The necessity of deepening the integration processes on the European continent, preserving security and economic growth in the CEE region as well as the openness of the EU enlargement policy - these are the basic principles the strategic interests of Ukraine and Poland are shaped around. I believe that the opinions and views of respected authors, presented in this publication, will be useful and interesting for a wide range of politicians, experts, diplomats and academics - for all those who see the future of Ukraine and Poland in the common European home.

Prof. Markiy Malskyy,
Ambassador of Ukraine to the Republic of Poland

A thorough and comprehensive book, combining facts and analysis. The authors discuss problems that Poland encounters in the enlarged EU and present an initial assessment of the costs and benefits of integration. The book may not only serve as a reliable textbook, but also as an interesting and useful source of knowledge for all those interested in Poland’s experiences related to the process of European integration.

Prof. Alojzy Nowak, Dean,
Faculty of Management, University of Warsaw

This book stands out for its exhaustive and interdisciplinary approach to European integration. The political discourse takes into account the economic, legal and social dimensions, which successfully conveys the complexity of the presented issues. The authors provide a competent and clear overview of the most important theoretical and practical aspects of Poland’s functioning in the European Union.

Prof. Edward Haliżak, Director,
Institute of International Relations, University of Warsaw

Poland in the European Union: Adjustment and Modernisation
Lessons for Ukraine

edited by
Artur Adamczyk
Kamil Zajączkowski
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Welcoming remarks of the Ambassador of Ukraine to the Republic of Poland H.E. Prof. Markiyan Malskyy on issues of European integration in terms of Poland’s experience of joining the EU

When 31 years ago, in 1980, the voice of the legendary Polish ‘Solidarność’ was heard around the world, few could believe that the beginning of the virtuous struggle for freedom by Polish and other European nations would lead to the collapse of the Berlin Wall.

The Eastern European states’ movement for liberation from totalitarianism was based on their deep belief in the rightness of democratic choice of our European neighbors on the other side of the ‘Iron Curtain’.

Now for over twenty years we have lived on the European continent liberated from artificial dividing lines. The European Union is a powerful global center of influence, a leader in the world economy, and since 1 July 2011, the Republic of Poland holds the Presidency of the EU.

Actually this is the one of the phenomena of European integration – a voluntary association of member states that is above all based on shared common ideals and values.

This fundamental principle of European integration inspires and gives Ukraine and other EU neighbors hope to someday become full members of the European Union. In fact, according to one of the founding fathers of the EU, the famous Frenchman Robert Schuman: ‘The European Community would be open to all European states’.

At the same time we in Ukraine are perfectly aware that consistent and persistent implementation of profound internal reforms in accordance with European standards is a key to gradual and practical rapprochement with the EU. And to this end the strategic partnership with Poland is of great importance to us.
During the 20 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations between Ukraine and Poland as sovereign states, our partnership has become a true example of good neighborliness, trust and constructive cooperation.

The necessity of deepening the integration processes on the European continent, preserving security and economic growth in the CEE region as well as the openness of the EU enlargement policy – these are the basic principles the strategic interests of Ukraine and Poland are shaped around.

Today we carefully analyze the successful experience of our Polish partners on the way to accession to the EU. The progress of our neighbors in achieving European standards in political and economic life, reforming the judicial and administrative-territorial system as well as strengthening of civil society institutions is a good example for Ukraine.

Poland’s accession to the European Union in 2004 proved the EU’s recognition of new realities, which 10–15 years before seemed to be only a dream. Poland gained enough power to join the European Community on equal terms and consequently, effectively increase the overall potential of the European Union and enhance the EU’s capabilities to conduct its foreign policy in the Eastern direction.

Making this dream come true was possible due to the long and sustained efforts of the Polish authorities and the society to reform and improve all aspects of their own country’s life.

The fact that Poland is one of the few EU member states to have successfully overcome the global economic crisis brightly testifies the effectiveness of Polish model of socio-economic development and effective adaptation of our neighbor to the EU system of institutional mechanisms.

That is why we have to learn a lot from our Polish partners, whereas the use of the European integration experience of Warsaw will only benefit the realization of the Ukrainian priorities in cooperation with the EU.

The year 2011 is not only the year of the 20th anniversary of establishing Ukrainian-Polish relations. Nowadays Ukraine is very close to opening a new page in relations with the EU.

During the Polish Presidency in the EU Council, by the end of the year we are planning to conclude the Association Agreement with the EU with the creation of a deepened and comprehensive free trade area.

In addition, Ukraine is determined to fully implement the first phase of the Action Plan to liberalize the visa regime with the EU.

Achieving these ambitious goals will additionally prove the irreversibility of Ukraine’s European choice and the determination of the Ukrainian authorities to bring the country closer to the EU and continue reforms.

It is also worth saying that the success of Ukraine’s European integration is without any exaggeration a success shared with our Polish friends. It is a good
example of the effectiveness of the Ukrainian-Polish strategic partnership, which is gradually increasing its weight in the European scale.

I am confident that this publication, created under the auspices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland and which I have the honor to present to your attention will also contribute to the enhancement of cooperation between Ukraine and Poland in the field of European integration.

I believe that the opinions and views of respected authors, presented in this publication, will be useful and interesting for a wide range of politicians, experts, diplomats and academics – for all those who see the future of Ukraine and Poland in the common European home.
From the Editors

The enlargement of the European Union in 2004 and 2007 expanded the area of security and stable economic growth of our continent. Never before has Europe formed such an integrated political and economic space, where the rules of democracy and free market economy serve to attain a high level of prosperity and security. Regrettably, the process of European integration has not embraced the whole continent, and the decision to continue enlargement further east has yet to be taken.

When Poland opted to follow the pro-Western path during the early 1990s, it did not turn its back on our eastern neighbours. Successive Polish governments focused particular attention on Ukraine. Poland was the first country in the world to recognise Ukraine’s independence and encouraged Ukrainian leaders to carry out democratic and market reforms. Poland’s efforts to draw Ukraine closer to the European Union intensified upon our accession to the EU and as a result of political changes which unfolded in Ukraine following the ‘orange revolution’ of 2004. Our involvement on behalf of Ukraine was clearly visible in Brussels, where Poland gained the reputation of being Ukraine’s advocate in its aspirations to join the EU and NATO. Ukrainians themselves perceive Poland as a natural bridge leading towards the European Union. Thanks largely to Poland’s initiative, the Eastern Partnership was established in 2009, responding to the desire of the EU’s eastern neighbours to move closer to the European Union. It was during Poland’s Presidency in the EU Council that the Eastern Partnership Summit was held in Warsaw. In October 2011 negotiations were concluded with Ukraine on a deep and comprehensive Free Trade Area as part of the Association Agreement.

Despite the intensification of Poland’s efforts at EU level to bring Ukraine closer to European structures, political and economic changes in our eastern neighbour are proceeding very slowly. In recent years the implementation of reforms in Ukraine has been slowing down, especially with respect to the rule of law, democratisation and free market principles.

Poland’s accession to the European Union has created a new economic, political and social sphere. This may force or imply the need for change in
many areas of life. Poles are aware of the amount of effort and sacrifice necessary to meet the demands of EU membership. We have successfully completed this path of reform and are willing to share experiences with our Ukrainian partners. To this end, a group of academics from the Centre for Europe and Institute of International Relations, University of Warsaw, along with a group of Ukrainian scholars from the Faculty of International Relations, Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, have prepared this publication. Its main purpose is to present the most important achievements and challenges in the process of European integration, and to show how EU membership has impacted upon Poland and Poles, as an example and encouragement for Ukrainians to continue their endeavours towards integrating with Europe. This collection of research papers gives a comprehensive account of Poland’s role and position in the European Union. It includes an analysis of the effectiveness of Poland’s European policy, as well as an overview of selected challenges related to the process of European integration. Considerable attention has been devoted to Ukraine’s current juncture in the process of advancing towards Europe and presenting the significance of disseminating knowledge about the European Union in the Ukrainian education system.

