kancelaria Sejmu, 2 October 2018, www.sejm.gov.pl

²² "Government information on Polish foreign policy in 2017 (presented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland Witold Waszczykowski at a sitting of the Sejm on 9 February 2017)," MSZ, www.msz.gov.pl; "Government information on Polish foreign policy in 2017 (presented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland Jacek Czaputowicz at a sitting of the Sejm on 21 March 2018)," see p. 11 in this volume.

²³ In view of the importance of the Katowice rules, I limit presenting the course of the negotiations by omitting, e.g., the Talanoa Dialogue or the high-level meeting on climate financing.

²⁴ "Wiceminister środowiska Michał Kurtyka objął funkcję prezydenta COP24," *Polskie Radio 24*, 2 December 2018, <https://polskieradio24.pl>.

the beginning of Poland's one-year presidency (until the next summit—COP25). The opening of the conference encountered disruptions as Turkey's delegation blocked the adoption of the agenda in order to obtain approval to relocate it from the basket of developed countries (committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and providing financial assistance) to the group of developing countries (assistance recipients). Eventually, the consultations with Turkey during the summit were settled, allowing the summit to begin²⁵.

The negotiations during the first week were conducted primarily within the Subsidiary Bodies - Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) and Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBSTA) - and APA Working Group. At this stage, the presidency discussed with individual delegations and provided the organisational framework for negotiations, but was not yet responsible for the text of the *rulebook*, which was dealt with by the subsidiary bodies.

The first week succeeded in reducing the number of contentious issues (so-called brackets) from 3,000 to 1,000, but the biggest controversies were still unresolved. A major challenge was to adapt the level of requirements for monitoring and reporting emissions, for presenting commitments and for reporting and providing climate finance to the capacities of individual countries. The developed countries sought to adopt the most universal rules possible. For developing countries, on the other hand, the rules needed to be differentiated: more restrictive for developed countries and less detailed for themselves. A separate, difficult to negotiate aspect was Article 6 of the Paris Agreement concerning market mechanisms (trading of greenhouse gases' reductions). It was necessary in the *rulebook* to determine how to avoid double-accounting (i.e. as emission reductions on-site and in the country that purchased them) and whether to allow Kyoto units to circulate in the new system. The mechanism established by the Paris Agreement to achieve higher global emission reductions also needed to be further developed and it was necessary to define how and what share of units were to be removed from the market. Furthermore, the question of financial assistance from developed countries was crucial for progress of the negotiations and for obtaining the consent of developing countries to additional rules. Although the assistance was not part of the *rulebook*, it was an important element in the negotiations of the future global climate policy regime²⁶.

The special report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) on the prospects for global warming by 1.5°C became an unexpected controversial subject. Its authors indicated that limiting global warming would be possible by

²⁵ K. Bolesta, "Turcy opóźniają start COP24, Premier Francji nie przyjedzie na szczyt klimatyczny," *Polityka Insight*, www.politykainsight.pl.

²⁶ M. Wąsiński, "COP24 Opens ...", *op. cit.*

quickly achieving so-called climate neutrality. However, if no action is taken to this end, an increase in greenhouse gas emissions will lead to a 1.5°C rise in average temperatures between 2030 and 2052, which would result in rising sea and ocean levels, an increase in the frequency of extreme weather conditions and the disappearance of coral reefs. On 8 December, the delegations of the U.S., Saudi Arabia, Russia and Kuwait protested against the formal record (“adoption”) of the report by the COP, being afraid that such a record in the summit conclusions could become an argument for more ambitious climate action in the future.

Taking over the chairmanship of the rulebook negotiations on 10 December, Minister Kurtyka should have started the discussions at the political level due to the arrival of the ministers for the environment in the second week of the COP. However, due to the still significant number of “brackets”, the COP24 president extended the time for technical discussions. The crucial actions were of APA Chairs, Jo Tyndall (New Zealand, responsible for transparency issues) and Sarah Baashan (Saudi Arabia, responsible for financial issues), SBSTA Chair Paul Watkinson (France, responsible for market mechanisms and national commitments - NDCs²⁷) and SBI Chair Emmanuel Dlamini (Eswatini, responsible for technology transfer mechanism issues, NDC registry and adaptation).

On 11 December, finding that the technical negotiations came to an end, Mr Kurtyka appointed two ministers each as *facilitators* to oversee the resolution of individual contentious issues. This is a common way of conducting negotiations on the most controversial areas at the UNFCCC forum, which relieves the presidency of being the only entity proposing compromise solutions. In this way, the following were established:

- Germany and Egypt—Financial matters²⁸;
- New Zealand and Chile—market mechanisms;
- Spain and South Africa—transparency;
- Norway and Singapore—emissions reductions (mitigation) and NDCs;
- Finland and Gambia—adaptation;
- Luxembourg and Marshall Islands—global stocktakes on progress in counteracting climate change;
- Sweden and Costa Rica—IPCC Special Report.

The number of pairs appointed indicated the multiplicity of contentious issues. In the negotiating texts proposed two days before the end of the summit (12 December),

²⁷ Nationally Determined Contributions—a key component of the Paris Agreement obliging all countries to present national contributions.

²⁸ These countries have been holding consultations since 10 December.

for the first time under the COP presidency, there were still over 600 “brackets” to be removed. The Polish presidency then decided not to present too many compromise proposals of its own in favour of resolving disputes jointly with the parties.

The Secretary-General of the United Nations was more active than usual at the summit, visiting the COP24 three times and allegedly telephoning world leaders to urge them to reach an agreement²⁹. The EU and China remained the key players in the negotiations, being the most engaged in the dialogue and seeking a compromise. Although as early as 12 December, China (together with India) insisted on the balance between reduction commitments and financial flows and the principle of *Common But Differentiated Responsibilities* (CBDR), on 13 December it made a concession and agreed to unify monitoring and reporting rules. Thus, the biggest negotiating barrier - the tendency for too flexible rules for developing countries—was removed³⁰.

Intensive negotiations on 14 and 15 December resulted in the final text being agreed, with only market mechanisms included in Article 6 of the Paris Agreement (due to Brazil's opposition to the proposed arrangements) and a future single NDC period, remaining unsettled. During the final discussions, the possibility of waivers for developing countries when they need them and providing technical assistance from the UNFCCC and other countries were introduced into the provisions. Key provisions included:

- All countries will have to include measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in their commitments, and developing countries do not have to have economy-wide targets for the time being, but are expected to do so in the future.

- NDCs will consist of: quantifiable information on the base year, the implementation period (from 2031 onwards all NDCs are to cover the same period, though it was not agreed which one), the range of activities undertaken (e.g. sectors), the planning process and national conditions, assumptions and methodologies for calculating the amount of greenhouse gases, a statement of the NDC's adequacy and ambition, and a demonstration of how the NDC would contribute to reducing global warming to 2°C by the end of the century. Countries should use the common methodology for greenhouse gas calculations as presented by the IPCC.

- From 2024, the parties to the agreement must submit biennial reports on emissions and climate change adaptation, taking into account the measures declared in the NDC. Methodological guidelines for such reports were established to ensure transparency and comparability. The states will also be able to indicate

²⁹ K. Bolesta, “COP24 zbliża się do finału, Chiny mogą przełamać podział na kraje rozwinięte i rozwijające się,” *Polityka Insight*, 14 December 2018, www.politykainsight.pl.

³⁰ M. Wąsiński, “The Katowice Rulebook and Perspectives on Global Climate Policy,” *PISM Bulletin*, no. 31 (1277), 27 February 2019, www.pism.pl.

their efforts related to loss and damage caused by extreme weather conditions (so-called *loss and damage*). Flexibility is provided for countries to prepare their reports if they need time to comply with uniform requirements. In that case, however, they must present arguments why they should meet them later.

- Transparency issues will be assessed and reviewed in 2027 and 2028 (in 2028 again the Eastern Europe group will be responsible for organising the conference).

- *Global stocktakes* will be held every 5 years to assess the achievement of the global target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. In Katowice, it was agreed that the stocktakes will include efforts to reduce emissions, increase resilience to climate change, financial flows and issues of the loss and damage mechanism.

- The NDCs and reports will be recorded and made public on the UNFCCC website.

- From 2020 onwards, reports are to be presented every two years on the financial assistance provided and the planned measures for the next two years. The developed countries are obliged to do so; others can do it voluntarily. Based on these contributions, a summary report will be prepared and a ministerial discussion on climate financing will be held.

- A discussion is to start in November 2020 on a new target for global climate financing (currently \$100 billion per year by 2020) for the period after 2025. The decisions of COP21, where the Paris Agreement was adopted, require that a new target be set by 2025 at the latest.

- The rules for a 12-member expert commission on the implementation of the Paris Agreement were also agreed. It will be able to inspect parties of the agreement that have not submitted commitments, or countries suspected of inconsistencies of data in reports. Then, with the agreement of the parties concerned, a subsidiary dialogue could be initiated. However, the Commission will not be able to impose penalties.

- A committee of experts has also been established to investigate the impact of implementing response measures (climate actions)³¹.

- The operation of the Technology Transfer Mechanism to assist developing countries and use of new technologies has been further defined.

Promotion and other measures. From Poland's point of view, two initiatives on the sidelines of the COP24 were to be particularly important: the Leaders' Summit organised on 3 December and three political declarations. The Leaders' Summit was attended by several dozen leaders, but the German Chancellor, the presidents

³¹ Eng. Katowice Committee of Experts on the Impacts of the Implementation of Response Measures.

of France, the U.S. and Russia, the president of China, the prime ministers of India, Canada, Japan and the United Kingdom were not present³². The summit initiative was still Minister Szyszko's idea, implemented by Chancellery of the President Andrzej Duda. Several factors could have discouraged the arrival of politicians: warnings from experts and the media about the failure of the COP24, Poland's low involvement in the promotion of climate protection, the trend of turning away from climate policy (U.S., Australia, Türkiye: Brazil), internal problems (France) or problems of national energy and climate policy (Germany). The statements made by the President of the Republic of Poland at the opening of the summit, regarding the use of coal as a strategic resource which reserves would last for 200 years, were unfortunate. They were echoed by foreign media, especially those connected with energy and climate issues³³. The President's statement also had a negative effect on Poland's most important initiative, the Silesian Declaration on fair and solidarity-based transition³⁴. It was signed on 3 December by 55 countries and was intended to draw attention to the issue of the social costs of climate policy, above all the fate of workers in the mining and fuel sectors. Viewed in the light of Andrzej Duda's statements, it appeared to be an effort to slow down the transition³⁵.

The second declaration, the Electromobility Partnership, launched by Poland and the UK and signed on 13 December, aimed to promote low-carbon transport and broaden the perception of the problem of greenhouse gas emissions as not only linked to the energy sector. The partnership was joined by 42 countries, 5 regions and cities and 18 international organisations³⁶.

The third declaration, on promoting the role of forests and natural carbon sequestration, attracted the widest range of signatories (80), including China, Russia, Canada and Japan, among others, but was also the most controversial because of the problem of deforestation and burning in some developing countries³⁷. However, the benefits of possible implementation are limited - there is no potential to achieve large additional reductions in carbon dioxide emissions in Poland.

³² R. Biskupski, "COP24: Szczyt bez najważniejszych przywódców," *Rzeczpospolita*, 3 December 2018, www.rp.pl.

³³ See, e.g. "Mamy zapasy węgla na 200 lat. Ekolodzy krytykują," *TVN24 BiS*, 3 December 2018, <https://tvn24bis.pl>; J. Berendt, "Playing Host to Climate Conference, Poland Promotes Coal," *New York Times*, 4 December 2018, www.nytimes.com; A. Robert, "COP24: Return of king coal," *Euractiv*, 13 December 2018, www.euractiv.com.

³⁴ "Just Transition Declaration," COP24 Katowice 2018, <https://cop24.gov.pl>.

³⁵ See footnote 57.

³⁶ "Driving Change Together—Katowice Partnership for E-Mobility," COP24 Katowice 2018, <https://cop24.gov.pl>.

³⁷ "Declaration 'Forests for climate,'" COP24 Katowice 2018, <https://cop24.gov.pl>.

The unified conference space was more comfortable than in 2017 in Bonn, where the exhibition and negotiation zones were far apart. In terms of logistics and organisation, Poland did very well (although the choice of Katowice with its too small hotel base forced participants to travelling far). On the other hand, the fact that a group of 12 climate protection activists was not allowed to enter Poland had a negative international impact, as noted by the world media³⁸. Poland was also criticised for introducing legislation prohibiting unannounced demonstrations³⁹.

Conclusions

The adoption of the *Katowice rulebook* should be regarded as a major success of the Polish presidency. Although it could not have been achieved without the involvement of experts, negotiators and politicians from other countries, Poland ensured very good conditions for conducting negotiations, and presided in a way which did not deprive the parties of the feeling that their arguments were understood and respected. A comprehensive mechanism was created overcoming the division into developed and developing countries, while guaranteeing flexibility for small and the least developed countries. The issue of fair transition has also been promoted even more fully. The Declaration on this question should be considered a success, as it has gained the support of more than a quarter of UNFCCC Parties, including the EU and its members as well as Japan, Canada, Republic of Korea, Indonesia and Mexico, among others. A direct reference to the text of the Paris Agreement is its strength⁴⁰.

The delay of several months in appointing a new Commissioner for Climate Action (from January to April 2018) worked against Poland's preparations to make the most of the summit. Replacement of the Minister made 8 months before the COP, hindered preparations for the COP24 and discussions with foreign partners. At the same time, the appointment of Michał Kurtyka was well received, making it easier for him to manage the summit⁴¹.

From the perspective of the objectives set by Poland, a greater influence was certainly gained on the negotiation of the rules for implementing the Paris

³⁸ P. Tamma, K. Oroschakoff, "Polish authorities under fire for denying entry to COP24 participants," *Politico*, 8 December 2018, www.politico.eu.

³⁹ K. Rall, "Polish Crackdown Ahead of Climate Talks," Human Rights Watch, 1 February 2018, www.hrw.org.

⁴⁰ „W cieniu brexitu w UE trwają negocjacje klimatyczno-budżetowe,” *Wysokie Napięcie*, 25 March 2019, <https://wysokienapiecie.pl>.

⁴¹ K. Mathiesen, S. Apparicio, "Poland appoints deputy minister to run biggest climate talks since Paris," *Climate Change News*, 30 April 2018, www.climatechangenews.com.

Agreement. The result of the summit was the equalisation of the obligations of all states in the area of climate protection, in accordance with the interests of Poland, the EU, and developed countries more broadly. On the other hand, however, taking advantage of the presidency to increase the power within the EU was unsuccessful. The presidency of the COP24 was set for 2019, a year in which technical decisions in the energy and climate area were not taken in the EU, due to the European Parliament (EP) elections in May. If Poland's goal was not to increase EU aspirations, this was not achieved either, as back in 2018, the EU raised the targets for the share of RES in the energy structure by 2030 by 2.5 p.p. and the target for energy efficiency by 2 p.p. Poland had to veto in 2019 (with three other countries) the EU's long-term strategy to achieve climate neutrality by 2050. The result of the EP elections indicated that the coming years will see an increase in the EU's climate action aspirations in both the 2030 and 2050 perspectives - against Poland's position.

The reputational advantages are debatable. On the one hand, the adoption of the *rulebook* certainly had a positive impact on the assessment of Poland as the presidency of the COP24. On the other, the summit was lacking an important element - the will to take measures to limit global warming. The reputational advantages refer to the pursued energy-climate and economic policy and should be associated with "clean" or "green" technologies. The Polish pavilion was prepared by the State Forests and made a positive impression on visitors (glazed, light wood), but right next to it was located the pavilion of the city of Katowice, which displayed coal. The statements of Polish politicians defending coal as an energy resource, the associations with the mining industry and finally an impression created by the pavilion of Katowice resulted in failure of the message about the transformation of the region and Poland⁴².

The national pavilion is primarily an opportunity to promote technologies that can be exported, the achievements of a given country, the financial assistance provided and its outcomes, or ambitious legislative proposals. The events hosted by Poland, however, were addressed to a Polish audience rather than to the numerous foreign delegations, media and NGOs participating in the conference. During the 12 days of meetings organised in the pavilion, apart from the issues of electromobility, fair transition, forests, and carbon leakage, there was no tangible opportunity to promote Polish enterprises operating on global markets or with a high potential for international expansion.