The publication consists of three parts. The first, entitled ‘Evolution of European Integration’ presents an analysis of the process of European integration, starting from the establishment of the first Communities up to present times. Olga Barburska and Dariusz Milczarek identify the major determinants leading to the creation of the European Union, portray the main stages of evolution of the Communities/Union and the efforts undertaken by Polish society and governments on the road to full membership in the EU.

The authors who contributed to the second part of the book focus on ‘Poland’s Experiences in the Process of European Integration’. The first work, by Bogdan Góralczyk, describes Poland’s place and role in the new global economic order, while Dariusz Milczarek presents the dilemmas related to shaping EU foreign and security policy in the new world order and locates Poland’s position in that order.

The next paper, written by Artur Adamczyk, examines Poland’s role in the EU institutional system. The author analyses the degree of influence exerted by Polish politicians in the EU decision-making process. This is followed by ‘Mechanisms and instruments of EU Common Commercial Policy. Implications for Poland’, where Anna Wróbel presents the economic and legal adjustments carried out by Poland in order to join the EU customs union. The author also assesses Poland’s capacity to influence the direction and shape of the Common Commercial Policy. The next paper, written by Przemysław Dubel, describes EU regional policy based on the example of selected Member States, and points to Poland’s extraordinary success in developing its infrastructure thanks to EU structural funds.
The issue of formulating and conducting Polish foreign policy towards non-European countries, based on relations with the countries of the Asia-Pacific region, is examined by Jakub Zajączkowski. He notes that Poland’s membership in the European Union, entailing the use of EU foreign policy and trade instruments, enabled Poland to intensify Polish bilateral relations with countries of the Asia-Pacific. The author distinguishes and characterises factors limiting Poland’s cooperation with Asian countries. In the next paper Kamil Zajączkowski presents the process of formation of the Polish system of development aid, along with a description of its structure and main objectives. The article also reviews EU development policy and Poland’s participation in that policy. He assesses the effectiveness of Polish development assistance, presenting major challenges and problems associated with its functioning.

Krzysztof Wielecki presents the findings of his research concerning ‘The Polish society and economy in the European social order’. He examines the socio-economic transformation which took place in Poland during the period of political transition, and points to further changes in Polish society which followed accession to the EU. He stresses that these changes amounted to a shock for Polish society, rather than an evolutionary process. This is followed by ‘Combating social exclusion within the European Union and Poland’ by Magdalena Drouet, who presents the problem of social exclusion and integration of groups that are particularly exposed to marginalisation and sustained professional inactivity. The author shows that the European Union was instrumental in generating interest in the subject in Poland, which was previously often neglected by successive governments. In the era of rapid changes in the global market and the possible loss of leading status by the European Union in many sectors of the economy, the key issue is investment in human capital development and efforts to increase competitiveness in areas where the human factor is most important. In the final paper of the second part of the book, Małgorzata Pacek examines the European Union’s migration policy and presents the main issues and challenges related to the increasing inflow of immigrants to Europe. The author also describes the process of shaping Poland’s migration policy following EU accession, when the problems associated with immigrants became a subject of discussion in Poland. The experiences of other Member States show that countries of emigration may become a destination for immigrants and thus should be prepared for such a process.

The third and final part of the book is entitled ‘The Ukrainian Perception of European Integration’. This topic is examined in a work written by Bohdan Hud and Andriy Didukh ‘Ukraine–European Union relations: achievements, challenges and prospects’, in which the authors present the history of Ukraine’s integration with the European Union. They identify the major problems related to that process: difficulties in reforming the country, political instability and above all, the EU’s approach to relation with Ukraine from the perspective of
EU-Russia relations. The authors also express regret on behalf of Ukrainian society that the EU has not provided incentives for reform by offering Ukraine the prospect of full membership in the EU.

In the next two articles Roman Kalytchak, Ihor Todorov and Taras Budzinskyy present the manner in which European studies are introduced and practiced in Ukraine’s education system, both at secondary and tertiary level. They also examine the state of research on European integration in their country. The authors point to the key role of the government with respect to changes in Ukraine’s education system, but also stress the role of non-governmental institutions in this regard. Their conclusions indicate that European studies are incorporated into a number of academic courses and it appears that there is no tendency to enhance their standing. The section and book ends with a presentation written by Marta Malska and Svitlana Pysarenko concerning Polish-Ukrainian cross-border cooperation and the visa policy, which indicates the necessity for political, economic, material, technical, organisational and ecological measures to be taken both by Poland and Ukraine in order to minimise the negative effects of existing barriers.

This present collection of works by Polish and Ukrainian scholars is not a full analysis of the issues under discussion. It is merely the starting point for research into the assessment of Poland’s experiences in the process of European integration and for the analysis of how these experiences can be applied by our Ukrainian partners. This may in turn assist in encouraging the Ukrainian nation to increase its efforts on the road to integration with Europe. Therefore, this is a substantial challenge for both the Polish government, which aspires to leadership in the EU Eastern Partnership, as well as for Ukrainian society and politicians. Academic circles may play a significant role in promoting the EU in Ukraine, given their authoritative status among university graduates and students.

The Centre for Europe, University of Warsaw is extremely grateful to the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs for its assistance and for making it possible to initiate research into Poland’s impact on the process of Ukraine’s integration with the EU. This publication is the product of an international research project ‘Direction West. Young Ukrainians at Europe’s gates’, conducted by the Centre for Europe, University of Warsaw and the Faculty of International Relations, Ivan Franko National University of Lviv. The project is co-financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland within the framework of the cyclical programme ‘Promoting knowledge about Poland’.

We also offer special thanks to the Ambassador of Ukraine to the Republic of Poland, Prof. Markiyan Malskyy and to Prof. Bohdan Hud (Ukrainian coordinator of the project), for their significant contribution to completing this project.

We also wish to thank the reviewers, Prof. Edward Halіżak and Prof. Alojzy Z. Nowak, for assisting in the preparation of this book and for their valuable comments.
Part I

Evolution of European Integration
Dariusz Milczarek

The origins of European integration

The concept of integration

We should start the deliberations on the history of European integration by defining some basic terms, in particular the integration as such. The word comes from the Latin verb integratio, which means to merge, to unite, to make a whole out of parts.

Integration is an ambiguous concept and is interpreted in different ways. It is the subject of study of many different disciplines, such as economy, law, sociology and political science. As a result of this, there is no single commonly used definition of integration. What makes it even harder is that integration can be defined both as the process of uniting and as a certain state achieved in this process (for example the European Union today).

The processes and phenomena of integration are extremely important in the modern world and play an increasingly important part in it, as pro-integration trends create favourable conditions for strengthening various bonds, relations and interdependencies between all the participants in international relations. This is manifested, among other things, by an increasing role of international organisations, in particular the establishment of a growing number of integration groupings (mainly economic in nature) of varying scope and scale of internal links. These take various forms, ranging from very loose structures, through groups having closer ties (e.g. free trade areas), to a political entity with integration processes as far advanced and comprehensive as the European Union.