It is also noteworthy that too few Polish entities tried to participate in the organisation of official (UNFCCC) accompanying events for a wider audience.

⁴² A. Robert, *op. cit.*; "COP24: key outcomes agreed at the UN climate talks in Katowice," *Carbon Brief*, 16 December 2018, www.carbonbrief.org.

The opportunity to promote a person who could attract global media and gain publicity in social media was also missed. That opportunity was taken by 15-year-old Swedish activist Greta Thunberg, who called on students to go on a climate protest.

Poland's lack of ambitious energy and climate agenda and the limited capacity of Polish clean technology companies did not allow the summit to be used in any significant way in the Polish foreign policy. Thus, it should be concluded that the opportunities created by the COP24, as well as the negotiation success, were not fully utilised.

Poland's Migration Policy

PATRYK KUGIEL

Migration policy is composed of the entirety of a country's rules, positions, and actions with regard to international migration. It is also understood to mean "a catalogue of instruments maintained and designed by the state or its components, comprising both passive and active forms of immigration and emigration management".¹ It is therefore at the meeting point of various national policies (e.g., the integration of foreigners, access to the labour market) and foreign policy.

Background

Poland's migration policy in 2018 was determined by long-term internal processes (mainly demographic trends, the situation on the labour market, and the politicisation of migration), discussions on reform of the EU's migration and asylum policy, and negotiations of global agreements regarding migration at the UN.

The main challenge at the national level was the demographic decline observed since 2012. Although the year 2017 was the first year since 2012 when the negative trend was halted (the population increased by only about 600 year on year), however, the number of inhabitants had decreased since 2012 by more than 110,000.² The main reason was negative natural growth (-900 in 2017). The fact that the population increased in 2017 was due to another key factor shaping demographics—foreign migration.

The year 2017 was also the second year in a row when the immigration of Poles was higher than emigration, by 1,400 people.³ Slightly more than 13,000 people with previous permanent residence abroad registered for permanent residence in Poland, while about 11,600 people registered for permanent residence abroad. At the same time, the negative trend in temporary stays continued. According to estimates by the Central Statistical Office, at the end of 2017 there were about

¹ P. Kaczmarczyk, M. Okólski (eds.), *Polityka migracyjna jako instrument promocji zatrudnienia i ograniczania bezrobocia*, Ośrodek Badań nad Migracją WNE UW, Warsaw, 2008, p. 12.

² *Rocznik Demograficzny 2019*, GUS, 2019, pp. 26–27.

³ *Ludność. Stan i struktura oraz ruch naturalny w przekroju terytorialnym w 2017 r. (stan na dzień 31.12.2017)*, GUS, 2018, <https://stat.gov.pl>.

2,540,000 Poles temporarily residing outside Poland (i.e., longer than three months), which was about 25,000 (1%) more than in 2016.⁴

The population of Poland at the beginning of 2018 was 38,434,000 people.⁵ At the same time, the age structure of the society had changed. In 2018, the number of people of working age was 23.3 million, or 248,000 fewer than a year before and more than 1.5 million fewer than in 2010.⁶

Demographic changes (e.g., population loss, ageing) and rapid economic development caused growing problems in the labour market. In the face of very low unemployment (6.6% in December 2017), employers pointed to an overall shortage of several hundred,000 workers.⁷ This gap had been filled for several years by the migration of foreigners, mainly from Ukraine. At the end of 2017, there were 325,000 foreigners registered in Poland for permanent or temporary residence. A much larger group of foreign workers stayed in the country on temporary visas and work permits. Meanwhile, employers' organisations continued to call for "changes that will improve the process of employing foreigners".⁸

Since 2015, migration issues have been highly politicised in Poland. Strong opposition from the Law and Justice party, expressed during the 2015 election campaign towards the reception of refugees under the EU relocation system, also affected the negative stance of the new United Right-wing government towards the wider problem of foreigners migrating to Poland. The government also considered the negative attitude of public opinion towards the reception of refugees. According to opinion polls of July 2018, 60% of Poles were against accepting refugees from countries affected by armed conflict ("in favour" were 34% of respondents), and almost three quarters (72%) were reluctant to relocate refugees from the Middle East and Africa already residing in Europe.⁹

At the EU level, the key condition for Poland's activity was the discussions on reform of EU asylum and migration policy. In December 2017, the European Commission (EC) presented proposals for a package of seven reforms and an action plan according to which the Union should adopt appropriate regulations by

⁴ "Informacja o rozmiarach i kierunkach czasowej emigracji z Polski w latach 2004–2017," GUS, 19 November 2018, <https://stat.gov.pl>.

⁵ *Rocznik Demograficzny 2019*, op. cit.

⁶ *Ludność. Stan i struktura oraz ruch naturalny w przekroju terytorialnym w 2018 r. (stan w dniu 31.12.2018)*, GUS, 2019, <https://stat.gov.pl>.

⁷ A. Błaszczak, "Zaciska się pętla braku kadr," *Rzeczpospolita*, 7 July 2018.

⁸ A. Matłacz, "Lewiatan: sytuacja na rynku pracy najlepsza od 25 lat," *Prawo.pl*, 29 December 2017, www.prawo.pl.

⁹ "Stosunek Polaków i Czechów do przyjmowania uchodźców," *Komunikat z badań*, no. 87/2018, CBOS, www.cbos.pl.

the end of June 2018. Simultaneous with the decrease in the number of foreigners arriving in Europe, the intensity of discussions on this subject also decreased, and the problem was no longer as high a priority as in the peak years of the refugee and migration management crisis of 2015–2016. According to Frontex data, in 2017 there were 204,719 irregular border crossings detected at the Union's external borders (60% less than in 2016 when there were 511,047), and in 2018 the downward trend continued, as the number of irregular border crossings fell by 27% to 150,114, or 92% lower than in 2015.¹⁰ Similarly, the number of applications for international protection submitted by foreigners in the EU decreased. In 2017, it reached 728,470 applications (46% less than in 2016), and in 2018 this number fell by another 10% to 634,700.¹¹ The programme for the compulsory relocation of refugees, which gave rise to the sharpest disputes between EU countries, ceased to apply in September 2017 after the two-year period stipulated in the programme.¹²

Migration issues within the Union ("free movement of people") were also part of the negotiations on the UK's exit from the EU. Migration issues were also among the EU's concerns in two other contexts related to the Community's external actions. First, there were ongoing discussions on the development of a negotiating mandate of the European Commission for dialogue on a new partnership agreement with the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) group of countries where migration issues played an important role. Second, the Union wanted to develop a common position on the international agreements on refugees and migration that had been discussed at the UN: the Global Compact for Refugees (GCR) and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM).¹³

The negotiations on these two agreements at the UN resulted in Poland needing to take a position on migration also at the global level. According to UNDESA data, in 2017 there were 258 million international migrants worldwide (3.4% of the global population), of which fewer than 26 million were refugees or asylum seekers.¹⁴ The lack of a common legal framework for cooperation with regard to migration management prompted the countries to take steps towards

¹⁰ "Risk Analysis for 2018," Frontex, 20 February 2018, www.frontex.europa.eu; "Risk Analysis for 2019," Frontex, 20 February 2019; www.frontex.europa.eu.

¹¹ "EU+ asylum trends—2018 Overview," European Asylum Support Office, 13 February 2019, <https://www.easo.europa.eu>.

¹² B. Bodalska, "Koniec dotychczasowego programu relokacji uchodźców," *Euractiv*, 27 September 2017, www.euractiv.pl.

¹³ P. Kugiel, "Prospects for the Global Compact for Migration," *PISM Bulletin*, no. 61 (1132), 24 April 2018, www.pism.pl.

¹⁴ "International migrant stock (Total); Refugees by destination (UN DESA)," Migration data portal, <https://migrationdataportal.org> (accessed: 13.06.2019).

regulating them. A relevant commitment was made by all UN member states in the New York Declaration in September 2016. Formal intergovernmental negotiations were scheduled from February to July 2018, and the official adoption of the agreement on migration was to take place at the Marrakesh conference at the end of the year. Although the new U.S. president, Donald Trump, changed the administration's approach under Barack Obama and by December 2017 had already announced a boycott of these discussions, claiming sovereign competence in the area of migration, this did not interrupt work on the agreement.

Goals and Assumptions

The government's long-term objectives with regard to migration were included in the Strategy for Responsible Development, adopted by the Council of Ministers on 14 February 2017. Presenting unfavourable demographic trends as one of the five main development challenges for Poland, the document recommended "the development of a long-term, strategic and coherent vision of migration policy"¹⁵. Its aim should be "better management of migration, e.g., focusing the policy process on the state's population problems related to depopulation, population ageing and shrinking resources in the labour market, but also taking advantage of the experience of other European countries, which have not always managed to cope with challenges related to the influx of foreigners". The document points out both the beneficial effects of migration, for the labour market, for example, as well as threats related to state security and social cohesion. Among the measures scheduled until 2020, the Strategy recommended, among others, "the preparation of a concept of responsible immigration policy (e.g., a point-based system), focused on the needs of the labour market and Polish entrepreneurs [businesses]"; the "creation of integration paths for selected categories of foreigners and members of their families"; "reduction of illegal immigration"; "development of integration instruments".

The objective set for 2018 was to regulate the migration phenomenon in its entirety by adopting a migration policy strategy. This task became all the more important as the previous such document ("Polish Migration Policy—current state and proposed actions") was adopted by the PO-PSL government in 2012 and repealed by the Law and Justice government on 19 October 2016.¹⁶ This was justified by the minister of the Interior and Administration with the need

¹⁵ "Strategia na rzecz odpowiedzialnego rozwoju do roku 2020 (z perspektywą do 2030 r.)," MFiPR, 2017, pp. 169–171.

¹⁶ "Pragmatycznie, a nie ideologicznie—o polityce migracyjnej Polski," *Biuletyn Migracyjny*, no. 55, Ośrodek Badań nad Migracjami UW, December 2016, <http://biuletynmigracyjny.uw.edu.pl>.

to develop a new document that would better address “two aspects of migration policy—the impact on the labour market and the security of citizens”.¹⁷

Eventually, the document guidelines, titled “The social and economic priorities of migration policy”, covering assumptions about future policy, was adopted by Poland’s Council of Ministers in March 2018.¹⁸ The general and short (three-page) text indicated that migration policy “must be adapted, first and foremost, to the priorities of the labour market and created from the perspective of having a positive impact on the social and economic development of the state while ensuring adequate employment standards and state security”.¹⁹ The document listed the basic directions of migration policy, the main target groups and the main priorities. The following actions were announced: 1) implementation of tools for monitoring migration processes; 2) development of tools for attracting employees and entrepreneurs from abroad; 3) support for the process of internationalisation of Polish universities and 4) support for the integration process of foreigners (e.g., facilitating the learning of the Polish language, establishing centres for supporting foreigners, etc.). According to the Ministry of Investment and Development, a comprehensive strategy was to be ready in mid-2018.

An important objective of the government in the area of migration was to create the conditions and incentives for the return of Poles from abroad. A relevant announcement was already made in Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki’s exposé of 13 December 2017 when he invited his compatriots “to build together a modern, strong and rich Poland”.²⁰ He also announced that “the objective of our government will therefore be to encourage as many Poles as possible, both from Kazakhstan and London, to return to their homeland”. The commitments towards the repatriates were confirmed in the speech of Minister for Foreign Affairs.²¹

In the context of foreign policy, the objectives relating to migration were defined primarily at the European policy level. During the presentation of the government’s priorities in the Sejm (in March 2018), Minister of Foreign Affairs Jacek Czaputowicz assured that Poland wants to “participate in solving the migration crisis”, however, he stressed that we are “against the imposition

¹⁷ “Nie uwzględniał sytuacji kryzysu. Rząd unieważnił dokument o polityce migracyjnej,” *TVN24*, 20 March 2017, www.tvn24.pl.

¹⁸ “MliR: nowe priorytety rządowej polityki migracyjnej (komunikat),” PAP, 29 March 2018, www.pap.pl.

¹⁹ “Priorytety społeczno-gospodarcze polityki migracyjnej,” MliR, March 2018.

²⁰ “Exposé premiera Mateusza Morawieckiego—stenogram,” KPRM, 12 December 2017, www.gov.pl/web/premier.

²¹ “Government information on Polish foreign policy in 2018 (presented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland Jacek Czaputowicz at a sitting of the Sejm on 21 March 2018),” see p. 11 in this volume.

of a system of obligatory quotas for receiving refugees”²² The minister also mentioned Poland's assistance to the societies of the “Middle East in solving the crisis in the location of its occurrence”, pointing to specific examples of Poland's activity in Lebanon, Libya and Syria. Elsewhere, he said that “the Union's policies, including migration and security policy, must not be imposed on any state against its will”.

Despite the replacement of prime ministers and the reconstruction of the government at the end of 2017, the administration declared unchanged Poland's position on migration.²³ The main assumptions of the position adopted include the conviction that migration policy, such as deciding who enters a country, are the sovereign competences of states; opposition to the automatic distribution of refugees within the EU; the conviction that the best way to solve the problem of irregular migration is to protect the Union's external borders more effectively and to eliminate the causes of irregular migration at its source, meaning in the migrants' country of origin. Already during the exposé of his government in December 2017, Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki stated that “the mechanism for the relocation of migrants has failed”.²⁴

In his speech to the European Parliament in July 2018, the prime minister presented Poland's proposals with regard to dealing with the movement of people more broadly. Acknowledging that “the migration pressure from Africa and the Middle East will intensify”, he added that, “the European Union must commit itself to stabilising and developing these regions. Today, a new Marshall Plan for Africa is a necessity, as is the counteract illegal trafficking of people into Europe. We support the establishment of new funds for Africa, such as the European Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF for Africa). But we propose even more. We propose establishing a European Development Fund for Africa. And I declare that Poland wants to participate in such assistance—in providing a rod rather than a fish—more than the proportion of our GDP”.²⁵

Migrations of Poles. The government's efforts to facilitate the return of Poles from abroad in 2018 focused on bringing repatriates (i.e., Poles displaced to the East during and after World War II and their descendants) and promoting the voluntary return of members of the “young emigration” group. This was facilitated by The Repatriation Act, amended twice in 2017 (on 7 April and 24 November)

²² *Ibidem.*

²³ “Morawiecki: Nasze zdanie nie zmieniło się. Sprzeciwiamy się koncepcji mechanizmu relokacji,” *Gazeta Prawna*, 31 December 2017, www.gazetaprawna.pl.

²⁴ “Exposé premiera Mateusza Morawieckiego,” *op. cit.*

²⁵ “Całe przemówienie premiera Morawieckiego w Strasburgu: ‘Wspólnota europejska znalazła się na zakręcie,’” *W Polityce*, 4 July 2018, www.wpolityce.pl.

and the Act on the Pole's Card and other acts. The position of government plenipotentiary for repatriation was established, which was held by the Secretary or undersecretary of state in the Ministry of the Interior and Administration. In March 2018, the five-member Council for Repatriation began to operate by virtue of the amendment, which had advisory and opinion-forming tasks for the government plenipotentiary.²⁶

In April 2018, Krzysztof Kozłowski, who held this position, informed that "almost 280 repatriates came back to Poland this year".²⁷ By the end of December, according to the estimates of the Ministry of Interior and Administration, about 600 repatriates had returned to Poland, and more than PLN 20 million from the state budget was allocated to support their integration in the country.²⁸ This meant an increase by almost 100 people compared to the previous year and an even greater increase compared to 2007–2016²⁹ (see Figure 1). However, these numbers were still below expectations. According to the amendment to the Act on Repatriation of March 2017, it was assumed that by 2018 more than 1,200 people would return, and within three years from the entry into force of the Act, all persons who were promised a visa for repatriation, together with family members (about 3,700 people), would return.³⁰

Another focus of the government's actions was to encourage representatives of the generation of "young emigration" who left the country after 2004, mostly to other EU countries, to return. Attention was paid to this issue to ensure it was present in meetings between the president, prime minister, and ministers with members of the Polish community during foreign visits. Information on opportunities regarding occupational career and state support (e.g., the "500+" programme, "Mieszkanie+") was somewhat effective. According to data from the PESEL register, the balance of foreign migration for permanent residence was positive, at 3,600 people in 2018 (the number of emigrants was lower than the number of immigrants).³¹ More than 15,000 people who previously had permanent residence abroad were registered for permanent residence in Poland, while fewer than 12,000 people reported going abroad for permanent residence.