These groupings are formed mainly by states, which still play a very important role in international relations, but are no longer dominant, as some non-state participants (including such as the EU) are gaining importance. All in all, a system is formed in which the most important decisions are more and more frequently made not by nation-states individually, but collectively, by many participants in international relations on the subregional, regional or global level.
The objectives and activities of European integration, which resulted in the emergence of the European Union, perfectly fit in this kind of trends. Not only was it formed as a result of the integration processes (which are the most important factor determining its establishment and development), but it also still creates these processes and even sets the highest standards for them by bringing its own unification process to a level not yet achieved by any other group in the world.

History of European integration

From the historical perspective, in short, the European integration can be presented as a process of formulating and implementing ideas of a united Europe. In this sense, the European integration, defined as striving for the unification of the Old Continent, has a long history. The idea was defined and realised in many different ways: it was understood as unification based on the noble principles of humanism and calling for the ‘fraternity of the peoples’, but also as concrete political, economic and socio-cultural projects; apart from peaceful integration projects, there were also attempts to unite the continent by domination or conquest. This means that the commonly used concept of ‘European integration’ does not refer exclusively to contemporary times.

Before we present the genesis and the process of integration in Europe, we should first introduce definitions of the relevant concepts and terms, for it is necessary to understand the difference between the ‘idea of Europe’, based on the concept of unity of the whole continent, and the ‘integration of Europe’, i.e. concrete ideas and integration projects. Even though for the purpose of popularization and publishing they may be treated as synonyms, these two concepts do not convey identical meaning.

In order to put the concept of European integration into practice, i.e. in order to make attempts of actual unification of the continent, the process of crystallization of the idea of European unity had to be initiated and carried out first. In other words, before integrating, Europe had to be ‘born’ as a separate entity, ‘the idea of Europe’ had to develop. It was a long process, lasting for many centuries, and it required very particular circumstances.

At this point, it should be stressed that it is very difficult to introduce clear and transparent criteria for an unambiguous division into the sphere of the development of the ‘idea of Europe’ and of the real, practical integration. Throughout the centuries, it often happened that both these spheres overlapped or just the opposite – functioned independently from each other. On the one hand, we could mention certain actions towards unification, such as the functioning of the ancient Roman Empire, which objectively laid foundations for the processes of integration on our continent, but at the same time never
referred to the ‘idea of Europe’ for the simple reason that it had not yet fully crystallized yet. On the other hand, we could name examples of slogans, especially originating in the Enlightenment period, which called for the fraternity of the European peoples, but which did not mention any specific integration structures.

There is no doubt, however, that the general rule was: first the need for the ‘idea of Europe’ had to develop, and then, based on it, the possibilities of taking concrete actions towards unification.

**European identity**

The fundamental factor which conditioned the birth of the ‘idea of Europe’ was the shaping of the European identity. It is a very broad and complex subject, therefore we can mention only the most important of the many factors constituting this identity. They include:

1. a common system of values,
2. a sense of separateness from ‘the others’.

Re 1. Adopted and accepted by most inhabitants of the continent, the common system of values, shaped by the community of historical events, was based on the comprehensive achievements of the European civilisation. These achievements will be analysed more extensively later in this text. It is sufficient to note here that the historical eras: the Antiquity, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the Enlightenment and beyond, until the present day, gradually contributed their share to the development of Europe in economic, political and legal, social, philosophical and religious, cultural, as well as scientific and technical terms. These achievements were the cement that bound Europeans together and formed the basis of Pan-European unity.

The factors uniting the socio-political life of European societies also had a positive effect on this. These factors included: the influence of the achievements of ancient civilisations (e.g. Roman law, still used today), the universal nature of the rules of Christianity and the use of common language, at least by the elites (starting with Greek and Latin). Mutual diffusion of patterns of culture in the broad sense contributed to the formation of a specific ideological, religious and also political community, regardless of all the conflicts, frictions and decentralist tendencies.

Re 2. The key factor in the development of the European identity was the crystallization of the sense of separateness, mostly in relation to the neighbouring territories, civilisations and societies, based on different, non-European systems of values. It should be explained here that this sense of separateness – especially in the long-term historical perspective – did not necessarily have to lead to negation, rejection, or even eradication of those who were ‘different’,
or ‘the others’; one of the characteristics of the European civilisation was the ability to benefit from the achievements of other cultures, and immigrants were generally treated as a desirable and useful element. The development of European identity was, therefore, more a process of becoming aware of the differences between ‘us’ and ‘them’ – differences, which did not always do credit to Europeans.

This notion is particularly important, not only from the point of view of history, but also taking into account the difficult problems of today, such as the controversy around the legitimacy of accepting such countries as Turkey and Ukraine to the EU. Since the logical, essential question following the issue of European identity is where exactly the borders of Europe, which separate it from ‘the others’, lay.

What makes it even more complex is that there can be many different types of borders. For instance, from the geographical point of view, Europe is not a separate continent, only a subcontinent, or rather a relatively small peninsula, of the huge Eurasian continent. What is more, this ‘small cape of Asia’, as it is sometimes called, does not have all of its natural borders clearly defined. While they are quite obvious on the seas in the North, West and South, they are not at all obvious in the East and where Europe meets Central Asia and the Middle East. The eastern borders of Europe were delimited arbitrarily as late as the 18th century, along the Ural Mountains and the Caucasus, and the south-eastern limits of the continent on the Bosphorus are also only conventional. So where does Europe end in geographical terms?

It is also hard to define its political and cultural borders. What makes it even more complicated is that throughout the centuries, Europe, seen as a certain political and cultural entity, evidently shifted towards the North. In reference to the Antiquity, we could say, very generally, that it covered the area of influence of the Greek and Roman civilisations, located mostly at the Mediterranean Sea. For the ancient Greeks ‘Europe’ was, at first, part of Greece, and then Greece as a whole. Only later it started to refer to other, more distant areas. While the main point of reference for the Romans were the borders (limites) of their huge empire, which did not cover the whole Europe in its modern meaning. Beyond the Roman limites, mainly in the Centre and East of the continent, there lay the lands of the barbarians (barbaricum).

The fall of the Roman Empire caused, among other things, by the raids of the ‘Europeanising’ Barbarians, as well as such events as the invasions of the

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1 Still, even here there is the question of where Greenland and Iceland, as well as a number of other Atlantic islands, should belong to.

2 The name comes from the Greek word barbaros. It was derived from the onomatopoeic imitation of unarticulated gibbering: bar-bar-bar, as the Greeks perceived the foreign speech that they did not understand (it is similar to the etymology of the name ‘Niemcy’ given by the Slavs to the Germans, whose language they did not understand).
Muslims from the South, led to the shift of the territory of Europe, still being in the state of formation, from the Mediterranean towards the present centre of the continent, and later also towards Scandinavia and Eastern and Central Europe. This had to do with the fact that in the Middle Ages the European borders were defined by the range of Christianity. As a result, for pagan peoples in the North and East – such as Poland in the times of the early Piast dynasty – the only way to enter civilised Europe was christening, followed by active involvement in the European concert of nation-states.

This way the present area of Europe gradually formed, or rather the area of influence of the European civilisation, most frequently equated with its West European, Christian and Latin aspects (it is no coincidence that many scholars believed that the range of European culture in the East coincides with the range of the Baroque style in church architecture, which, as it is commonly known, was not present in the art of the Eastern Orthodox Church). In present times, the most important factor defining the shape of Europe is – in line with the central theme of this publication – the functioning of the integration structures, in particular of the European Union. Although belonging to the EU does not pre-condition being ‘European’ – neither for states nor for individuals, there is no doubt that the EU is usually equated with Europe as such by the outside world.