²⁶ "MSWiA: Pierwsze posiedzenie Rady do Spraw Repatriacji," *WNP*, 20 March 2018, www.wnp.pl.

²⁷ "Pełnomocnik rządu ds. repatriantów: 'w tym roku liczymy na przyjęcie 750 rodaków,'" *TVP Parlament*, 17 April 2018, www.tvpparlament.pl.

²⁸ "W 2018 r. rząd przeznaczył na wsparcie repatriantów ponad 20 mln zł," *TVP Info*, 31 December 2018, www.tvp.info.

²⁹ "Repatrianci powracają do Polski. Większość z Kazachstanu i Rosji," *TVP Info*, 29 December 2018, www.tvp.info.

³⁰ "Projekt Ustawy o zmianie ustawy o repatriacji oraz niektórych innych ustaw. Ocena skutków regulacji," 10 March 2017, p. 4.

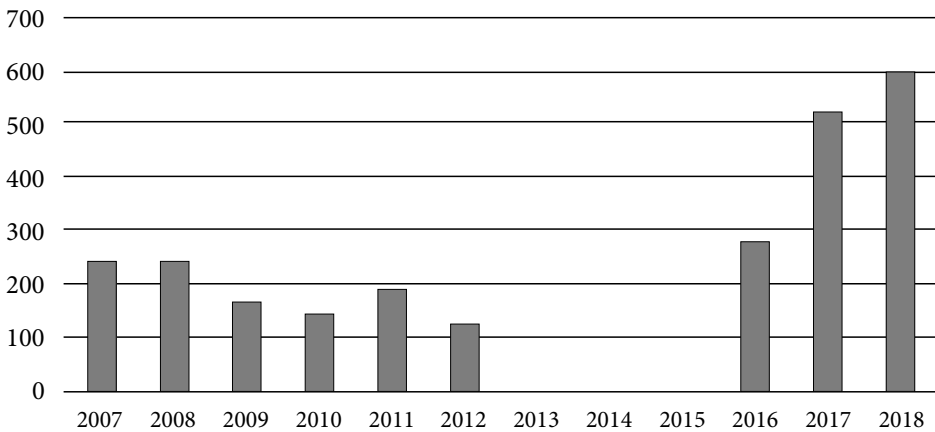
³¹ "Ludność. Stan i struktura ..." (2018), *op. cit.*, pp. 10–11.

However, with the continuing negative population growth (–26,000 people), the population of Poland decreased by about 22,000 and amounted to 38,411,000 at the end of 2018.³² Importantly, the year 2018 was the first in eight years that saw a reduction in the temporary emigration of Poles, mainly to the United Kingdom.³³ Consequently, at the end of 2018, about 2,455,000 permanent residents of the country temporarily resided outside Poland, or 85,000 (3%) fewer than in 2017. The most important reason for the returns was the uncertainty associated with Brexit, as well as the improvement in the Polish labour market and the good economic situation of Poland.

Figure 1.

Repatriates' Returns to Poland, 2007–2018

Source: Author's compilation based on: 1) for the years 2007–2012, *Implementation of*



the Polish migration policy with regard to foreigners declaring Polish origin, Supreme Audit Office, 2014, and 2) since 2016, *TVP Info*. Note, for 2013–2015, no data available.

Migration of Foreigners. Poland was also becoming an increasingly attractive migration destination for foreigners, mainly from Ukraine. As of 31 December 2018, 372,000 foreigners held valid residence permits in the territory of the Republic of Poland (i.e., 47,000 more than in 2017), including 203,000 (55%) for temporary residence, 81,000 (22%) of EU citizens using documents confirming the residence permit, 69,000 (19%) for permanent residence.³⁴ The largest national

³² *Rocznik Demograficzny 2019*, op. cit.

³³ "Informacja o rozmiarach i kierunkach czasowej emigracji z Polski w latach 2004–2018," GUS, 15 November 2019, <https://stat.gov.pl>.

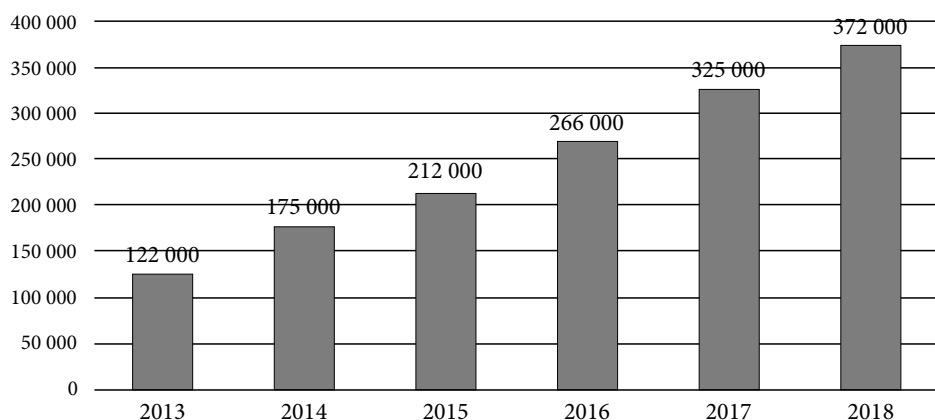
³⁴ "Raport roczny – legalizacja pobytu: 2018," Urząd ds. Cudzoziemców, <https://udsc.gov.pl>.

group with valid residence permits (permanent or temporary) was Ukrainians. Their number amounted to 179,000 (48% of all foreigners), which was 33,900 more than a year before. The second most numerous group was Germans (21,000, 6%), followed by citizens of Belarus (20,000, 5%), Vietnam and Russia (12,000 and 3% each), China and India (9,000 and 2% each), Italy (8,000, 2%), France and the UK (6,000 and 2% each). Increasing numbers of workers came to Poland from Nepal, Bangladesh, and the Philippines.

Figure 2.

Foreigners with Legal Right of Residence in Poland, 2014–2018

Source: The author's own compilation based on OFF data, *Annual report—legalization of residence: 2018*.



The main motivation of foreigners to return to Poland was the desire to take up employment (73% of cases). Furthermore, 12% of applicants wanted to stay in Poland for family reasons, and 10% in connection with taking up or continuing studies. In 2018, 328,800 work permits for foreigners were issued, 93,100 more than in 2017. Work permits for foreigners were most often issued for citizens of Ukraine (72%), Nepal (6.1%), Belarus (about 5%), India and Bangladesh (2.5% each).³⁵

Furthermore, some foreigners stayed in Poland temporarily and took up jobs based on other documents (e.g., statements from employers). Therefore, in 2018, the NBP estimated that the inflow of Ukrainians to the Polish labour market stabilised at the level of about 800,000 people.³⁶ In total, about 1.2 million

³⁵ "Zezwolenia na pracę cudzoziemców w Polsce w 2018 r.," GUS, 20 May 2019, <https://stat.gov.pl>.

³⁶ "Przez polski rynek pracy przewija się ok. 1,2 mln Ukraińców," *Business Insider*, 11 March 2019, <https://businessinsider.com.pl>.

Ukrainians passed through the labour market, of which 330,000 had valid work permits and the remainder worked based on visas with employers' statements.³⁷

The number of foreigners legally residing and working in Poland is better illustrated by the number of notifications to the social security system. At the end of 2018, there were 569,116 foreigners registered for pension insurance (mainly from outside the EU, totalling 533,535), with the largest number Ukrainians (425,670) and Belarusians (32,632).³⁸ In total, foreigners already accounted for 3.5% of all those insured in ZUS, providing more and more contributions and covering the shortfall caused by the decrease in the number of working Poles.

As the number of migrants in Poland increased (see Figure 2), the nature of migration also changed, from temporary and circular to permanent. The data on legalisation of stay indicated that a growing group of people, especially those from beyond Poland's eastern border, decided to settle permanently in the country.

The needs of employers and the growing interest in Poland as a place to take up employment also caused Polish consulates in Asian countries to be overloaded and unable to process visa applications on a regular basis. Media reported queues and months-long waiting periods for applications to be processed, for example, at the Polish Consulate in New Delhi.³⁹ Also, national administrative bodies pointed out the need to strengthen personnel, financial, and infrastructural capacities in proportion to the double-digit percentage increase in the influx of foreigners, in order to address the problem of prolonged waiting periods for administrative decisions.⁴⁰

On the other hand, a smaller—but increasing—group of foreigners arriving in Poland were refugees. According to the Office for Foreigners, 4,100 people applied for international protection in Poland in 2018, about 1,000 fewer than in 2017 and the least since the year 2000. Of them, the largest number were citizens of Russia (2,700 people), Ukraine (466), and Tajikistan (144).⁴¹ One of the forms of international protection (refugee status, subsidiary protection, tolerated stay) was granted to 406 foreigners (including refugee status, 168, or subsidiary

³⁷ *Ibidem*.

³⁸ *Cudzoziemcy w polskim systemie ubezpieczeń społecznych*, Departament Statystyki i Prognoz Aktuarnych, ZUS, 2019.

³⁹ M. Cedro, "25 tysięcy osób czeka na polską wizę w New Delhi. Do pracy w Polsce jadą Hindusi, Nepalczycy i Banglijczycy," *Dziennik*, 10 September 2018, www.dziennik.pl; "Polska cnota—każdemu otworzyć wrota," *Onet*, 7 June 2018, www.onet.pl.

⁴⁰ "Napływ cudzoziemców do Polski w latach 2014–2018 (stan na dzień 1 stycznia 2019 r.)," Urząd ds. Cudzoziemców, <https://udsc.gov.pl>.

⁴¹ "Annual Report—International Protection: 2018," Urząd ds. Cudzoziemców, <https://udsc.gov.pl>.

protection, 191). The majority of positive decisions was issued to citizens of Ukraine (95 persons), Russia (79), and Iraq (27).⁴²

During this period, Poland did not accept any asylum seeker requesting protection in another EU Member State under the relocation mechanism. Although the programme itself expired in 2017, the possibility existed on a voluntary basis. As in previous years, Poland also did not participate in the UNHCR-supervised resettlement programme for refugees directly from camps in the world's unstable regions. The idea of creating "humanitarian corridors" (i.e., accepting a certain number of refugees in Polish parishes) for the most vulnerable people, as proposed by the Catholic charity Caritas and supported by the Episcopate and NGOs, was not implemented.

Migration Management. Despite announcements by the Ministry of Investment and Development in March 2018, a draft of Poland's new migration policy strategy has not been finally presented. The government postponed the schedule to adopt the document, and the deputy minister in charge at the MliR, Paweł Choraży, was dismissed in September due to a statement he made on 30 August during a meeting at the Jagiellonian Club in Warsaw. He referred to the need to increase immigration from Asia and said the importance of repatriation for the labour market was underestimated.⁴³ Differences in the approach towards migration processes within the government (mainly between the MliR and the MIAA) also influenced a delay in the work on the strategy.

The legal framework concerning the rights and status of foreigners in Poland continued to be reformed. At the beginning of the year (12 February 2018), an amendment to the 2013 Act on Foreigners came into force, aimed primarily at implementing the Directive of the European Parliament and the EU Council on the conditions of entry and residence of citizens of third-country nationals (non-EU) as part of an intra-corporate transfer. Furthermore, the Act improved the legal framework for managing migration in Poland, among others, it introduced solutions to streamline proceedings for granting temporary residence and work permits, changes in proceedings for obliging a foreigner to return or the addition of a specific basis for granting a temporary residence and work permit to a foreigner if the purpose of the stay is to perform work in an occupation desirable for the Polish economy.⁴⁴

⁴² "Informacja o działalności Urzędu do Spraw Cudzoziemców w okresie 01.01.2018 – 31.12.2018 r., tabela VIII. Wydane decyzje w sprawie o udzielenie ochrony międzynarodowej," Urząd ds. Cudzoziemców, 10 January 2019, <https://udsc.gov.pl>.

⁴³ "Premier był wściekły. Morawiecki podjął decyzję o zdymisjonowaniu ministra Chorażego. Zaważyły wypowiedzi o imigrantach," *Wirtualna Polska*, 14 September 2018, www.wp.pl.

⁴⁴ "Nowelizacja ustawy o cudzoziemcach," Urząd ds. Cudzoziemców, 26 January 2018, <https://udsc.gov.pl>.

At the same time, the government began work on another amendment of the Act on Foreigners in order to adapt the Polish legal order to the EP and Council Directive (EU) 2016/801 on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of scientific research, studies, training, participation in voluntary activities, school youth exchange programmes or educational projects, and taking up work as an au pair.⁴⁵ The draft was submitted to the Sejm on 27 November and the amendment was finally adopted in early 2019.

The External Dimension of Migration Policy

The EU Dimension. At the EU level, Poland participated in the work on changes to migration and asylum policies. The EC wanted by the end of June 2018 to work out a schedule for the fair distribution of refugees among the Member States in the event of a new crisis. Reform of the EU asylum system (Common European Asylum System) was also important. The EC's proposal envisaged the adoption of seven packages of decisions concerning, among others, the Dublin system, the improvement of the EURODAC system, and the establishment of the EU Asylum Agency. The changes were intended to spread the burden more fairly among the states, to reduce abuse of the asylum system and the secondary migration of refugees to other member countries. Poland was particularly opposed to the introduction of new refugee relocation mechanisms at the EU level and the transfer of competences to the Union level (e.g., to the new EU agency).

The Polish government worked closely with other Visegrad Group countries in developing its position. Addressing the EU's migration policy was one of the six priorities raised by the V4 leaders in their joint statement on the Future of Europe of 31 January 2018. The statement called for, among other things, "guaranteeing the protection of external borders and the differentiation among asylum seekers and irregular and labour migrants", and for decisions on migration to be taken only "by consensus", or for avoiding "the use of mandatory quotas, which are ineffective and have already divided Europe".⁴⁶ The V4 leaders jointly boycotted an informal meeting of EU leaders on migration in Brussels ahead of a key EU summit in June, and the Polish prime minister concluded that the proposals developed by the EC are "overwhelmingly unacceptable".⁴⁷

⁴⁵ "Nowelizacja ustawy o cudzoziemcach," Urząd ds. Cudzoziemców, 19 April 2019, <https://udsc.gov.pl>.

⁴⁶ "Oświadczenie Grupy Wyszehradzkiej w sprawie przyszłości Europy," KPRM, 26 January 2018, www.gov.pl/web/premier.

⁴⁷ "Czaputowicz: Polska nie weźmie udziału w spotkaniu w sprawie migracji," *TVN24*, 22 June 2018, www.tvn24.pl.

Instead, the V4 leaders met at a summit in Budapest (21 June) and addressed the issue of migration in a joint statement, which emphasised the need for an effective EU migration policy to focus on “protecting external borders” and “hampering irregular migration through common European action in the external dimension”.⁴⁸ A more detailed position on migration was presented by the V4 interior ministers (26 June). Criticising the EC proposals, they called for the EU response to include: “a well-functioning border management system”, “an effective return system”, “stronger cooperation with third countries located along migration routes”, and “strengthening the European Border Guard Agency”.⁴⁹

Eventually, at the European Council summit on 28–29 June, Poland together with the V4 countries managed to block proposals for the implementation of a permanent refugee relocation mechanism. It was also agreed that any changes to the asylum system (especially the Dublin regulation) would require unanimity. Poland supported the other provisions of the European Council, including the strengthening of the external borders, the establishment of “regional disembarkation platforms” for migrants (camps or hotspots outside the EU where “irregular” migrants would be transferred for preliminary verification of their status), and improvement of cooperation with third countries. Prime Minister Morawiecki considered the outcomes of the summit a “gigantic success for Poland” and called the agreement “good for Poland and the whole Union”.⁵⁰ In the following months, the government managed to confirm the migration provisions also at the informal meeting of heads of states and governments in Salzburg in September and at the last summit of the year on 14 December 2018. The position of Poland, among others, contributed to blocking the entire reform of the EU’s asylum policy.