This does not change the fact that the political and cultural borders of contemporary Europe are still not clearly defined, as proved, for example, by the controversy around the potential accession of Ukraine and Turkey to the European Union. Leaving aside the material arguments of both supporters and opponents of their accession, we can clearly see that neither the EU nor the candidates have a resolute position on this subject. The reason for this is that neither the policy-makers and the citizens of the EU, nor the Ukrainians and the Turks know exactly how to define their identities and cultural and political affilia-tions in the context of their relation to being ‘European’. This problem con-cerns also some other nations, especially the Russians and, to a large extent, the British – the nations who, for centuries, have been torn between the feel-ing of belonging to the European culture (to which they greatly contributed) and the tendencies towards orthodox preservation of their own, Slavic or Anglo-Saxon identity.

It seems, therefore, that because of the lack of explicit criteria for defining Europe as a separate entity cultural aspects should be the first to be taken into account. The Old Continent has developed a unique civilisation, emanating to other regions. Broadly understood culture has always been the basic factor distinguishing Europe from other civilisations: first the barbarian, eastern, Asian, middle-eastern, and later those from even more distant parts of the world.

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3 This range coincides with the cultural influence of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the East.
Therefore, the European identity, treated as a necessary condition for the
birth of the ‘idea of Europe’, is based, on the one hand, on the common sys-
tem of values, a canon of ideas and views shared by the Europeans; a canon
based on the rich achievements of the European culture and reflected in ideo-
logical, religious, cultural and political concepts developed over centuries. On
the other hand, the identity was shaped in opposition to the external world,
based on the sense of separateness from ‘the others’ and belonging to a certain
community, built on the basis of jointly experienced historical events.

The evolution of the ‘idea of Europe’

As mentioned before, the ‘idea of Europe’ could be born as a result of
the development of a common identity, and only then any specific integration
actions could be taken. There is, however, one more essential thing to be
considered: How and in what time period has this idea crystallized? Only
after examining this issue, may we try to answer the essential question about
the time of the birth of Europe as a separate civilisation. The above question is
clearly justified, because only after identifying the relevant turning point can
we start discussing the real beginnings of the European processes of integra-
tion.

The turning point would naturally be very approximate, conventional, or
even symbolic. In the case of a subject which covers a huge historical heritage,
which is interpreted so differently and which is quite debatable, if not contro-
versial, it simply cannot be otherwise. The multitude of views on this matter
makes such an analysis very difficult, although not impossible.

To begin with, we should present the genesis of the name ‘Europe’ (while
pointing out that, over centuries, the name was very rarely used in everyday
life; it was rather used in cartography, which confirms the cultural origin of the
‘idea of Europe’). The fact that it originated from Greek mythology4 proves
that it has its roots in the Antiquity and that it has geographical and cultural ori-
gins.

According to some scholars, the concept of Europe as a separate cultural
and political entity was born in Greece already in the period between the Per-
sian Wars and the times of Alexander the Great. It resulted partly from the clash
of two different civilisations based on opposite values: the Hellenic freedom
and the Eastern despotism. This deep disparity made the Greeks realise that

4 According to the myth, Europa was the name of the daughter of Agenor, the ruler of the
Phoenician city of Tyre. She was considered the most beautiful woman of her times and she even-
tually caught the eye of Zeus, who appeared before her as a white bull at the seaside and kid-
napped her with the help of Poseidon and Aphrodite, taking her to Crete.
they are different and led to the establishment of the division: Hellenic Europe versus despotic Asia. (In this context, we could say that the Greco-Persian Wars were the first clash of the European civilisation with a foreign one, in this case an Asian civilisation).

As mentioned before, what Greeks perceived as Europe was only their own motherland and the areas under its direct influence. The expansion of the area of Europe – treated as a certain entity, or rather as a cultural idea – was gradual, starting with the expansion of the Hellenist civilisation by Alexander the Great, the achievements of which became a permanent element of European identity. Naturally, this does not mean that all territories conquered by Alexander (stretching from the present area of Greece and Turkey, through the Middle East, to northern India) can be regarded as parts of Europe, but it showed the growing attractiveness and strong influence of the civilisation which now more and more legitimately can be called European, or perhaps still rather ‘pre-European’.

This refers to even greater extent to the situation in the age of ancient Rome. Geographically, politically and culturally, the vast Roman empire was not the same as the concept of Europe, no matter how we define it. With its distant *limes* (on the Rhine and on the Danube, on the Asian Euphrates and on the African Sahara) and with its society consisting of many different cultures, it was much more universal in nature. Its inhabitants did not feel they were Europeans, but much rather the citizens or subjects of the Roman Empire. Their common identity was shaped both by the multifaceted achievements of the Roman civilisation and by a specific sense of separateness. The Greek division: Hellenic Europe versus despotic Asia was replaced by a new one: the civilised Roman world versus the barbarian world (*barbaricum*).

All this does not change the fact that from the long-term historical perspective, these multifaceted achievements of the Romans, based to a large extent on those of the ancient Greeks, laid foundations for the future European civilisation. Thus, they constituted a key element in the development of the European identity, proud of the achievements of the Antiquity and feeling increasingly aware of the common history and of the difference from others. It objectively helped in the gradual crystallization of the ‘idea of Europe’ – regardless of how rarely this concept was applied in the ancient world.

What is more, the Roman experience in creating a very effective, centrally governed state combining such large and diverse areas became a point of reference for the future visions of European integration. Within several centuries after the fall of the Roman Empire, when the processes of disintegration of the continent escalated, the example of Rome as the uniting factor was becoming an inspiration for many ideas for integration; this will be discussed later in this text. Their creators referred to the heritage of the ‘Golden Age’ of *Pax Romana*, not only in terms of peace and prosperity, but also of unity.
Of course, the disintegration tendencies did not create favourable conditions for the development of the ‘idea of Europe’. Nevertheless, even in the times of chaos, recurring barbarian invasions and general regress, some spiritual and material values were created, which contributed to the European cultural heritage, especially when it comes to the direct successor of the Roman Empire – the Byzantine Empire. Byzantium, which existed for over one thousand years (until the Turkish conquest in the 15th century), not only kept much of the heritage of the Antiquity, but also enriched its own culture, as well as the Western European culture, with the heritage of the Orient. For centuries, Byzantine culture, or more broadly – the Byzantine civilisation – dominated the socio-political life, especially that of Eastern Europe, eventually becoming one of the sources of the European identity.

Moreover, the history of the Empire shows the importance of a new factor, which had a great or even decisive influence on the future shape and fate of Europe – namely Christianity. Its importance should not be underestimated, for it played the crucial role of the cement which, for the first time in the history of the continent:

1. strengthened the ‘idea of Europe’ in its various aspects;
2. initiated and helped implement certain strictly European concepts and projects of integration.

Re 1. The role of Christianity in the context of the ‘idea of Europe’ consisted in strengthening European identity – and maybe even in giving it its final shape. According to the classification outlined earlier, it was, on the one hand, the creation of a new, universally applicable system of values, and on the other hand, the reinforcement of the sense of religious and cultural separateness, leading (together with this new canon of values) to the formation of Europe as a specific community.

As regards the system of values, apart from contributing to the development of modern philosophy (especially to deliberations on the phenomenon of human existence), Christianity created its own canon of principles of faith, absolutely different from pagan beliefs, as well as a complex system of behaviours required from all believers. The Church put an emphasis on external aspects of religious practices and spread the same rituals and liturgy, as well as a similar rhythm of life and lifestyle (e.g. fasting on Friday or prohibition of working on Sundays and holidays). All this was essentially a process of unification of many aspects of social life across the continent, which facilitated the development of a sense of belonging to a community.