The government’s approach towards migration at the European level was strongly associated with Poland’s humanitarian and development aid. In 2018, the government representatives made several visits to crisis-affected countries initiating new projects and emphasising Poland’s commitment to reducing the root-causes of migration. Polish humanitarian aid amounted to PLN 128.6 million⁵¹ and overwhelmingly allocated to refugees, internally displaced persons and the local population in Jordan, Lebanon, and Iraq, in line with the

⁴⁸ “Stronger Together: V4 Joint Statement,” Visegrad Group, Budapest, 21 June 2018, www.visegradgroup.eu.

⁴⁹ “Joint Declaration of Ministers of the Interior,” Visegrad Group, Budapest, 26 June 2018, www.visegradgroup.eu.

⁵⁰ “Koniec przymusowych relokacji uchodźców. Morawiecki: To gigantyczny sukces Polski,” *Do Rzeczy*, 29 June 2018, www.dorzeczy.pl.

⁵¹ Preliminary data for 2018 obtained from the Department of Development Cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. As of 26 June 2019.

Middle East Package adopted in 2017. However, the value of this aid was nearly PLN 50 million less than a year before, and this was the first decrease since 2015. This change was mainly due to lower contributions to EU refugee instruments (e.g., MADAD, Turkish Instrument). Nevertheless, the multilateral channel (i.e., through international organisations and multilateral funds) remained the primary method of Polish support (PLN 70.27 million, 55%). Poland made contributions to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Aid (UN OCHA), and others, as well as contributions to funds administered by the EU. The implementation of the Polish-German project (€1 million in 2018) aimed at rebuilding Lebanese public schools where Syrian refugee children and the poorest Lebanese children study, and developing school infrastructure, also continued.

Migration Issues in International Agreements. Migration issues also emerged at the EU level in the context of Brexit, negotiating mandate arrangements with African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) countries, and discussions around the Global Compact on Migration. At the final stage of the preparation of the Brexit agreement, the Polish government assured that it “stands up for the rights of Poles in the UK”.⁵² The final version of the agreement, approved at the end of November 2018, included the Polish proposals.⁵³

With regard to the negotiations of the new agreement with ACP countries, Poland insisted that the negotiating mandate should include stricter provisions on better cooperation in counteracting irregular migration and the readmission of citizens. Also due to Poland's insistence (but mainly Hungary's, which blocked the adoption of the document for several weeks), the mandate approved in June contained a strong call for the future agreement with the ACP to bring about, among other things, the strengthening of cooperation to stop irregular migration and to reaffirm “the legal obligation of the parties to accept their nationals whose stay is illegal on the territory of another state-party”.⁵⁴

Discussions on the Global Compact for Migration (GCM) played a smaller role on the EU forum than originally expected. In the face of Hungary's opposition, the EU did not adopt a common position on this issue, and individual states arbitrarily shaped their approach at the UN forum. The EU was very active in these negotiations and supported the adoption of the Compact, simultaneously striving

⁵² “Premier po rozmowach w sprawie brexitu: ‘Stoimy w obronie praw Polaków,’” *TVN24 BiS*, 12 October 2018, tvn24bis.pl.

⁵³ “Morawiecki: umowa w sprawie brexitu gwarantuje prawa Polaków na Wyspach,” *TVN24*, 25 November 2018, www.tvn24.pl.

⁵⁴ “Negotiating directives for a Partnership Agreement between the European Union and its Member States of the one part, and with countries of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States of the other part,” Council of European Union, Brussels, 21 June 2018, p. 23.

to include many of the proposals of the Member States, such as emphasising the obligation of third states to take back their citizens expelled from Europe.

In the GCM negotiations, Poland stressed the need for a more efficient distinction between refugees and economic migrants, as well as a clear recognition of the sovereignty of states in migration policy. Poland did not publicly criticise the agreement itself and did not threaten to withdraw from the negotiations, as Hungary did, being equally critical of the initiative. Yet, it was among the more than 150 countries that unanimously accepted the final draft agreement in July 2018.

The situation began to change only in the second half of the year when the issue, which had previously received little media or public attention, became the object of strong criticism from some political forces across Europe, including in Poland. It was not until 9 October that Minister of Interior and Administration Joachim Brudziński announced that he would recommend that Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki withdraw Poland from the Global Compact for Migration, claiming that it was “contrary to the priorities of the Polish government, which are the security of Polish citizens and maintaining control over migration flows”.⁵⁵

Finally, on 20 November 2018, the Council of Ministers decided that Poland would not support the GCM. According to the government’s position, “the document did not meet Poland’s proposals to confirm sufficiently strong guarantees of the sovereign right to decide whom states accept on their territory and to distinguish between legal and irregular migration”⁵⁶. As “inadequately strong guarantees” was considered the provision in the preamble stating that: “The Global Agreement reaffirms the sovereign right of States to determine their national policies on migration and to manage migration in accordance with their legislation, with due regard for international law”, or the provision in Section 27 in which parties commit to “manage borders” (among others) in a manner that “ensures security for States” and consistent with “national sovereignty”.⁵⁷

As a result, Poland was one of only several countries in the world and a few in the EU that did not sign the GCM at a special conference in Marrakech on 10 December. Poland was also one of five countries (along with the U.S., Israel, Hungary, and Czechia) that voted against the agreement in the UN General Assembly on 19 December. Poland also did not support the concurrently negotiated

⁵⁵ “‘Ten projekt nie gwarantuje Polsce bezpieczeństwa. Premier Morawiecki odstąpi od umowy ONZ?’, *Niezależna*, 9 October 2019, <https://niezalezna.pl>.

⁵⁶ “Stanowisko wobec Globalnego Porozumienia ONZ na rzecz bezpiecznej, uporządkowanej i legalnej migracji”, KPRM, 20 November 2018, www.gov.pl/web/premier.

⁵⁷ *Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 19 December 2018*, United Nations Human Rights, New York, 2018.

Global Compact for Refugees (GCR). The Polish representative on 17 December did not participate in the vote at which the GCR was adopted with 181 votes in favour to 2 votes against (the U.S. and Hungary) and three abstentions (Liberia, Eritrea, and Libya). This meant a boycott of the first international initiative to regulate migration phenomena. In view of the non-legally binding nature of the two agreements, the withdrawal was mainly symbolic and political.

Assessment and Conclusions

An assessment of Poland's migration policy in 2018 shows it as inconclusive. The number of repatriations increased and a positive permanent migration balance was recorded for the second year in a row. Most significantly, a record number of Poles returned from temporary residence abroad (85,000). The clear impact of the expected Brexit on their decisions does not allow a prediction of whether such a tendency will be maintained in subsequent years and to what extent the government's actions conditioned the choices of Poles. The scale of repatriation or returns from temporary emigration still did not fully satisfy the needs of the labour market. Furthermore, the decrease in the number of Polish population by 22,000 in 2018 confirmed the negative demographic process.

In the face of the above data, the migration of foreigners to Poland became even more important. The year 2018 was another year in which the number of foreigners registered for temporary and permanent residence significantly increased (by almost 50,000), and this group at the beginning of 2019 already amounted to more than 370,000 people. This shows that it was the migration of foreigners and not the return of Poles that played a more important role in migration flows to Poland. Economic and demographic processes will most likely continue to favour the transformation of Poland from a country of emigration into a destination country of migration for people from increasingly distant regions of the world.

In this context, the delay in adopting a comprehensive migration policy strategy, called for by experts, employers, and non-governmental circles for years, should be assessed negatively. It limited the possibilities of planning, shaping, and controlling migration processes. It also hindered the funding and functioning of institutions dealing with foreigners. While the number of foreigners was growing dynamically, there was still a lack of tools and outlays for integration policy, which would build social cohesion. In the external dimension, difficulties in access to visas undermined the promotional efforts of Poland as a country attractive for business, tourism, or education. There was also a growing risk that this issue, if

not resolved, would negatively impact official political relations with countries whose citizens had increasing difficulties in obtaining visas.

The objective of rejecting quotas for the relocation of refugees within the European Union was achieved, and the EU approach towards migration, with its emphasis on protecting external borders and addressing the “root causes of migration”, came closer to the position presented by Poland for years. However, the result of being against the relocation mechanism led to weakening the entire reform of the asylum system and migration policy, which is needed for the Union to operate more efficiently in the event of future crises. The safeguarding of the rights of Poles living in the UK under the Brexit agreement and the constructive contribution to the negotiating mandate of the EU should also be appreciated.

Poland also continued to provide humanitarian aid in refugees’ countries of origin, which not only contributed necessary support to specific people but also strengthened Poland’s negotiating position in the EU. A clear decrease in the amount of such support was unfavourable in this context, which could have contradicted the government’s declarations of “involvement at the source of the problem”, especially as Poland’s spending on this purpose was already among the lowest in the EU. Further increases in bilateral humanitarian aid would allow better use of the potential of Polish NGOs. Poland’s credibility as a state helping refugees “at the source” would be enhanced by participating (even if only symbolically) in the resettlement programme for the most affected refugees from the Middle East under the UNHCR programme or by voluntarily relocating selected people from another EU country. Poland’s position was also not strengthened by the lack of apparent action towards the establishment of the new European Fund for Africa, which the prime minister spoke about in his speech in Strasbourg.

The assessment of the overall Polish migration policy reveals ambiguity and a discrepancy between declared objectives and practice. On the one hand, the government’s opposition to accepting refugees, the blocking of the “permanent distribution system” at the EU level and the rejection of global agreements on migration and refugees strengthened the perception of Poland as a country unfriendly to migrants. On the other hand, the number of economic migrants actually residing in Poland reached a record level and the foreigners’ countries of origin diversified. It is worth noting that as early as in 2017 Poland had become the country issuing the greatest number of residence permits for non-EU nationals, and this result may have been repeated in 2018.⁵⁸

Also notable is the inconsistency between the “hard-line rhetoric” of politicians on migration and measures that facilitated arrivals (e.g., access to

⁵⁸ “Wzrost wydawanych pozwoleń na pobyt w UE w 2017 r.,” Europejska Sieć Migracyjna 2018.

work). Furthermore, while Poland internationally demanded a clear distinction between refugees and migrants, Polish politicians themselves often conflated the two categories. As a consequence, the reluctant attitude towards refugees trying to enter Europe influenced the public's general perception of migrants, limiting the readiness to discuss migration policy in an objective manner. The around 400 people who were granted refugee status or another form of international protection in Poland in 2018 represented only 0.1% of all foreigners residing in the country on a permanent or temporary basis. The disputes visible in public opinion mainly concerning the problem of refugee relocation, a marginal aspect of the larger phenomenon, indicate a misunderstanding of migration issues. This shows that there is still a need in Poland for a reliable, non-ideological, and unemotional public discussion on migration, focused on the needs, threats, costs, and benefits, enabling the country to develop a socially acceptable consensus.

Enlightened Opportunism? Poland's Policy Towards the Return of Transatlantic Tensions in 2017–2018

ŁUKASZ KULESA

To many Europeans, Donald Trump's victory in the November 2016 American presidential election not only came as a surprise but also heralded an earthquake in transatlantic relations. Over the course of the election campaign, Trump clearly dissociated himself from the previous consensus of the American political class on the importance of close U.S.-European ties. Trump made no secret of his reluctance with regard to NATO commitments and cooperation with the EU, and denounced the "cheating" and "exploitation" of America by its traditional partners concerning particular trade issues.

Indeed, 2017–2018 saw a great deal of turmoil in transatlantic relations, and the future of Europe-U.S. relations remained uncertain at the halfway point of President Trump's term. According to some experts, the strategic, political, social, and economic foundations of transatlantic cooperation have not been affected, so a renaissance of close transatlantic cooperation may follow Trump's presidency. According to other observers, Trump's election marked the beginning of the end of the current model of transatlantic ties, and more broadly: the liberal model of the international order.¹ The post-2016 period would therefore be the first stage in the formation of a new format for transatlantic relations, one containing elements of cooperation but dominated by rivalry and a growing catalogue of divergences between the U.S. and Europe.

Regardless of these predictions and their own preferences, all European countries have been forced to rethink their policies towards the U.S. and the question of the future of Europe-U.S. relations. The political debate in many of these countries, led by Germany, focused on the challenges and threats that the new situation might pose.² As for Poland, the increased tension in transatlantic relations after 2016 have posed a challenge, but above all an opportunity to strengthen its position.

¹ Both points of view are presented, e.g., in: R. Jervis, F.J. Gavin, J. Rovner, D.N. Labrosse (eds.), *Chaos in the Liberal Order. The Trump Presidency and International Politics in the Twenty-First Century*, Columbia University Press, 2018.

² See Conclusion: J. Puglierin, H. Kundnani, "Atlanticist and 'Post-Atlanticist' Wishful Thinking," *Policy Essay*, 2018, no. 1, German Marshal Fund, www.gmfus.org.

It has been a challenge because since the 1990s, Poland's policy has been based on the assumption of consistency between the development of a strategic partnership with the United States within NATO and at the bilateral level, and EU membership along with European integration processes.³ Regardless of differences on specific issues between the U.S. and some European countries (e.g., with regard to the intervention in Iraq in 2003), the sustainability of transatlantic ties was to guarantee the maintenance of a basic community of shared values and interests on both sides of the Atlantic, and thus to provide favourable conditions for Poland to strengthen its security and further development. The increased likelihood of a clash of interests between the U.S. and Europe (in practice: the most important EU members) made the implementation of Polish interests in both areas more complicated. Should the disputes worsen, it would leave Poland with a dilemma of choosing the strategic course of cooperation—either the U.S. or the European partners. Responding to this challenge and treating transatlantic relations as a priority, Poland, nevertheless, tried to act in favour of reducing tensions and strengthening ties between the United States and Europe. It also opposed any European concepts—harmful in its understanding—of increasing political and strategic distance towards the U.S., in particular, the development of European strategic autonomy⁴ and any initiatives concerning the development of capabilities or military cooperation in Europe, which might weaken the political and military significance of NATO.⁵

Trump's victory was both an opportunity for the evolution of the Polish-American “asymmetric alliance” in a direction favourable to Poland as well as in line with the political preferences of President Andrzej Duda and the Law and Justice (PiS) government. The unconventionality of the American president and willingness of his administration to strengthen relations with Poland created opportunities to achieve ambitious objectives in foreign policy, economics, and security and to advance in the hierarchy of U.S. partners. Poland's activity and

³ O. Osica, „Czego nie widać. Polska wobec współpracy transatlantyckiej,” in: A. Radwan-Röhrenschef (ed.), *15 lat Polski w Unii Europejskiej*, Instytut In Europa, Warszawa, 2019, <http://ineuropa.pl>.

⁴ The term is used in, among other things, the “European Global Strategy of 2016” and other EU documents to define the EU's ambitions in terms of its ability to make decisions and act independently in foreign and security policy, but authorities and experts in individual EU countries interpret it differently; see: U. Franke, T. Varma, “Independence Plan: Europe's Pursuit of Strategic Autonomy,” *ECFR Scorecard*, European Council on Foreign Relations, July 2019, www.ecfr.eu.

⁵ See, e.g.: the position of the representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of National Defence presented at the meeting of the Committee of National Defence and the Committee of Foreign Affairs concerning the EU Common Security and Defence Policy, “Pełny zapis przebiegu posiedzenia Komisji Obrony Narodowej (nr 70) i Komisji Spraw Zagranicznych (nr 80),” Sejm RP, VIII Kadencja, 12 October 2017, pp. 5–7, www.sejm.gov.pl.

intensification of contacts with the U.S. administration brought tangible benefits in each of these areas in 2017–2018.⁶ The political cost in relations with European partners appeared to be not significant at this stage.