This, in turn, accelerated the formation of a sense of separateness. An important factor here was the threat from ‘the others’ – since the aggressive barbarians from the times of the Roman Empire became civilised and settled down in Europe, now the main threat was the militant Islamic peoples, who started invading the Iberian Peninsula and the Balkans towards the end of the
first millennium CE. In this case, however, the threat of physical aggression was accompanied by religious, political and cultural aspects – the enemies were additionally followers of an alien religion, pagans fighting with Christianity. This was essential for the formation of the ‘idea of Europe’, as it led to the development of yet another division in the history of the continent: Christian versus pagan.

As back then, the range of Christianity roughly coincided with the area of Europe, this helped develop a new European identity, based on a common religion. Consequently, this meant that a certain cluster of ideas and thoughts was formed: a Christian is an inhabitant of Europe (whatever this term meant at that point), and the other way round – a European is a Christian. There are still traces of such thinking referring to the latter concept today.

These concepts were additionally justified by the fact that the role of the Christian religion in the history of Europe went much beyond simple participation in building the identity of its inhabitants. In the Middle Ages, the Church made a great – maybe even decisive – contribution to the general civilisational development of our continent.

On the one hand, this contribution consisted in supporting science, culture, education and economy. This was done by many centres of clerical power and Church dignitaries, including popes, as well as by most religious orders, who created a modern socio-economic and cultural infrastructure through a network of monasteries, which led to the spreading of settlement. On the other hand, the organisational structure of the Church, with its system of hierarchy and power, was the germ and the foundation for the development of the European states’ administration. It was formed on the basis of Church territorial units, i.e. parishes and dioceses, which exist until today. Furthermore, due to their education and skills, it was the clergy who provided the best people for the developing structures of power in young European states.

This way, mediaeval Europe developed a system of two overlapping communities: the Christian and the political. While within a longer period this led to conflicts between the Church and the secular power, between *sacrum* and *profanum*, it also allowed Christianity to play an important role in another sphere of our interest.

Re 2. From the early Middle Ages, the Church and the Christian religion belonged to the most essential factors initiating and implementing concrete concepts and projects of integration of the whole continent. The ideological basis for this was the notion of Christian universalism. It did not constitute a manifestation of the striving to build a single European state, but rather to unify Europe under a common religious and ideological order, which – as desired by many popes and secular rulers – aimed at the establishment of a Christian empire, referred to as, e.g.: *imperium christianum*, *christianitas*, or *respublica christiana*. 
This combination of religious and political aspects resulted in the fact that participation in the civilised world, understood as the area of the developing Europe, required the participation in the Christian community. Therefore, between the 5th and the 10th century, almost all European peoples, from Western Europe to the central and eastern frontiers, underwent the process of Christianisation. One of the main motives behind Christianisation were political calculations – many feudal rulers of some, often very weak, states were not able to safeguard their interests on their own, and therefore it was natural for them to accept the supremacy of the Pope and the Emperor. There is no doubt, however, that the attractiveness of the gradually developing pan-European culture, based on Christian models, was also an essential factor. Belonging to this pan-European culture ensured political protection and largely contributed to the acceleration of the general development of civilisation in the given state. Thus, a new division was formed: the civilised world of Christian Europe versus the primitive world of barbarian pagans. As we will see, this division was not entirely justified in the light of the level of development of the ‘barbarian’ civilisation.

The development of a specific social class, namely the mediaeval knighthood, in all parts of Europe was also very important. The universal and pan-European ethos of this class, deeply pervaded with Christian ideals, was a significant factor for standardising the system of values and behavioural patterns of elites throughout the continent. The knights engaged in various projects, which were justified by religion, but in fact were political in nature – a classic example of such a project are the crusades, which were undertaken not only to liberate the Holy Land, but also to conquer pagan lands in Eastern Europe (e.g. the activities of the Teutonic Order).

All this constituted a basis for formulating visions of unification, and, above all, for undertaking concrete actions towards integration, based on Christian ideals. An example of such an action is the attempt to reactivate the Roman Empire within new, exclusively European borders, initiated by Charlemagne, or the realisation of the idea of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation. These plans and actions had various motivational backgrounds, including personal and dynastic interests, both of the clerical authorities (in particular of the popes), and of secular authorities (especially of the emperors). As mentioned before, this led to a series of clashes of the two centres of power, which lasted, with shifting fortunes, for several centuries. Despite the successes of popes (symbolised by the infamous humiliation of the Emperor in Canossa), the final

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5 The periods of developing European statehoods are essentially consistent with the dates of christening of their rulers: in the West the King of Franks, Clovis, was baptised as early as 496 CE, while in the Central and Eastern Europe the process started five hundred years later – with the christening of the rulers of Poland and of Hungary in the years 966–972.
victory belonged to the secular power. However, for our purposes, the most important fact is that both sides, regardless of their political and doctrinal differences, based their actions on the principles of Christian universalism.

The birth of Europe

Having in mind the role and achievements of the Christian mediaeval period and the heritage of the Antiquity, we could try to answer the initial question about the symbolic date of the birth of Europe. Taking into account various possible interpretations, it seems justified to distinguish between the subjective and objective dimensions of this problem.

In the subjective dimension, both with regard to Antiquity and the early Middle Ages, we can hardly speak of fulfilling the basic conditions for the emergence and establishment of the ‘idea of Europe’, understood as the development of a clearly defined, mature European identity. As mentioned before, neither the inhabitants of the Roman Empire, nor the subjects of the early mediaeval feudal states considered themselves Europeans; some of them identified themselves with Pax Romana, others with Christian ideals (the Greeks were probably the closest to the ‘idea of Europe’, as they were its ‘inventors’, but from their point of view it was limited geographically, culturally and politically and referred mainly to the area of influence of the Hellenic civilisation, which was different from the world of eastern despotisms). Hence, the process of crystallization of the European identity was very long and had various intensity over time, depending on the general course of historical processes throughout the continent.

However, what was decisive was that the ‘idea of Europe’ was being born in the objective dimension. This was possible due to a number of factors, the most important of them being the gradual accumulation of the multidimensional, impressively rich general civilisational achievements made throughout several eras by the states and the peoples living in the developing Europe. These achievements constituted a foundation for the European culture, but also created the roots of European unity, and consequently of the processes of integration. They served as a basis for the gradual crystallization of a separate, pan-European identity, additionally drawing on the elements mentioned above, such as the common system of values and the sense of separateness, based on perception of a common external threat and on experiencing similar history.

This is how the ‘idea of Europe’ was forming, allowing the development of an objectively functioning community of the inhabitants of the whole continent – regardless of their ideologies and religions and of whether or not they were subjectively aware of this fact. In other words, in the following centuries, like it or not, the inhabitants of Europe were becoming Europeans.
At one point in history, the two dimensions – the subjective and the objective – became much closer to each other, if not fully joint. According to many historians, this happened more or less at the turn of the first and the second millennium CE. In the 10th and 11th century CE, not only the European elites, but also the societies became aware and felt the real existence of a common pan-European social, cultural and even political space.

Contrary to the popular, unjustified opinions, the Middle Ages were not only a period of regional fragmentation and civilisational backwardness. On the contrary – as a matter of fact, mediaeval Europe achieved, in a certain sense, a state of unity, which we are trying so hard to achieve in the 21st century. The political, clerical and intellectual elites from different countries of that time formed a relatively homogenous society, which used a common language (i.e. Latin, which was universally used, just as French several centuries later and as English nowadays) and witnessed an intensive exchange of thoughts between its members – as shown, for instance, by the activity of Erasmus of Rotterdam. Thus, a specific community of intellectuals was formed, later also referred to as the ‘Republic of the Enlightened’, which laid foundations for both theoretical and practical concepts of European unity.

The intellectual unity of the continent was accompanied by, as we would call it today, ‘freedom of movement of goods, persons and services’ – a solution that was formally introduced by the European Community only in the second half of the 20th century. It was manifested, among other things, by the possibility of free movement of people (hence the blooming settlement of people from Western Europe, mostly Germany, in Eastern European agricultural regions and cities) and the development of pan-European trade. This was further facilitated by the lack of formal restrictions and barriers in crossing borders, which were often only conventional, as well as the fact that the still not fully formed concept of nationality (the sense of belonging to a community or adherence to a particular ruler) did not give rise to any serious ethnic tensions. Mediaeval merchants, settlers, artists, scientists had no problems with free movement, with formal crossing of borders and with finding jobs or studying at the best European universities. In practice, this meant that, for instance, a Spanish artist could create in France, a German artisan could work in Krakow, a Lithuanian nobleman could study at Italian universities, and a merchant from the Hanseatic League could perform free trade with Mediterranean port cities.

All in all, the above arguments lead to a quite obvious thesis that the birth of Europe was not a one-time event, which could be precisely located in time,

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6 It is widely known that European nation-states started to form quite late, from the 18th–19th century onwards. Only then did they start to control the movement of people across their borders, which had earlier encountered practically no barriers, even during armed conflicts.
but a complex, long-lasting process unfolding for almost two millennia. Speaking only in very general terms, around the 10th–11th century, in the early High Middle Ages, the process gained a new quality, due to which, from that time on, we can speak of Europe as a relatively uniform cultural and religious community and a separate ideological and political entity.

As stated in the thesis at the beginning of this chapter, the fact that the ‘idea of Europe’ was crystallized enabled the emergence of concrete ideas and projects of integration in the strictly European – which should be strongly emphasized – dimension (for even though in earlier times there also existed some practical integration actions, such as the Roman Empire, these had no reference to the ‘idea of Europe’, which simply had not yet emerged).

This transition from idea to practice was, however, not an automatic sequence of events. On the contrary – as a kind of dialectic feedback. Ideas and projects of integration appeared on a broad scale only when some intensive processes of decentralisation in politics were taking place in mediaeval Europe – which was already a relatively consistent cultural community at that time – e.g. in the form of regional disintegration of many countries (such as Poland). The signs and effects of these processes caused a counteraction around the 14th century, initiated by European intellectual and political elites, the aim of which was to mitigate these disintegrationist tendencies by creating new integration structures. Without doubt, this was a true paradox: in order to start integrating, the Europeans first had to become politically divided.

A symbolic sign of these changes was a renaissance of the name ‘Europe’ itself, which started to be used more and more often, not only by just geographers and cartographers, and in a much broader sense, as a cultural or political concept, e.g. in names of several integration projects, including the first use of the name ‘the European Union’ (sic). Throughout the next several centuries, the integration projects and ideas were becoming an increasingly important part of European reality, and finally led to the present-day processes of integration.

The European integration today

The processes of integration which were taking place on the European continent at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries are certainly amongst the most important features characterising the present-day international relations. They are that significant not only because they determine the shape and fate of Europe (including the development of Poland), but also because they are one of the essential factors influencing the economic, political, social and cultural situation on a global scale. Moreover, for the people living today, the European processes of integration are amongst the most obvious processes in interna-
tional relations, and it is difficult to imagine the world in its present shape without them.

The main actors in the processes of integration – first the European Communities, and now the European Union, which is their continuation – still play an essential role. Despite the fact that these processes are, naturally, much broader and involve much more participants in international relations in the political, economic or military areas than merely the EU Member States (to name only the most important organisations: the Council of Europe, NATO, or the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe), there is no doubt that the integration in the form of the EC/EU played the most essential part in these processes and that it constitutes the foundation for the whole edifice of European unity.

Present-day European integration has certain specific features. The most important of them are the exceptionally unique and greatly complex nature of the European Union phenomenon. Using the original heritage of the European culture, which emanates throughout the world, the EU is the only instance in human history of a so deeply integrated international group, based on its own specific ideological and political assumptions, more generally referred to as the European values (these values are based, generally speaking, on the principles of democracy and human rights). EU is characterized by features which are not all unique or special, but which occur simultaneously and jointly, and thus create (by way of a specific synergy) new quality and make the Union a unique entity.

The uniqueness of the Union lies primarily in the depth and scale of integration. It should be emphasized that no other group in the world has developed the integration processes taking place within it to such an extent. This applies both to the depth of the adopted solutions (as evidenced by exclusive Community competence in certain areas) and the scale of integration activities. Expanding gradually, they have covered virtually all spheres of life (though with varying intensity): economy, politics, social and cultural issues, research, defence, etc. The same applies to the organisational shape and the adopted institutional and legislative solutions – none of the other integration groupings has reached such a level of consistency and, at the same time, efficiency of operations of their institutions.

A manifestation of the effectiveness of the European integration process is the fact that the European Union obtained a powerful potential, defined by fundamental geo-political determinants, such as human resources, area, as well as economic, social, cultural, scientific and military capabilities. It is the leading potential in the world, especially when it comes to its economic dimension. This is demonstrated by the achievements of the EU economy, which combines – owing to the single market mechanisms and the economic and monetary union – the economic efforts of the Member States and takes top places in the
world, while taking active part in the processes of globalization. As shown by the basic macroeconomic indicators, the EU Member States have a higher total GDP than the United States, occupy a prominent place in world trade, etc. These successes are possible owing to the specific phenomenon of synergy mentioned before, whereby the overall position of the EU is much better than it would seem just from mechanically adding the individual potentials of EU states.

Moreover, having such a significant potential, the European Union is able to play a number of important international roles. In accordance with its values, the EU is a promoter of democracy, the rule of law, human rights, an advocate of peaceful resolution of international problems and the world’s largest provider of development aid.

Another characteristic, which makes it even more difficult to study the EU and which has implications in the sphere of political practice, is the vagueness of the EU phenomenon. As a structure still in the nascent state, it is constantly evolving and is, if one can say so, an ongoing process rather than an achieved status. For this reason, even if only with great difficulty, it can be subjected to all evaluations, analyses, and especially categorisations. From a cognitive standpoint, the European Union is a kind of ‘intellectual puzzle,’ while in political terms, as the former President of the Commission Jacques Delors put it aptly in his famous saying, ‘the Union is a politically unidentified object.’

A further complication is that the European Union is a very heterogeneous structure – institutionally, legally and functionally – which is to be regarded as a kind of cumulative category. It covers not only the actual structure of the Union, i.e. the Union as such, but until recently also the European Communities. In addition, we should take into account the Member States, which still retain most of their sovereign powers and are full members of the international community. The entire structure of the integration is based on the concept of two basic models: federalism (also known as the community method) and confederalism (intergovernmental method).\(^7\)

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\(^7\) This is certainly not the only possible division, as there may be some other approaches. In simple terms, we can say that federalism treats the processes of European integration as transnational processes (assuming the formation of institutions with governing powers over states), while confederalism is basically limited to the integration of the intergovernmental cooperation of countries who retain their sovereign powers. Although these concepts seem to have contradictory aims and objectives, they are complementary, and create an original ‘blend’ which has been reflected in the practical functioning of the European Communities, and now of the European Union.
Conclusions

In making overall evaluations of the European integration, it should be noted that regardless of any controversy concerning the various aspects involved, it is characterised by one major advantage, which cannot be negated by anyone – the integration processes, lasting for more than half a century, ensured an unprecedentedly long period of peace in Europe, coupled with sustained political stability and dynamic economic development leading to prosperity. This has been achieved by creating (with support from America) appropriate security structures, as well as political, economic and military cooperation. On the one hand, these have created conditions that have prevented the occurrence of conflicts between the Member States of the EC/EU, on the other – they have deterred potential outside adversaries.