Opening Balance Sheet—The Obama and Trump Presidencies

Unlike most European countries, for which Obama's presidency represented a period of constructive and positive U.S. engagement with traditional Western European partners, Poland and the Central European countries experienced a decline of interest from the Americans.⁷ In foreign policy, the Obama administration focused on other regions and broader issues (including improving relations with Russia). Until 2014, it did not pay particular attention to contacts with Poland, which was neither a particular challenge nor a highly desirable partner.⁸ A prime example of this approach was the manner by which the Obama administration announced the changes in the architecture of the missile defence system concerning Poland and modification of the bilateral agreement on this issue. The decision was known to U.S. media before it was announced in Warsaw, and the unfortunate announcement itself was made on 17 September 2009—the anniversary of the 1939 Soviet invasion of Poland.

The criticism of Obama and U.S. engagement in the region continued in Poland until the end of his term. It was unaffected even by the Obama administration's significant change of policy in these areas in 2014, forced by the events of Maidan, Russian aggression against Ukraine, and the failure of the "reset" policy with Russia. The decisions to increase the U.S. military presence in Poland and the region, sanctions against Russia, or the launch of the European Reassurance Initiative (ERI) programme in 2014 were considered to come too late and be insufficient in Poland. The relations were not improved as a result of the criticism by the Obama administration of the changes in the judiciary introduced by the Law and Justice government.⁹

⁶ See: A. Dąbrowski, "Poland's Policy Towards the United States," *Yearbook of Polish Foreign Policy 2017*, PISM, Warsaw, 2020; M.M. Piotrowski, „Poland's Policy Towards the United States,” in this volume.

⁷ B. Wiśniewski, "Stosunki polsko-amerykańskie w erze Obamy," *Polski Przegląd Dyplomatyczny*, 2017, no. 2, pp. 90–108.

⁸ An image of eight years of United States foreign policy. See, e.g.: S. Dębski, G. Kozłowski, "Dziedzictwo Baracka Obamy. Polityka zagraniczna 2009–2016. Wybrane zagadnienia," MSZ, 2017.

⁹ A. Dąbrowski, "Poland's Policy Towards the United States," *Yearbook of Polish Foreign Policy 2016*, PISM, Warsaw, 2019, p. 70.

The election of Trump came as much less of a shock to Polish policymakers than to leaders of other European countries.¹⁰ Despite concerns about his expressed sympathy for Vladimir Putin and connections to Russia, as well as concerns about the effectiveness and consistency of the new administration's actions, a number of factors favoured the potential for closer bilateral relations. Primarily, Poland habitually associates the governance of Republican administrations with a strong stance towards Russia and an increased focus on strengthening U.S. military capabilities and deepening relations with close allies. Poland expected Trump's policy towards the region to be largely shaped by traditional Republican political, business, expert, and administrative elites, positively disposed towards Poland. Second, there was the proximity of certain ideological aspects between Trump and his closest circle, as well as the Polish government and its political environment. In particular, it was a conviction about the primacy of national interests over community interests (in the sense of an international, transatlantic, or European community), attachment to the idea of state sovereignty, and distrust of institutions that could limit it, as well as reluctance towards the political correctness of the traditional establishment promoting a liberal model of international relations.¹¹ Third, the Polish attitude towards transatlantic relations was much more realistic and transactional than that of most elites in Western European states. Although the policymakers and the Polish public tend to idealise bilateral relations with the U.S., they do not share either the complex history of creating and developing transatlantic ties after 1945 with the Western European states or the belief in the partnership nature of relations with the United States. For Poland, the imbalance of potentials and capabilities between the U.S. and Europe in security issues, regarded as the most important dimension of these relations, is obvious.¹² This implies the need for the weaker partner to adapt to the preferences and expectations of the stronger one, primarily to ensure the benefits of security guarantees.¹³ Trump's rejection of the previous approach towards transatlantic relations and focus on a strong promotion of American interests came as less of a surprise to Polish policymakers than to most Europeans, who were convinced

¹⁰ "Conversation with Minister of Foreign Affairs Witold Waszczykowski," *Polski Przegląd Dyplomatyczny*, 2017, no. 1, pp. 16–18.

¹¹ "Kaczyński: Prawdopodobnie ustana te amerykańskie niebywałe po prostu ingerencje w wewnętrzne sprawy polskiej," *Dziennik*, 23 January 2017, <https://wiadomosci.dziennik.pl>.

¹² See: A. Dybczyński, "Dwutorowa asymetria – sojusze Rzeczypospolitej w XXI wieku," *Polski Przegląd Dyplomatyczny*, 2017, no. 2, pp. 75–89.

¹³ It is also associated with a greater willingness to incur costs, including financial ones, to maintain U.S. interest in the security of its European allies. See, e.g., the interview with Professor Zbigniew Lewicki, "Możemy liczyć tylko na USA," *Polska The Times Plus*, 30 November 2018, <https://plus.polskatimes.pl>.

that transatlantic relations are excluded from the rules of *Realpolitik* and that the U.S. president treats European leaders as equal partners.

Trump and the State of Transatlantic Relations

The implementation of President Trump's announcement of a change in foreign policy from one allegedly defeatist and unfavourable to the U.S. to one promoting, above all, American interests, resulted in a series of tensions in transatlantic relations. One of the areas of personal dissatisfaction for the president, who at the beginning of his term was influenced by Steve Bannon, an advisor promoting anti-EU and ultranationalist views, was the alleged exploitation of the United States by Europe in security issues and economic relations, as well as the very functioning of the European Union. This reluctance manifested itself in harsh criticism of the failure of some NATO countries to meet their commitments of spending at least 2% of GDP on defence, in President Trump's personal support for Brexit, as well as in his criticism of the EU as an organisation designed to "exploit the United States in trade matters".¹⁴ Germany (a country that "owes the U.S. large sums of money for protection" under NATO) and Chancellor Angela Merkel personally were the particular objects of negative comments by the U.S. president.

An additional source of transatlantic tensions became changes in U.S. policy as regards a number of global and regional issues, placing the U.S. in opposition to the EU and most European countries. The most striking example was the revision of U.S. climate policy and the withdrawal (in June 2017) from the 2015 Paris Agreement on limiting climate change and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, as well as the shift to a much more critical approach towards trade agreements binding the U.S. (WTO, NAFTA, TPP, trade rules with the EU). With regard to relations with Iran, Trump strongly distanced himself from Obama's policy and the JCPOA (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action), a nuclear agreement negotiated by the U.S. and European countries, among others, claiming that it strengthened the regime in Tehran and legitimised its aggressive actions in the region. The European assessment of the JCPOA remained positive and the EU countries were determined to implement their commitments. The new U.S. Middle East policy, in particular, its stronger support for Israel than before (including the recognition of Jerusalem as the capital and the decision to move the U.S. embassy there in December 2017, the change of attitude towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict), also diverged significantly from the common EU position.

¹⁴ I. Schwartz, "President Trump Holds MAGA rally in Council Bluffs, Iowa," *Real Clear Politics*, 9 October 2018, www.realclearpolitics.com.

However, the first two years of Trump's presidency demonstrated both the durability of the foundations of the transatlantic relations and its resilience to turbulence. Contrary to fears expressed by some of the president's critics, the U.S. has neither withdrawn from NATO nor entered into a full-scale political and trade conflict with the European Union. In the global strategy of the United States, based on the assumption of intensifying rivalry with Russia and China and the need to achieve more favourable conditions for functioning in the international community, the European states were still considered partners rather than rivals.¹⁵ Trump's radical rhetoric was often in conflict with the actions of his administration, which continued and developed further the policies towards its European partners as set out in 2014–2016 by the Obama administration rather than radically deviated from them.¹⁶

However, the American expectations and operational methods have changed significantly.¹⁷ With regard to NATO, President Trump and his administration made a litmus test of allies' compliance with political commitments on defence spending. Despite reaffirming the guarantees of Article V of the Washington Treaty, Trump appeared to make the support of individual states in the event of a possible crisis conditional on their attitude.¹⁸ As regards the European Union, the criticism has not translated into confrontation. However, the U.S. imposed tariffs on, among other things, steel and aluminium from the EU in March 2018 and announced the possibility of applying additional measures (e.g., tariffs on cars) to change the unfavourable trade balance for the U.S.¹⁹

The United States expected European states to unequivocally support its policy towards Russia, China, Iran, and other countries with which it was in conflict. To this end, the U.S. was ready to apply political and economic pressure: either directly, against its European partners, or indirectly, by striking at their interests. Furthermore, the U.S. was less inclined than before to work out common

¹⁵ M.A. Piotrowski, B. Wiśniewski, "The U.S. National Security Strategy: The Trump Administration's Approach," *PISM Bulletin*, no. 128 (1068), 21 December 2017, ww.pism.pl; M.A. Piotrowski, "Changes in the Main Assumptions of the U.S. National Defense Strategy," *PISM Bulletin*, no. 14 (1085), 26 January 2018, www.pism.pl.

¹⁶ A. Dąbrowski, "Polityka zagraniczna USA w rok po zwycięstwie Donalda Trumpa," *Biuletyn PISM*, no. 107 (1549), 8 November 2017, www.pism.pl.

¹⁷ For more, see: J. Gotkowska, "US-German clash over international order and security. The consequences for NATO's Eastern flank," *OSW Commentary*, 22 February 2019, www.osw.waw.pl.

¹⁸ "Very aggressive: Trump suggests Montenegro can cause world war three," *The Guardian*, 19 July 2018, www.theguardian.com.

¹⁹ The reason for the dispute was European subsidies to the aviation industry. The EU responded by imposing tariffs on selected U.S. products. For more on transatlantic trade, see, e.g.: M. Schneider-Petsinger, "US-EU Trade Relations in the Trump Era. Which Way Forward?," *Chatham House Research Paper*, March 2019; www.chathamhouse.org.

solutions to global challenges—a well-functioning international trade system based on the WTO, counteracting climate change, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and support for multilateralism and the UN system—instead favouring the promotion of its own solutions.

European countries and Canada in 2017 and 2018 were primarily responding to U.S. actions and initiatives. They sought to establish close relations with the American president and his administration. Even the leaders of countries critical of Trump's person and his views recognised the key role of the United States at the global and regional levels, in particular, its contribution to European stability and security. Some partners also endorsed the U.S. diagnosis of the strategic situation and assessment of the challenges with regard to the activities of China, Russia, and Iran, the insufficient defence spending of some NATO members, the weakness of the WTO system and the need to reform other international regimes.

This implied a far-reaching willingness to cooperate with the U.S. on selected issues. For example, in response to criticism of the JCPOA, the E3 states supporting the agreement (UK, France, Germany) engaged in discussions with the U.S. in 2017–2018 on the possible strengthening and expansion of the agreement. The E3 countries hoped to adopt a common position that would enable the reopening of negotiations with Iran to, among other things, impose restrictions on the Iranian missile programme.²⁰ It was only the failure of the discussions, due to the uncompromising position of the U.S., and ultimately its withdrawal from the JCPOA in May 2018, that escalated the transatlantic crisis. It resulted in the reimposition of sanctions by the U.S. against Iran and its trading partners (including those of the EU) and the preparation of mechanisms to circumvent American sanctions by the EU countries.

European states declared their will to cooperate on, among other things, WTO reform, a gradual increase in defence budgets, and the rebalancing of EU-U.S. trade. The postulate of preserving transatlantic cohesion and maintaining close ties with the United States was the starting point for European countries on almost every issue. On the other hand, the Americans demonstrated, at that time, a limited willingness to compromise with their most important European partners.

Much more important than the newly emerged differences on individual issues (which had existed before as well) was the growing conviction about the structural nature of the crisis and the need for a fundamental redefinition of transatlantic relations among some European political and expert elites in 2017–2018. According to a widely reported statement by Merkel in May 2017,

²⁰ "Future of the Iran nuclear deal. How much can US pressure isolate Iran?," European Parliamentary Research Service, European Parliament, May 2018, p. 4; www.europarl.europa.eu.

“the times when we could completely rely on others are, in a sense, over”.²¹ From this perspective, the Trump presidency appeared to be a factor accelerating the processes of divergence between the interests of the United States and most of its traditional European partners. Hence, the challenge became not so much to maintain the possibility of returning to the previous state of transatlantic relations (characterised by Europe's recognition of U.S. primacy in security policy issues), but rather to start building a system in which the United States and Europe are close actors but pursuing their own interests.

The deterioration of transatlantic relations after the election of Trump has also made many Europeans aware of the scale of political, strategic and economic dependence on the U.S., and consequently of their ability to coerce European countries to act in accordance with U.S. preferences. A clear example was the withdrawal of most European companies from their plans to develop cooperation with Iran after the announcement of the U.S. decision on the JCPOA despite the EU's declaration of willingness to maintain contacts. The debates concerning the scale of the crisis in transatlantic relations, European strategic autonomy, the legitimacy of building a European defence capability or even an independent nuclear deterrence capability intensified as doubts grew among some European elites about the possibility of overcoming differences and returning to *business as usual* in relations with the U.S.²²

For many experts, the postulate of gaining independence from the U.S. was a logical strategy for the European Union given the intensifying rivalry between superpowers, as well as an appropriate response to the U.S. focus on the Asia-Pacific region. Such a process of emancipation could be gradual and consensual, involving increasing the strategic autonomy of European states and the EU, reducing U.S. obligations towards Europe, and developing new partner mechanisms for dialogue, coordination, and cooperation. However, it would also be possible for conflicts to escalate and for transatlantic ties to be violently broken.

Those who criticised the proposals to loosen transatlantic ties argued that the close ties between the United States, Canada, and European countries had not been sufficiently taken into account.²³ In the area of security and defence,

²¹ “Merkel, After Discordant G-7 Meeting, Is Looking Past Trump,” *New York Times*, 28 May 2017, www.nytimes.com.

²² See, e.g.: A. Billon-Galland, A. Thomson, “European Strategic Autonomy: Stop Talking, Start Planning,” *Policy Brief*, European Leadership Network, May 2018; www.europeanleadershipnetwork.org; “Defending Europe: scenario-based capability requirements for NATO's European Members,” International Institute for Strategic Studies, April 2019; B. Tertrais, “Will Europe Get Its Own Bomb?,” *Washington Quarterly*, 2019, no. 2 (42), pp. 1–20.

²³ T. Kleine-Brockhoff, “Where Heiko Maas is Wrong,” *Berlin Policy Journal*, 30 October 2018, <https://berlinpolicyjournal.com>.

these ties include not only the North Atlantic Alliance and the NATO structures with the leading role of the U.S. but also the presence of U.S. forces and military installations on the territory of a number of European countries, joint operations, particularly in the Middle East and Africa, intelligence cooperation, and the purchase of military equipment, research, and cooperation of the arms industry. The economic, cultural and social ties between North America and Europe are also difficult to ignore. Some European countries also hoped U.S. policy could evolve or be reconstructed back to “normal” following a change of a president, arguing for a wait-and-see approach to the crisis.

The existence of a group of states, including Poland, vitally interested in maintaining close transatlantic relations, even in the version proposed by the new U.S. administration, was also important for the overall assessment of Europe’s position towards the Trump administration. This implied a willingness to incur additional costs associated with supporting regional and global American interests.

The Polish Way to Deal with Trump and Transatlantic Relations

From Poland’s point of view, the role of the United States as the most important and reliable guarantor of security in relation to Russia, a supplier of modern armaments, a source of investment, including in the energy sector—also in the region (the Three Seas Initiative)—and an instrument for “disciplining” NATO in terms of the defence budgets of member states remained indisputable. Irrespective of who was elected as the U.S. president, Poland would therefore seek closer ties with the U.S. Ideological similarities with Trump and common points in the assessment of the international environment made it, however, easier for the Polish authorities to use the tensions in the relations between the U.S. and its traditional European partners to deepen bilateral relations.²⁴

The factors independent from Poland’s stance—the need to oppose Russia’s policy and the crisis in U.S. relations with other European states, intensified by the critical attitude of their publics towards the policy and the person of the U.S. president (to some extent with the exception of the UK)—were conducive to the tightening of U.S.-Poland relations. Invariably, Poland’s major advantages were the pro-American attitudes of the elites and a large part of Polish society,²⁵

²⁴ For a comparison of the Polish and German approaches, see: P. Buras, J. Janning, “Divided at the Centre: Germany, Poland, and the Troubles of the Trump Era,” *Policy Brief*, European Council on Foreign Relations, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, 19 December 2018, www.ecfr.eu.