This alone is enough for this venture, which is unique in the world, to be considered to be a huge success of Europeans. Such assessment is not affected even by the fact that, for objective historical reasons, this success bore fruits mainly in the Western part of the continent – although all its inhabitants enjoyed the period of peace, and now also the countries of Central and Eastern Europe are experiencing the benefits of integration. Generally, the positive picture is also not obscured by the fact that while there were no wars on a continental scale, this unfortunately did not mean that there were no bloody armed conflicts occurring in different periods on a local scale (such as the Soviet interventions in Hungary and Czechoslovakia and the clashes in Ulster and in the Basque country, or the civil war in the former Yugoslavia), of which, however, only a portion could possibly have been solved by integration structures of the West.

A characteristic feature of the post-war integration processes was also their universal character, manifesting itself in the fact that the processes encompassed a wide range of almost all spheres of the political, economic, social and cultural life of Western European countries. Therefore, the idea of unity of the continent has not been ‘appropriated’ by any single political orientation or world view, and remained a concept with diverse and yet very general assumptions, acceptable to almost every European citizen.

Taking into account the elements of the above characteristics, we could try to present the definition of the European Union as the most important organisational structure of the modern integration processes taking place on our continent.

Thus, we can say that the European Union:

– is an independent entity or political, organisational and legal structure, an association (community, collectivity) of sovereign states, forming a regional grouping with the most advanced integration processes in the world (in terms of depth and scale);
– carries out a variety of economic, political, military, socio-cultural and other goals jointly set by its members, through its specific mechanisms, which include both the creation of supranational structures of decision-making and authority (in accordance with the federal/community model), and intergovernmental cooperation (in accordance with the confederal/intergovernmental model), using the jointly defined and accepted ways and methods of operation.

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From the establishment of the European Communities to the Lisbon Treaty

Over the past half century, the European integration process has undergone various stages, which are classified in various ways. For the purpose of this study, let us adopt a division into the following stages of integration processes and phenomena which were taking place in Europe after World War II:

- **Stage one (1945–1957)**, which initiated the effective implementation of the idea of integration and marked the victory of the concept of the European Communities;
- **Stage two (1958–1969)**, which was the period of building the foundations for economic integration;
- **Stage three (1970–1991)**, which resulted in the processes of extending and strengthening the integration bonds between the Member States and preparations for the establishment of the European Union;
- **Stage four (1992–2004)**, which was the period of gradual implementation of the European Union, initiated by signing the Maastricht Treaty and continued by the Treaty of Amsterdam and the Treaty of Nice;
- **Stage five (after 2004)**, initiated by the greatest enlargement to the East in the history of European integration, and also including the signing of the Constitutional Treaty and the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty.

**Stage one: 1945–1957**

In the period immediately after the war, the idea of European integration quickly found a number of influential supporters among the ‘Fathers of Europe’, which included such politicians as: J. Monnet and R. Schuman in France, K. Adenauer in Germany and W. Churchill in the United Kingdom.

The latter promoted the idea of pan-Europe, proposing in 1946 the establishment of the United States of Europe, based on the principles of federalism.
The first step in this direction would be to create a special international body. This postulate was supported at the Congress of Europe in the Hague, in May 1948. A year later, on 5 May 1949, several European countries founded the Council of Europe – an organization with almost universal competence.\footnote{With the exception of strictly political and military matters.}

At the same time, the first projects initiating the political and military co-operation in Western Europe were launched. On 17 March 1948, France, the United Kingdom, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg signed the Brussels Treaty and a half year later the Western Union was formed, aiming to implement a common security policy. The decisive element in this field, however, was the conclusion of the Treaty of Washington on 4 April 1949, which provided for the establishment of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), a structure which has played an important role in the history of Europe. It initially consisted of ten European countries, the USA and Canada.\footnote{The NATO founding states were: France, the United Kingdom, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Norway, Denmark, Iceland, Portugal. Later they were joined by Greece and Turkey (1952), West Germany (1955) and Spain (1982). In 1966, France withdrew from the NATO and returned to it partly in mid-1990s. In 1999, the NATO gained new members: Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary, and in 2004 r. seven new Central and Eastern European countries.}

Historically, however, the most important role was played by projects of economic integration, which have been the foundation of European unity.

This process has been initiated, among others, by the customs union called the Benelux, established by Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg on 14 March 1947. The economic aid given by the United States to its European allies in the form of the Marshall Plan, announced in 1947, proved to be a strong stimulus for further moves of this kind. This aid has played a major role in the reconstruction and rapid economic development of Western Europe. In order to ensure effective management of this aid, on 16 April 1948, 16 Western European countries established the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC).\footnote{Later, it was transformed into another very important entity, the worldwide Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).}

During this period, the main initiator of integration processes was France, who wished to make Europe the ‘third power’ alongside the United States and the Soviet Union. The French also feared the possibility of rebuilding the economic and military power of Germany, which the USA wanted to make a member of the NATO as soon as possible. Finally, France has taken another initiative, which was meant mostly to protect its national interests, but which eventually laid the foundations for the whole edifice of European integration.
On 9 May 1950, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, R. Schuman, using the concept of his adviser, J. Monnet, presented the proposal to create a coal and steel community (‘the Schuman Declaration’). Its main objective was to ensure equal economic rights for West Germany, but also – through the inclusion of German heavy industry in the broader international structure – to maintain control over it. The proposal was accepted; on 18 April 1951, in Paris, Germany, France, Italy and the Benelux countries signed the Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), one of the three Communities which were to unite Western Europe.

At the same time, there were still some concepts of extending the integration to cover the political and military sphere. In 1950, a proposal appeared to create European armed forces by establishing the European Defence Community (EDC). This was done in 1952, by the members of the European Coal and Steel Community. Another project of that time was that of the European Political Community (EPC), which would combine the activities of the EDC and the ECSC. However, all these plans failed – in 1954, the French parliament rejected the treaty establishing the EDC; further work on the establishment of the European Political Community was also ceased. In exchange, another organization was established to deal with military issues, but as a strictly intergovernmental entity – in 1954, the ECSC countries and the United Kingdom signed a treaty establishing the Western European Union (WEU), replacing the Western Union and not associated with the Community system until 1992.

As a result of the successful functioning of the ECSC and the increasingly evident need for unifying economic efforts in Western Europe, the proposals to extend the scope of economic integration through the establishment of new Communities fell on fertile ground. After a series of intense negotiations, on 27 March 1957, in Rome, six ECSC states signed the Rome Treaties establishing the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom).

The main objective of the EEC was to achieve close co-operation, progress and continuous improvement of living and working conditions, reduce disparities between regions and ensure overall development of the economies of Member States. This was to be achieved by first establishing a customs union (the area where the customs duties would be abolished, and common tariffs in trade with third countries would be applied), then a common market (based on the so-called four freedoms: free movement of persons, goods, services and capital), and ultimately an economic and monetary union.

The measures to implement these tasks were, among others, common policies (agricultural, trade and transport), specific policies (e.g. regional development), harmonisation of legislation, ensuring the rules of competition, economic and social cohesion, consumer protection, development of research, etc.
Most of these were achieved, which made the EEC a very important element of the whole process of European integration.