²⁵ See: “O stosunkach polsko-amerykańskich i prezydenturze Donalda Trumpa,” *Komunikat z badań*, no. 57/2018, CBOS, www.cbos.pl.

the potential, location, and political ambitions of a country aspiring to become the leader of the Three Seas region, as well as the possibility to quickly develop and strengthen the existing forms of political, military, and economic American presence. The Polish strategic communication was adapted to the expectations and personal preferences of President Trump and the U.S. administration (including the new ambassador to Poland, Georgette Mosbacher). First, it emphasised the common heritage of Western civilisation, the rich tradition of mutual relations, and a similar approach to the protection of conservative values. Second, it stressed the particular importance of the U.S. president's personal contribution to the development of bilateral relations, with the culminating proposal to create the "Fort Trump" military base.²⁶ Third, it emphasised elements that were particularly important for the president and which positively distinguished Poland from the majority of European states: the fulfilment of NATO commitments to maintain defence spending at the level of 2% GDP and economic benefits for the U.S. resulting, in particular, from gas agreements, arms contracts, and the willingness to co-finance the U.S. military presence. Such a message was an appeal to the transactional dimension of Trump's approach towards relations with partners. It also included the omission of sensitive or disputable matters, both multilateral (e.g., related to EU-US relations, the Paris Agreement, the JCPOA) and bilateral (the issue of visas, the JUST Act on so-called heirless property).

The implementation of this approach was on display during President Trump's visit to Poland in July 2017 and President Duda's visit to Washington in September 2018 and the signing of the Declaration on Strategic Partnership. Poland also expressed its willingness to provide "good services" in support of U.S. global policy, for example, by accepting the role of co-host of a conference on the future of the Middle East, which was held in Warsaw in early 2019 (the proposal was accepted in late 2018).

The intensification of bilateral cooperation, especially increasing the scale and changing the nature—to a permanent kind—of the U.S. military presence was a priority for Poland. Some representatives of the Polish government, however, believed that the ultimate and attainable goal should be to consolidate Poland as one of the closest European partners of the United States, and even to replace the United Kingdom or Turkey as the counterbalancing force to the critical positions of France and Germany towards the U.S.²⁷ The foundations of a close relationship were to be established during Trump's presidency, but the consolidation of Poland

²⁶ "Baza USA w Polsce. Duda proponuje nazwę Fort Trump," *Rzeczpospolita*, 18 September 2018, www.rp.pl.

²⁷ "Conversation with Bartosz Cichocki, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs," *Polskie Radio*, 19 September 2018; www.polskieradio.pl.

as an important ally was, in this view, to become permanent and impact beyond the perspective of one or two presidential terms. This would persuade subsequent administrations to recognise the benefits of the partnership. The strengthening of bilateral ties was also intended as a safeguard in the event of a breakdown in multilateral formats of transatlantic cooperation (NATO) and European integration (the EU).

Poland's policy was, however, also perceived as a contribution to maintaining transatlantic ties and a way of keeping the U.S. interested in European issues, thus acting in Europe's well-understood interest. Poland declared itself as a proponent of dialogue among the members of the transatlantic community, a country which "has always tried to build bridges over the Atlantic".²⁸ Pointing to the risk of a return to isolationism and a decrease in U.S. involvement in European affairs, Poland advocated the necessity of respecting U.S. interests and preferences, also by adapting to the style and rhetoric of the American president. Minister of Foreign Affairs Jacek Czaputowicz noted that "we will develop both bilateral cooperation [with the U.S.] and cooperation in multilateral forums, primarily NATO. We are against any steps provoking transatlantic divisions".²⁹ Poland's objection to the development of a stand-alone European military capability was motivated, among other things, by concern about a negative reaction from the U.S. and Poland's desire to fulfil the obligations undertaken within NATO in the first place.³⁰

Holding a position equal to or close to the American one did not in itself entail high political costs for Poland in the 2017–2018 period. In European politics, as it was a period of deteriorating relations with the main partners of Poland on the continent—Germany and France—and with the European Commission. Poland's pro-American stance was justified by a sense of threat from Russia and the necessity to obtain support from the U.S. However, this did not mean a radical change in foreign policy just for the sake of appeasing Trump. For example, the American actions with regard to Russia (e.g., taking a firm stance on its violation of the INF Treaty or additional sanctions against entities involved in the construction of the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline), as well as its attitude towards defence spending within NATO, were consistent with the established Polish position. While the U.S. tightened its policy towards China,

²⁸ "Conversation with Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki," *Polski Przegląd Dyplomatyczny*, 2018, no. 4, p. 20.

²⁹ "Government information on Polish foreign policy in 2018 (presented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland Jacek Czaputowicz at a sitting of the Sejm on 21 March 2018)," see p. 11 in this volume.

³⁰ "Full record of proceedings of the National Defence Committee ...," *op. cit.*

Poland also took steps to adjust its relations with that country, primarily due to the imbalance in trade relations and dissatisfaction with the scale and quality of Chinese investments.³¹ On issues where the EU common position adopted with Poland's participation differed from the U.S. approach, for example, in the area of trade, operations of international organisations, counteracting climate change, or support for the nuclear agreement with Iran (JCPOA), a two-track policy was pursued. Poland maintained support for the EU's common position, yet at the same time distanced itself from it slightly in contacts with the U.S. administration and expressed understanding for the U.S. position.

A facilitating factor in transatlantic politics was the lack of consensus on the European side about an adequate response to the Trump administration's policies. Whereas in political discussions and opinion polls, the Trump's critics clearly outnumbered his supporters in several Western European countries, even France, which promoted slogans of greater European sovereignty in foreign and security policy and increasing its independence, was concerned at the same time about maintaining close cooperation with the United States in selected areas.³² European Union institutions, within the scope of their competences, defended EU interests in their contacts with the U.S., but were not given a mandate by the Member States to pursue a more assertive policy. Developing a new policy towards the United States was not facilitated by the crisis related to Brexit and disputes over the future of the Union.

In 2017–2018, not only did a concept that was coherent, realistic, and acceptable to the most important European countries of an alternative approach to transatlantic relations fail to emerge, but there was even no consensus on the necessity of its adoption.³³ For Poland, it was a convenient scenario, as it opened up opportunities for closer relations with the U.S.

Crisis as Opportunity: the Effectiveness of Poland's Transatlantic Strategy

Since the 1990s, the most favourable scenario for Poland in the development of transatlantic relations has been the maintenance of the following model: on the one hand, the constructive involvement of the U.S. in European politics and maintenance of security guarantees, and, on the other hand, the grudging

³¹ A. Bachulska, R. Turcsanyi, "Behind the Huawei Backlash in Poland and Czech Republic," *The Diplomat*, 6 February 2019; <https://thediplomat.com>.

³² See: P. Belkin, "France and U.S.-French relations: in brief," *CRS Report*, no. R 45167, 19 April 2018, pp. 11–12, FAS Project on Government Secrecy, <https://sgp.fas.org>.

³³ German Minister of Foreign Affairs Heiko Maas made an attempt to do so in 2018, proposing the creation of a global "alliance of multilateralists" to strengthen the liberal international order.

willingness of European states to share the costs of the transatlantic alliance and selective support of U.S. policy. In situations involving conflicts of interest, Poland seems to prefer compromise solutions, even at the cost of concessions on the European side. However, if a compromise is not possible, Poland's support for the U.S. may be considered more likely. At the time of the last major crisis (related to the intervention in Iraq in 2003), when a choice had to be made between supporting the major European countries or the U.S., Poland chose the United States.

The first years of Trump's presidency did not confront Poland with any similar choice. Making the most of the opportunities created by the new situation, Poland maintained the position that an alternative arrangement of transatlantic relations, for example, involving strategic autonomy for the European Union, is both unrealistic and harmful. Not only does it threaten transatlantic unity but it also opens up the possibility of Russia to play off certain EU Member States against the U.S. Poland's approach can be described as "enlightened opportunism": in its understanding, its policy was motivated not only by the desire to gain benefits for itself but also by concern for the future of transatlantic relations. Such an approach was questioned in the internal Polish debate.³⁴ According to critics, unconditional support of American policy and adaptation to the presidential rhetoric and style of action of Trump, while weakening the commitment to European cooperation, raised a question about the future of transatlantic relations. Sceptics claimed that Poland was not helping to save transatlantic relations but rather assisting in dismantling them.

In 2017–2018, there was no relevant forum and political instruments to develop a common position of leading European countries, including Poland, towards the U.S. and changes in transatlantic relations. At the level of the Union, the differences in approach towards the United States, as well as the focus on Brexit negotiations, prevented an in-depth discussion and the development of a common strategy, even if these issues were raised during the European Council and foreign ministers' proceedings. At the level of European states, the cooperation on specific issues to confront U.S. actions was more of an exception (e.g., the E3 countries on the Iran issue), and the development of national strategies became a rule. Neither the Weimar Triangle nor other multilateral instruments have become a mechanism for coordinating European transatlantic policy.

The question of the permanence and irreversibility of the Trump administration's decisions concerning Poland in the context of further transatlantic

³⁴ See, e.g.: K. Pełczyńska-Nałęcz, P. Buras, "Czas przemysleć sojusze, bo priorytety USA są inne niż UE," *Rzeczpospolita*, 19 July 2018, www.rp.pl; R. Kuźniar, "Duda w Waszyngtonie, czyli kolonialny kompleks PiS," *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 20 September 2018, <http://wyborcza.pl>.

tensions remained open.³⁵ One scenario for the post–2018 developments is the status quo, meaning no escalation of transatlantic divergences and even some normalisation of the U.S.-Europe relations.³⁶ This would allow Poland to continue to take advantage of the favourable situation in bilateral relations and to avoid an intra-European confrontation over relations with the U.S..

In a less favourable scenario, transatlantic relations could deteriorate significantly during the second half of Trump's first term and in the event that he wins again. This deterioration is likely to happen if the U.S. takes a more critical stance on relations with the EU and the future of NATO, if a conflict involving the U.S. in the Middle East or East Asia erupts, if the rivalry with China escalates, or, paradoxically, if bilateral relations with Russia improve. The growing cost of Poland's involvement in supporting U.S. policy could then become problematic. In such circumstances, the United States will expect Poland to provide firm political and probably also material support, even if it means political confrontation with important European partners.

Should the crisis in transatlantic relations escalate and in response to such U.S. actions, some European states may proceed to pursue slogans of strategic independence in isolation from their partnership with the U.S. and from NATO. Continuing the current political course, Poland would find itself outside such integration initiatives. For the first time in recent history, it would be faced with a choice between two strategic options: American or European.

Finally, changes in bilateral relations cannot be ruled out if Trump loses in the 2020 election. The new administration may focus on developing relations with the EU, France, and Germany, which would mean less intense contacts with Poland. At the same time, however, not only would the possibility of a decline in the transatlantic partnership diminish, but new opportunities to strengthen it might in fact open up.

³⁵ M.M. Piotrowski, "Poland's Policy Towards the United States," *op. cit.*

³⁶ J. Puglierin, "The next two years in EU-U.S. relations: bad, worse, worst?" in: A. de Hoop Scheffer, M. Quencez, *Transatlantic Security Cooperation Toward 2020, Policy Paper*, no. 7, German Marshall Fund, 2019, pp. 4–8.

The Northern Dimension of Polish Foreign Policy After 2004

—Relations with the Nordic States

VERONIKA JÓŹWIAK, KINGA RAŚ

Poland's geographical location and membership in the Euro-Atlantic structures are the main determinants of its relations with the Nordic states. In 1999, as part of NATO, Poland became bound by an alliance with Denmark, Norway and Iceland. As a result of its accession to the European Union in 2004, Poland joined Denmark, Finland and Sweden. The Community of interests arising from these alliances as well as the location on the Baltic Sea fostered close political and economic cooperation. This cooperation deepened after 2014, particularly in the areas of security and energy, while its potential remained unexploited.

Nordic states from the Polish perspective

Relations with the Nordic states were not a priority for Poland over the discussed period and were primarily conducted within the framework of regional platforms. The Baltic Sea basin was the second most important pillar of Poland's regional involvement following the Visegrad Group, with which Poland identified itself economically and culturally to a greater extent.

Poland wanted to act as a bridge between the Baltic Sea region and the Central Europe¹. After joining the Euro-Atlantic structures, the successive governments expressed their willingness to increase the country's involvement on the North-South line and to attract Nordic partners to cooperate over matters of common interest, including economic, energy and defence cooperation, in particular. At the same time, Polish local governments with a stronger Baltic identity actively built relations with partners in the Nordic countries, especially through EU cross-border cooperation programmes. Under the rule of the Civic Platform (PO) (2007–2015), Poland increasingly often pointed out the need to cooperate with partners from the north of Europe. The course of the development as regards relations with some Nordic states was determined by the eastern dimension of the European Neighbourhood Policy. The Special partnership brought Poland and Sweden together, initiating the Eastern Partnership programme established

¹ Since 2006, this has been a constant element of the minister of foreign affairs' annual information on the assumptions of Polish foreign policy delivered to the Sejm.

by the EU in 2008. The areas of cooperation also included energy and defence industry as well as the development of innovation and new technologies - sectors in which the Nordic countries were among the world leaders.

Poland recognised the region's distinctive political stability and growing economic attractiveness². Especially after 2008, at a time of crisis on international markets and in the Eurozone, Poland wanted to take advantage of the optimistic forecasts for the economies of the Nordic states, which (apart from Finland) showed not only relative stability but also potential for rapid growth. Therefore, Poland's increasingly important objective was to strengthen trade relations with these countries. An important dimension of bilateral relations in the discussed period was the economic emigration of Poles to the countries of the North. In 2018, they were the largest group of foreigners in Norway and Iceland.

Relations with the region became more dynamic after Russia's aggression against Ukraine in 2014 and the change in the security situation. The government of the United Right (since 2015) wanted to intensify political relations and sectoral cooperation with the Nordic countries, which was fostered by an increasingly convergent perception of the threat from Russia. In 2016, Poland provided a new framework for cooperation with the Baltic Sea region, establishing together with Croatia the Three Seas Initiative (TSI). Although it did not include the Nordic states, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jacek Czaputowicz, described Scandinavia as the natural development direction of infrastructure investments within the TSI³.

An important dimension of Poland's involvement in the Nordic countries was increasingly active cooperation within the framework of various regional fora. Their activities were most often focused on the economy, environmental and climate protection, as well as on the areas of so-called soft cooperation (e.g. culture, building regional identity and people-to-people contacts). Political cooperation within these platforms was rarely undertaken. This can be attributed primarily to the participation of the countries of the region in various alliances – not all of them were members of the EU and NATO, which influenced the way in which they cooperated at intergovernmental level. Another barrier to the deepening of political ties was the fact that the Nordic countries are strongly integrated with each other, co-founding, among other things, the Nordic Council - a grouping based on linguistic, cultural and historical affinity, from which Poland was naturally excluded. Since the beginning of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, an

² A. Purju, "The economies of the Baltic Sea Region. Growth patterns and foreign trade now and in the future," *Journal of East-West Business*, 2013, vol. 19, no. 1–2, pp. 4–15.

³ "Government Information on Polish foreign policy in 2018 (presented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland Jacek Czaputowicz at a sitting of the Sejm on 21 March 2018)," see p. 11 in this volume.

inconsistent stance on maintaining political relations with Russia had also been a barrier to conduct any collective actions. Finland, e.g. continued to base its security policy partly on good relations with that country.

Of the numerous groupings of multilateral cooperation in the region, Poland was most involved in the activities of the Council of Baltic Sea States established in 1992, a political platform bringing together 11 countries: the Nordic states, Germany, the Baltic states, Poland and Russia, and the European Commission. A further 11 countries: Belarus, France, the U.S., Great Britain, Italy, the Netherlands, Slovakia, Romania, Hungary, Ukraine and Spain all enjoy observer status in the Council. The Council cooperates in implementing, among other things, the objectives of sustainable development of the UN, the Paris Climate Agreement and the Palermo Protocol to Prevent and Combat Human Trafficking. This platform was primarily used by Poland for economic and social integration with Scandinavia and the Baltic States and for direct contacts with Russia, especially the Kaliningrad Oblast.

Poland chaired the CBSS in 2004–2005 and then in 2015–2016. During its second term, it focused on sustainable development (including environmental protection, diversification of energy sources and internationalisation of science), support for the social and economic development of the region through culture, and civil protection through interoperability of services, nuclear safety, radiological protection and children's safety⁴.

Poland also participated in the EU regional initiatives - the macro-regional strategy for the Baltic Sea and the Northern Dimension (ND). The first one, adopted by the European Commission in 2009⁵, serves primarily the purpose of cooperation in the field of environmental protection, and the second one serves the economic integration between the EU and the partner countries (Russia, Norway and Iceland) covering territory from the Arctic to the southern shores of the Baltic Sea and from the north-western Russia to Greenland. Poland participates in three areas of ND cooperation (transport and logistics, public health and social welfare, culture)⁶. Following the accession of Poland and the Baltic States to the EU, the ND served primarily the purpose of EU cooperation with the Kaliningrad Oblast⁷.

⁴ K. Popławski, K. Redłowska, "Cele polskiej prezydencji w Radzie Państw Morza Bałtyckiego," *Przegląd Bałtycki*, 17 January 2016, www.przegladbaltycki.pl.

⁵ "Komunikat Komisji do PE," Commission of the European Union, 10 June 2009, www.ec.europa.eu.

⁶ "Wymiar Północny," MSZ, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja.

⁷ K. Raś, "Wizerunek północnego wymiaru współpracy w regionie Morza Bałtyckiego," *Sprawy Międzynarodowe*, 2018, no. 3, p. 153.

Following Russia's aggression against Ukraine, the importance of the format created by the Nordic and Baltic states (NB8) increased, focusing more and more on security issues. Poland, together with Germany, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, participated in the NB8+ format, which brought together defence ministers⁸, and in the meetings of foreign ministers of the NB8+ Visegrad Group initiated by Poland and Sweden in 2013. The issues linking the two regions were relations with the EU's eastern neighbours as well as energy and security policy.

A new platform for intra-EU cooperation was the informal Hanseatic Group, established in March 2018, consisting of eight countries - Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, the Netherlands and Ireland⁹. They share a similar view of the reform as regards the Eurozone - they are in favour of a restrictive fiscal policy, among other things. This group, which was extended to include other nine Member States (including Poland), also expressed its views on other issues, such as the strengthening of the EU single market¹⁰.

Political relations

Denmark. It is Poland's only Nordic partner in the EU and NATO simultaneously, which definitely encouraged the development of political dialogue and bilateral relations. The EU was an important forum, especially considering the close collaboration of Poland with Denmark (and Cyprus) as part of the so-called trio since 2008, and mainly during the Polish Presidency of the EU since July 2011. The chairmanship of this group underwent in difficult conditions, requiring the EU states and institutions to manage the economic crisis efficiently. Thus, the most important challenge of the Poland-Denmark-Cyprus trio was to restore European growth and competitiveness and to develop the EU budget for 2014–2020¹¹. Poland and Denmark shared a similar perspective by remaining outside the Eurozone and treating the idea of deepening the EU integration more cautiously. In practice, the presidency brought about numerous consultations at government level, and Poland was the third country visited by the then new

⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 154.

⁹ M. Makowska, "Przyszłość Unii po wyborach do Parlamentu Europejskiego," *Polski Przegląd Dyplomatyczny*, 2019, no. 2.

¹⁰ "Preparing the March European Council. The future development of the Single Market and European digital policy in view of preparation for the next Strategic Agenda," 26 February 2019, www.vnk.fi.

¹¹ "Spotkanie trio Polska–Dania–Cypr," KPRM, 6 May 2011, www.gov.pl/web/premier.

Prime Minister Helle Thorning-Schmidt in October 2011¹². Both countries also held similar views concerning EU eastern and security policy.

Cooperation was strengthened after Russia's aggression against Ukraine. In April 2016, the Prime Minister of Denmark Lars Lokke Rasmussen visited Warsaw. The main topic of discussions with the head of the Polish government Beata Szydło was the Baltic Pipe gas pipeline¹³. A month later, President Andrzej Duda paid a visit to Copenhagen, where he discussed both the NATO summit in Warsaw and cooperation in the Baltic Sea region with the Danish Prime Minister, and continued discussions on the scheduled gas interconnection. He also participated in the Economic Forum¹⁴. In December 2018, Krzysztof Tchórzewski, Minister of Energy, met Lars Christian Lilleholt, Minister of Energy, Public Utilities and Climate Affairs, during the COP24 climate summit in Katowice. He then signed an intergovernmental agreement on the Baltic Pipe, which is to operate from 2022. The Memorandum on the Agreement regarding dialogue in the field of energy and energy transformation was also concluded at that time¹⁵.

During the discussed period there were a number of working meetings of ministers of foreign affairs and energy, however, the agreement of November 2018 on the demarcation of the maritime border between the continental shelves and the exclusive economic zones of both countries in the part of the Baltic Sea south of Bornholm was crucial in bilateral relations¹⁶. This was particularly important for designating the recommended route for the scheduled Baltic Pipe, which is to cross the area. At the same time, it was Denmark that among the Nordic states most strongly manifested an increased sense of threat from Russia. As a result of pressure from the Central and Eastern European countries and the U.S. in 2018, the Denmark's opposition efficiently delayed the implementation of the second connection as part of the German-Russian Nord Stream gas pipeline project.

Military cooperation with Denmark primarily involved the participation of both countries in the North-Eastern Multinational Corps, as well as joint training. The contacts between representatives of the defence ministries

¹² "Spotkanie premiera Donalda Tuska z szefową rządu Danii," KPRM, 27 October 2011 r., www.gov.pl/web/premier.

¹³ In 2017, Poland and Denmark signed a memorandum on the construction of Baltic Pipe. According to the assumptions, this gas pipeline would connect Poland with Denmark and, from 2022, enable the transmission of Norwegian gas—annually up to 10 billion cubic metres. It would also serve the EU gas market (North-South corridor).

¹⁴ "Para Prezydencka z wizytą w Królestwie Danii," *Prezydent.pl*, 8 June 2019, www.prezydent.pl.

¹⁵ "Polsko-duńska współpraca energetyczna," MAP, 11 December 2018, www.gov.pl/web/aktywa-panstwowe.

¹⁶ P. Stępiński, "Koniec sporu terytorialnego Polska-Dania to dobra wiadomość dla Baltic Pipe," *Biznes Alert*, 2 November 2018, <https://biznesalert.pl>.

were aimed at exchanging information on the experience of participation in stabilisation missions, and also included reforms of command structures or the purchase of military equipment and armaments. In May 2018, the Head of the National Security Bureau, Paweł Soloch, spoke in Copenhagen with the Danish Prime Minister's Chief Advisor for National Security, Michael Lund Jeppesen, and General Björn Ingemann Bisserup, Chief Defence Commander, about the forthcoming NATO summit in Brussels, bilateral cooperation and security in the region, including an increased role for the North-eastern Multinational Corps in Szczecin. The issue of cooperation in the context of the presence of Danish forces in Estonia and Polish forces in Latvia within the framework of NATO Battalion Battle Groups (Enhanced Forward Presence, eFP) was also raised¹⁷.

Finland. Political relations with Finland were based on a similar approach to security issues and the Eastern Dimension of the EU Neighbourhood Policy and on multilateral cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region. Under the rules of the Civic Platform (PO), the two countries also shared a common approach towards the European Union - a conviction of the need for common principles and strong institutions, especially the EC, the need for closer integration, as well as a focus on competitiveness and the common market¹⁸.

Bilateral relations intensified in 2011, when Prime Ministers Jyrki Katainen and Donald Tusk signed the Joint communiqué on enhanced cooperation between Poland and Finland in Warsaw¹⁹. It defines the economy, energy, information and telecommunications technologies, environmental protection, security, education and the EU's eastern neighbourhood as natural areas of common interest. Katainen paid another working visit to Gdańsk in 2013, stressing the importance of cooperation to reduce pollution of the Baltic Sea and to develop economic relations. Further strengthening of political relations and defence cooperation occurred in 2014 in connection with the Russian aggression against Ukraine. Tusk paid a working visit to Helsinki, Tallinn and Stockholm in February 2014. In 2012–2014, 49 meetings and consultations were held in Poland and Finland at the level of prime ministers, ministers, deputy ministers, heads of departments, and representatives of parliaments²⁰.

The will to strengthen cooperation - especially in the field of security—in the Baltic Sea region and for the EU's eastern partners was confirmed by Finnish President Sauli Niinistö during his official visit to Poland in spring 2015. President

¹⁷ "Szef BBN w Danii o NATO i bezpieczeństwie w związku z aktywnością wojskową Rosji," BBN, 24 May 2018, www.bbn.gov.pl.

¹⁸ "Wizyta premiera Finlandii w Polsce," KPRM, 19 December 2011, www.gov.pl/web/premier.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*.

²⁰ "Informator ekonomiczny," MSZ, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja.

Andrzej Duda's return visit to Helsinki was held in autumn 2017. Security, the situation in Ukraine and policy towards Russia were the main issues discussed. During the meeting of Prime Minister Juha Sipilä with Beata Szydło in January 2017 in Warsaw, the options of cooperation in the combat against hybrid threats and terrorism, the question of innovation and the future of the EU after Brexit, were discussed.

Finland's cautious approach towards further centralisation of governance in the Eurozone and the federalisation of the EU was consistent with the perception of the EU presented by the Law and Justice government²¹. The reasons for Finnish cautious attitude were, among other things, the recession in 2012–2016 and a lack of monetary policy tools during this period. Furthermore, during the pan-European discussion on the future of the EU since 2016, Finland highlighted, e.g. the need to protect the rule of law and fight against climate change²². These factors considerably distinguished the Finnish position on the development of the EU from the approach taken by the Polish Government, whose priority was, among other things, to maintain migration and asylum policy within the competence of the Member States.

In the period of 2004–2018, both countries managed to develop cooperation mainly in the field of security, despite the differences in both countries' approach towards Russia. Finland is focused on avoiding tensions and building a space for dialogue with Russia and on being an intermediary between Russia and the West. To this end, it uses, among other things, its membership of the Arctic Council with Poland as an observer. It is also interested in strengthening defence cooperation with NATO and the U.S. and in the EU. Simultaneously, Polish-Finnish cooperation in the armaments sector was developing, primarily focusing on the contract with Patria for Rosomak armoured transporters. In 2013, the Finnish manufacturer extended Poland's licence free of charge for another 10 years. The Polish army ordered 300 Rosomaks in 2013, so in 2019 it will own over 900 vehicles²³. In 2017 in Helsinki, Minister Antoni Macierewicz suggested a possible further extension of cooperation with this company, which may result, e.g. in the modernisation of combat vehicles²⁴.

²¹ V. Jóźwiak, "Hungarian-Russian Economic Relations," *PISM Bulletin*, no. 105 (1351), 26 July 2019, www.pism.pl.

²² J. Szymańska, "Przyszłość Unii Europejskiej po wyborach do Parlamentu Europejskiego," *Polski Przegląd Dyplomatyczny*, 2019, no. 2.

²³ "Licencja na produkcję Rosomaków w Polsce przedłużona o 10 lat," *Puls Biznesu*, 12 July 2013, www.pb.pl.

²⁴ "Finlandia / Macierewicz: możliwe rozszerzenie współpracy z firmą Patria," *Rzeczpospolita*, 27 September 2017, www.rp.pl.

On the initiative of Poland and Finland, an informal Ministerial Forum of the Schengen Member States with the External Borders was set up in 2013, enabling dialogue on border protection and migration systems. In September 2017, Defence Ministers Jussi Niinistö and Antoni Macierewicz signed a bilateral framework agreement on joint action against hybrid and cyber threats, information exchange and technological cooperation²⁵. Poland was also among the founding countries of the European Centre of Excellence for Combating Hybrid Threats, inaugurated in April 2017 in Helsinki. This institution enables the exchange of knowledge and experience between states and structures of the EU and NATO²⁶. Furthermore, the exchange of experiences related to the development of territorial defence turned out to be the subject of Polish-Finnish cooperation.

Iceland. Multilateral formats were important for Polish-Icelandic relations - in economic matters, in particular, the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, in which Iceland cooperates with EU countries, and in political matters - the Council of Baltic Sea States linking this geographically distant country with the region of Northern Europe. The presence of the Polish community in Iceland was also an important factor. In 2018, Poles were the largest group of foreigners there (approx. 20,000, at a total population of approx. 350,000). Iceland, which is a member of the European Economic Area (EEA), on 1 May 2006 lifted restrictions on access to the labour market for citizens of the countries that joined the Union in 2004.

Since 2008, the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland had been operating in Reykjavik, and in April 2013, by the decision of Minister of Foreign Affairs Radosław Sikorski, an embassy was opened. In June 2017, for the first time since 1976, the Head of Polish diplomacy, Minister Witold Waszczykowski, paid a visit to Iceland. During the meeting with Minister Gudlaugur Thor Thórdarson, the allied relations between the two countries within NATO and the common efforts to increase the level of security in Europe were emphasised. In October 2018, in connection with the tenth anniversary of the Polish school, the Speaker of the Polish Senate Stanisław Karczewski, Minister of National Education Anna Zalewska and Undersecretary of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Andrzej Papierz arrived in Reykjavik. The Icelandic Prime Minister, Katrín Jakobsdóttir, and the Minister of Education, Lilja Dögg Alfredsdóttir, also attended the ceremony. Speaker Karczewski also met with President Guóni Thorlacius Jóhannesson and President of Althing (the unicameral parliament) Steingrímur Jónmann Sigfússon.

²⁵ "Polska i Finlandia ramie w ramie na wojnie z cyberprzestępczością," *TVP Info*, 27 September 2017, www.tvp.info.

²⁶ "Polska w gronie państw założycieli Europejskiego Centrum Doskonalenia w dziedzinie zwalczania zagrożeń hybrydowych w Helsinkach," MSZ, 12 April 2017, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja.

Norway. Until 2014, the most important area of bilateral relations between Poland and Norway was the economy. The Norwegian Ministry of Defence tried to attract Poland's interest in closer industrial cooperation, e.g. in the acquisition and use of submarines. Poland purchased the Norwegian Kobben submarines, which were delivered shortly before 2004. Their use ended in 2016, mainly due to the fact that the equipment was already obsolete. Another contract of the armaments industry was the Polish-Norwegian contract for the purchase of NSM missiles designed to combat ships. It was signed in 2008, and the implementation of the contract began in December 2012, when the Polish Navy received the first 12 (out of 50) missiles. Apart from purchases of armaments, the main areas of military cooperation between Poland and Norway concerned allied issues, including NATO commitments and Post-Command exercises.

The Norwegian Financial Mechanism and the EEA Financial Mechanism were important elements of bilateral cooperation during this period. Under these programmes, in the years 2004–2014, Poland was granted EUR 1.1 billion for development projects compensating for economic and social differences. Another EUR 809 million has been allocated to Poland for the period 2014–2021²⁷. Prime Minister Donald Tusk paid a visit to Oslo once, in February 2011. The discussions with Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg concerned economic cooperation, including energy policy. In May 2012, President Bronisław Komorowski hosted King Harald and Queen Sonja in Warsaw.

In the Norwegian Government's strategy for cooperation with the EU in 2014–2017, Poland is among the partners of particular importance. The objectives included the development of bilateral cooperation within NATO, in the field of energy, climate and environment protection as well as facilitating trade and investments. In May 2016, President Andrzej Duda and his wife paid an official visit to Norway. In 2016, the meetings of heads of government - Beata Szydło and Erna Solberg - were also held in February in Oslo, and in July in Warsaw. On the other hand, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs Waszczykowski and Børge Brende met in February 2017 in Warsaw. All these meetings focused on cooperation in the fields of armaments, defence and energy.

Bilateral relations intensified after the Russian aggression against Ukraine, which triggered a change in Norway's strategic approach. For fear of confrontation with Russia in the Arctic, it began to modernise its armed forces and increased defence spending. It also considered it necessary to strengthen the presence of NATO forces in the Baltic Sea region, which is regarded as a sensitive region

²⁷ *Informacje o Norwegii*, "Informator ekonomiczny," MSZ, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja.

in relations between Russia and the Alliance²⁸. A similar assessment of threats and ways of counteracting them favoured closer cooperation in implementing the decisions of the Warsaw NATO Summit of 2016. In 2017, Poland hosted the BALTOPS Navy exercises in which all the Nordic countries participated. In 2018, Poland participated in the NATO Trident Juncture military exercises, which were held in Norway. Polish-Norwegian cooperation in the bilateral dimension and within NATO was also the subject of consultations in quadriga format in March 2018. The possibilities of developing NATO cooperation with the EU, Sweden, Finland, and with Ukraine, were discussed then. The ministers addressed, among other things, Russia's actions in Ukraine, as well as the issue of arms control and confidence-building and security measures in Europe²⁹. The strengthening of NATO's northern and eastern flank, including the new Alliance's commands, bilateral Polish-Norwegian cooperation (including the production of Kongsberg missiles for the Polish Navy), as well as NATO-EU relations and European defence policy were the subjects of discussions between the head of NSB, Soloch in Norway in March 2018³⁰.

In the energy sector, the interests of both countries were complementary. Unlike security issues, the situation in Norway and Poland was fundamentally different in terms of relations with Russia. Polish-Russian relations were affected by a large asymmetry resulting from the importer-exporter relationship, while Norway, as an exporter, was competing with its eastern neighbour in the European market³¹. After 2014, Poland made the diversification of natural gas sources faster. In 2016, the Norwegian oil company Statoil began supplying gas to the LNG terminal in Świnoujście. By providing itself with alternative sources of supply, Poland was then able to use market mechanisms directly to reduce its dependence on Russian gas - both its own as well as that of the group of countries in the region³². The closer cooperation was fostered by crucial decision for Poland to jointly implement the Baltic Pipe/Northern Gate project—the construction of a gas pipeline connecting Poland with the Norwegian continental shelf, which was taken in November 2018 by the transmission system operators of Poland and Denmark, GAZ-SYSTEM and Energinet. Furthermore, the Polish energy sector increased investments in the North Sea. According to PGNiG's strategy,

²⁸ J. Gotkowska, "Oslo się zbroi," *Polska Zbrojna*, January 2017, no. 1, www.osw.waw.pl.

²⁹ "Polska zacieśnia współpracę wojskową z Norwegią," *Biznes Alert*, 8 March 2018, www.biznesalert.pl.

³⁰ *Szef BBN w Norwegii o NATO i współpracy dwustronnej*, BBN, 22 March 2018, www.bbn.gov.pl.

³¹ B. Bielszczuk, A. Gawlikowska-Fyk, J. Godzimirski, A. Kacprzyk, W. Lorenz, M. Terlikowski, "Nordic-Baltic Security in Times of Uncertainty: the Defence-Energy Nexus," A. Gawlikowska-Fyk, M. Terlikowski (eds.), PISM / NUPI, 2018.

³² *Ibidem*, p. 17.

the production of gas from its own deposits in Norway may reach as much as 2.5 billion m³ per year - some of them are to be imported to Poland³³.

Sweden. Of the Nordic countries, it is the relationship with Sweden that has the longest tradition and has developed most dynamically. In September 2008, these relations were elevated by the prime ministers to the status of structural dialogue, i.e. regular consultations on matters of priority importance for both countries³⁴. On 4 May 2011, in Warsaw, in the presence of King Charles XVI Gustaw and President Komorowski, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs Radosław Sikorski and Carl Bildt signed a Declaration on political cooperation between Poland and Sweden in the areas of strategic importance, accompanied by the so-called Background Paper, i.e. a document indicating specific areas of cooperation - these were European policy, security and defence policy, energy and climate issues, trade, investments, and development of the Baltic Sea region. A review of cooperation was carried out in October 2013, which allowed the Background Paper to be updated and supplemented with new areas (agriculture, fisheries, information technology and social policy challenges).

In 2015, the Polish-Swedish Parliamentary Forum and the Polish-Swedish Sustainable Energy Platform began to operate. Apart from parliamentary cooperation, bilateral intergovernmental consultations on the Union's Eastern policy, the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, the EU enlargement and development policy were regularly held. The Union is therefore the most important forum for determining Polish-Swedish cooperation. The effectiveness of joint action was confirmed by the fact that in 2009, the Polish-Swedish initiative of the Eastern Partnership was given the status of an EU project.

Both countries jointly initiated a new format of North-South regional contacts, based on the then Polish Presidency of the Visegrad Group and the Swedish Presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers. The first meeting of the V4, Nordic and Baltic states at the level of foreign ministers was held in Gdańsk on 20 February 2013.

The defence cooperation between Poland and Sweden evolved and became more formal when, in 2012, in a quadriga format, the deputy ministers of defence and foreign affairs expressed the need to institutionalise the Polish-Swedish dialogue cooperation³⁵. The key Polish undertaking at that time was the purchase of 36 RBS MK3 missiles from the Swedish Saab Bofors for the Polish ships Orkan. Over

³³ D. Malinowski, "PGNiG rośnie w siłę w Norwegii. Kupił złożę za 220 mln dolarów," *WNP*, 18 October 2018, www.wnp.pl.

³⁴ "Stosunki z państwami Europy. Szwecja," MSZ, 2012, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja.

³⁵ P. Pacuła, "Współpraca obronna w regionie Morza Bałtyckiego. Stan obecny i perspektywy," *Bezpieczeństwo Narodowe*, 2013, no. 2 (26), p. 64.

the following years the cooperation concerned mainly the exchange of experience, over time there was also Polish growing interest in the teamwork of air forces in the field of training and airspace control.

Trade exchange between Poland and the Nordic states in EUR billion

(in brackets, Poland's position among its partners in terms of turnover volume)

Country	Trade flow	2004	2011	2018
Total	Exports	4.97	10.2	14.47
	Imports	5.03	9.07	11.27
	Balance	-0.06	1.13	3.2
Denmark	Exports	1.33 (14.)	2.51 (17.)	3.85 (17.)
	Imports	1.07 (17.)	1.98 (20.)	2.47 (22.)
	Balance	0.26	0.53	1.38
Finland	Exports	0.47 (21.)	1.02 (24.)	1.8 (23.)
	Imports	0.99 (19.)	1.53 (22.)	1.68 (27.)
	Balance	-0.52	-0.51	0.12
Iceland	Exports	0.03 (70.)	0.03 (88.)	0.106 (70.)
	Imports	0.03 (68.)	0.1 (66.)	0.226 (63.)
	Balance	0	-0.07	-0.120
Norway	Exports	1.06 (17.)	2.74 (14.)	2.6 (19.)
	Imports	1.02 (18.)	2.39 (18.)	2.57 (19.)
	Balance	0.04	0.35	0.03
Sweden	Exports	2.08 (8.)	3.9 (8.)	6.12 (9.)
	Imports	1.92 (9.)	3.07 (13.)	4.33 (12.)
	Balance	0.16	0.83	1.79

Source: The authors' own compilation based on the GUS data, www.swaid.stat.gov.pl

After Russia's aggression against Ukraine, the Polish-Swedish cooperation in the area of security began to gain importance. The direct result of this cooperation

was the signature of the framework agreement in September 2015 between the Republic of Poland and the Kingdom of Sweden on Mutual Defence Cooperation³⁶. Subsequently, the commander of the Royal Swedish Navy, Rear Admiral Jens Nykvist, paid a visit to the General Command of the Armed Forces on 31 January 2017, where the issues of joint naval exercises or bilateral cooperation for 2017–2018 were discussed.

A wide range of issues of cooperation between Poland and Sweden was confirmed in March 2015 by the meeting between Prime Minister, Ewa Kopacz and Prime Minister, Stefan Löfven. Apart from the consultations before the European Council summit, the common areas of action were defined: Eastern policy, security and defence, energy policy, as well as cooperation in the Baltic Sea region. Then, in November 2015, Minister Waszczykowski paid his first official visit to Stockholm. During the discussions, the Polish and Swedish ministers agreed on an assessment of the international situation in the Middle East and Ukraine. They also emphasised the need for greater control of migration and the need to continue the involvement of both countries in Eastern Europe, e.g. by supporting the reforms and European aspirations of Ukraine. Two years later, during a meeting with Löfven, Prime Minister Szydło pointed out that “Sweden is a strategic partner for Poland and we want our relations to be even closer”³⁷.

Poland also perceived Sweden as an important partner in economic cooperation, which over the years had developed and covered more and more areas, including new technologies and innovations. Therefore, in June 2015, the Swedish-Polish Innovation Forum was held in Warsaw, attended by Deputy Prime Minister Janusz Piechociński and the Swedish Minister of Entrepreneurship and Innovation Mikael Damberg. The politicians signed a letter of intent on extending bilateral cooperation to the area of innovation.

Economic relations

Poland's trade with the Nordic countries increased significantly over the period 2004–2018: the value of exports almost tripled and imports more than doubled. For more than ten years, the balance of trade has been positive for Poland, and the Nordic countries are still ranked at the end of the second tenth among recipients of the Polish goods and exporters to Poland. The exception is Sweden, one of Poland's ten most important trading partners. Economic relations

³⁶ “Strategiczne porozumienie Polski ze Szwecją. ‘Bałtyk z morza pokoju stał się morzem zagrożeń’,” *TVP Info*, 14 September 2015, www.tvp.info.pl.

³⁷ “Premier Beata Szydło: Myślę, że celów i wspólnych obszarów współpracy dla Polski i dla Szwecji będzie coraz więcej,” *KPRM*, 20 June 2017, www.gov.pl/web/premier.

were positively influenced by Scandinavian investment capacity. The share of Scandinavian companies in the total value of foreign direct investment (FDI) in Poland in the record year 2011 was approx. 9% (approx. EUR 14.4 billion). This value fell to about 5% (EUR 10.2 billion) by 2017.

Poland is Denmark's most important trading partner in the Central and Eastern Europe. The balance of trade between them is favourable for Poland³⁸. From Poland's accession to the EU until the international financial crisis in 2008–2010, the Polish-Danish trade turnover showed very dynamic growth. Denmark was the 12th largest investor in Poland, responsible for 2.43% of total foreign investments. The largest share of Polish exports to Denmark was generated by the electrical machinery and chemical industry and agri-food products. The largest volume of imports in 2018 were agri-food products (mainly pork) and products of the electrical machinery industry³⁹.

Of the five Nordic states, the value of trade between Poland and Finland ranks fourth. Exports were dominated by machinery, appliances and transport equipment and industrial goods. Imports, were dominated by raw materials (mainly paper and cardboard and iron and steel) as well as specialist and telecommunications equipment⁴⁰. Since 2004, the turnover has been affected by supplies of AMV (Rosomak) armoured transporters for the Polish army, manufactured by the Finnish state-owned Concern Patria Industries OY⁴¹. The exchange balance is positive for Poland since 2014⁴². Finland had invested EUR 1.4 billion in Poland through FDI by the end of 2017. It is ranked 17th among countries investing in Poland with a share of approx. 0.7% in total direct investments. Whereas, the state of Polish investments in Finland was at the end of 2017 EUR 100.8 million (0.4% of Polish investments abroad).

Poland's economic relations with Iceland are limited - in 2018, the country's share in Poland's total exports was 0.05%, and in imports - 0.1%. Poland exports mainly products of the electrical-machine industry (including aircraft, helicopters, vehicles), metallurgical and chemical industries. On the other hand, aluminium

³⁸ "Polsko-duńskie relacje gospodarcze," *Info Dania*, www.infodania.eu.

³⁹ M. Zieliński, „Dania (Królestwo Danii) Informacja o sytuacji gospodarczej i stosunkach gospodarczych z Polską,” MPiT, 2019, www.gov.pl/web/rozwoj-praca-technologie.

⁴⁰ *Ibidem*.

⁴¹ "Polsko-skandynawska współpraca gospodarcza," Skandynawsko-Polska Izba Handlowa, 2015, p. 33, www.spcc.pl.

⁴² "Informator ekonomiczny," MSZ, www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja.

and fish dominate in imports. The value of Icelandic FDI in Poland in 2017 was EUR 12.6 million. The Polish investments in Iceland are insignificant⁴³.

The trade balance with Norway is negative. The exports decreased between 2013–2018 and there was only a slight increase in imports. Both exports and imports are dominated by shipbuilding products. Poland is also the first importer of Norwegian salmon in Europe⁴⁴. There are about 400 Norwegian companies in Poland, especially in the processing industry⁴⁵. Their total capital invested reached EUR 1.33 billion (0.6% of total FDI) at the end of 2017. Whereas, the cumulative value of Polish investments in Norway amounted to EUR 417 million (1.6%) in 2017.

In the years 2004–2018, the structure of Poland's goods trade turnover with Sweden remained unchanged, and the products of the electrical machinery industry were most important (approx. 45% of exports and approx. 38% of imports). Polish trade turnover with Sweden in the last twenty years has been characterized by very dynamic growth—since 1998 it has doubled. The total value of Swedish FDI in Poland at the end of 2017 reached EUR 4.225 billion (approx. 2.1% of total FDI), which ranked Sweden 11th among investors in Poland⁴⁶.

Assessment and prospects

Following Poland's accession to the EU, relations with the countries of the Baltic Sea region were strengthened. For this purpose, Poland made use of numerous formats of multilateral cooperation, to which bilateral relations were complementary. The main forum where Poland successfully increased its activity was the CBSS. Furthermore, Poland managed to expand its cooperation by involving other regional platforms, such as the NB8+ and the V4 meetings. However, the main challenge remained the disparities between Poland and the Nordic states. Apart from economic differences, the hermetic nature of their cooperation due to linguistic and cultural similarity, was problematic. Even though the Nordic states were more and more willing to cooperate in multidimensional regional forums, they still prioritised activities within their own group. This specificity - resulting from many years of tradition - therefore remained a challenge for Poland.

⁴³ M. Zieliński (oprac.), "Islandia. Sytuacja gospodarcza i współpraca gospodarcza z Polską," MPiT, July 2019, www.gov.pl/web/rozwoj-praca-technologia.

⁴⁴ "Polsko-skandynawska współpraca gospodarcza," Skandynawsko-Polska Izba Handlowa, 2015, www.spcc.pl.

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁶ M. Zieliński (oprac.), "Informacja o stosunkach gospodarczych ze Szwecją," MPiT, 2019, www.gov.pl/web/rozwoj-praca-technologia.

A factor determining the activity of both Poland and the Nordic states after 2014 became security. Russia's aggression against Ukraine prompted them to increase the effectiveness of cooperation in this respect and to strengthen bilateral political relations. Similar perceptions of the nature of the threat posed by Russia and the desire to maintain transatlantic relations as close as possible made the Nordic states closer to Poland than their Visegrad partners in this respect. An increasingly convergent perception of security also contributed to the implementation of joint energy projects, considered by Poland as a priority.

The so-called Hanseatic League, bringing together EU countries with restrictive fiscal policies and a similar vision of Eurozone governance, may prove to be a new platform for cooperation between Nordic states and Poland. Poland's participation in such a grouping creates an opportunity for cooperation in European politics, since there are more elements that differentiate the programme of the Polish government from the perspective of the Nordic states (e.g. migration and climate policy).

Poland and Northern Europe share common interests in the EU's competitiveness in new areas, including artificial intelligence and digital services. A high innovation rate of these countries makes them natural partners for economic cooperation. Poland has recognised this potential, and yet it has still not been sufficiently exploited.

We are pleased to present to our readers another volume of the Yearbook of Polish Foreign Policy. It is the only publication on the Polish publishing market that presents the views of analysts from the Polish Institute of International Affairs, who specialize in this area and continuously follow the shaping of Polish political activity in the international environment. They describe the process of implementing Polish foreign policy, using the same method, repeated every year, which allows them to monitor changes taking place within this sphere of state activity and to compare specific periods. In 2018, the importance of this process is reflected by exceptional circumstances – the 100th anniversary of Poland's independence. This occasion lends additional significance to publications such as the Yearbook of Polish Foreign Policy. After all, what today is an analysis of current events will, in decades to come, constitute a supplementary source for future scholars of Polish foreign policy working on successive volumes of Polish Diplomatic Documents.

Sławomir Dębski

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