Euratom, in turn, was to ensure the development of the nuclear industry in Western Europe and restrict its use exclusively to peaceful purposes, e.g. through the establishment of joint research centres, funding, and safety control system.

All this led to the formation of the structures of three European Communities constituting the organizational and legal basis for all further processes of integration. The treaties under which they were established are now called the founding treaties.

The Treaties of Rome were supplemented by the provisions of the Convention on certain institutions common to the European Communities, signed around the same time. Structural differences, however, were so large that the Communities succeeded in creating only two joint bodies: the Parliamentary Assembly and the European Court of Justice.

Stage two: 1958–1969

The processes of integration also covered those Western European countries which – as the United Kingdom – were distrustful towards the concept of creating a supranational decision-making authority (although in this period, even the integration within the Communities was based mainly on intergovernmental co-operation). In 1960, in Stockholm, the United Kingdom, Austria, Portugal, Switzerland, Sweden, Denmark and Norway signed a treaty establishing an organisation with fairly limited powers and importance: the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), joined by Iceland in 1970.

Rapid economic success achieved by the newly formed EEC encouraged its Member States to extend the integration processes to include the sphere of political co-operation. In 1961, France introduced the ‘Fouchet Plan’, which provided for the establishment of the Political Union, with fairly broad powers, but of a clearly intergovernmental nature, and thus being a kind of counterweight for Community institutions. The presentation of the project initiated a wide debate, which resulted in a series of proposals, but all these initiatives failed because of too much divergence between the approaches to the issue of national sovereignty, especially emphasized by General Charles de Gaulle. An important event, however, was the signing of the Franco-German friendship agreement (the Elysée Treaty) on 20 January 1963, which was a significant contribution to overcoming the effects of the past and to strengthening security and peace in Europe.

An agreement of major importance in the field of institutional integration was the Merger Treaty of 8 April 1965, which completed the process of join-
ing together the three Communities and setting up common institutions, by establishing a single Council and Commission (at that time called respectively the Council of Ministers and the Commission of the European Communities), which were added to the Court of Justice and the European Parliamentary Assembly (since 1962 called the European Parliament). Other bodies established by the Treaty were the Economic and Social Committee, the advisory body of the Communities, and the Committee of Permanent Representatives (COREPER), which also played an important role.

The most successful part of Community activity was the establishment of the common market, including in particular the customs union, which was introduced in 1968, and the Common Commercial Policy. There was some progress also in increasing the freedom of entrepreneurship and movement of workers, and in competition law. In some other areas, however, such as the Common Transport Policy and, above all, Common Agricultural Policy, there emerged some difficulties and conflicts of interests. Although the basic principles of the Common Agricultural Policy were set already in 1962, their implementation started only five years later.

Again, the country which most forcibly articulated its reservations was France. From mid-1965, it applied the ‘empty chair’ policy, i.e. it blocked the operation of EC bodies by withdrawing its representatives. The conflict was resolved through the ‘Luxembourg compromise’ reached on 29 January 1966. It was essentially a revision of the Treaty of Rome, by which France forced its partners to acknowledge a rule, according to which in matters most important to national interests each Member State should have a practical power of veto in regard to the decisions of the Council.

At that time, engaged in their internal issues, the European Communities did not focus on geographical enlargement. Their actions in this field were limited to signing Association Agreements: in 1961 with Greece, in 1963 with Turkey, and in the same year in Yaoundé, the Convention of Association with 18 African countries. The United Kingdom tried to join the EEC twice – in 1961 and in 1967 – and twice it failed because of strong opposition of France, distrustful towards the pro-American course of British foreign policy and fearing for its own economic interests, especially in the field of agriculture.


At the beginning of the 1970s, the Communities entered a period of prominent institutional and territorial development. At the Hague summit in December 1969, relevant decisions were made, regarding, among others, the admission of new members (the latter was made possible by the resignation from office by Charles de Gaulle). As a result, on 22 January 1972, the EC Member
States signed the Accession Treaties with the United Kingdom, Ireland, Denmark and Norway. Except for Norway, where the treaty was rejected by referendum, these countries became full members of the Communities on 1 January 1973.

As regards political integration, at the Luxembourg summit on 27 October 1971, the Member States of the Communities established a structure to coordinate and harmonize their foreign policies – the European Political Cooperation (EPC). It was operating beyond the Community system and without any treaty basis, but it still played an important role in the Communities as a forum for the exchange and coordination of views on foreign policy, and to a certain extent, on defence policy.

At the Paris summit in December 1974, a new (although already formally existing) body was constituted – the European Council, composed of the Heads of States and Governments of the EC Member States. Although it has never been a Community body, it has since been of great importance, as its main function is to consult, coordinate and take decisions on major issues relating to the Communities.

One of the more important moves of the European Council was the decision to introduce general elections to the European Parliament. After the first elections, set for mid-1979, the Parliament was transformed from an inter-parliamentary institution into a supranational body (initially with fairly limited powers).

In this time of institutional development of the Communities, ideas for a far more advanced integration in the form of the European Union were gaining importance. For example, the Belgian Prime Minister issued the ‘Tindemans report’, which proposed deep integration, not only economic, but also political, including in foreign policy.

In this period, we can observe an ever clearer domination of the three main members within the EEC: France, West Germany and the United Kingdom. In many cases they were the only ones to decide on certain matters, which, naturally, largely suppressed collective problem-solving. At the same time, co-operation in justice and home affairs was gradually developing, as shown for instance by the establishment of the Trevi Group in 1975, aiming to coordinate the fight against international crime and terrorism.

The Community institutions were dynamically developing in the field of economic integration, which resulted in the establishment of the Court of Auditors in 1975, whose main task was to control the budget of the Communities. The common market was made more effective, and the introduction of the ‘currency snake’ in 1972, restricting excessive fluctuations of exchange rates, was a major step in monetary policy. 1978 saw the creation of the European Monetary System and the innovative step of introducing the European Currency Unit (ecu).
In 1970, another set of principles for funding the Common Agricultural Policy was agreed on; successes were also recorded in the field of Common Commercial Policy, as shown by further Association Agreements – with Malta in 1970 and with Cyprus in 1972. In the years 1969–1984, the EC Member States also signed preferential agreements with a group of African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) countries (Yaoundé II, Lomé I, Lomé II, Lomé III), and in 1976–1977, with some countries of the Maghreb and of the Middle East.

In the second half of the 1970s, however, a number of difficulties occurred, resulting both from the growing economic crisis in the West (caused by the embargo on oil supplies introduced after the 1973 Arab-Israeli War) and from the structural and institutional crisis within the EC. This was manifested in, among other things, severe budgetary difficulties, the crisis of the Common Agricultural Policy and the inefficiency of Community institutions (a problem referred to as ‘Eurosclerosis’). The integration formula existing so far seemed to have exhausted its possibilities of development, but this stimulated reform efforts. At the beginning of the 1980s, a number of proposals appeared referring to the earlier idea of creating a European Union, including in the form of the resolution of the European Parliament of 1984 on a draft Treaty establishing the European Union, which was a kind of constitution for the united Europe and contained far-reaching federalist solutions.

The Schengen Agreement signed on 14 June 1985 (referred to as Schengen I), which regulated such issues as free movement of persons by abolishing internal border controls and allowing them only at the external borders of the Community and by adopting a common extradition procedure and visa policy, was an important development. The Agreement was later supplemented by a series of other acts, such as the Dublin Convention of 1990.

The first half of the 1980s also brought the completion of the process of admitting to the EEC some countries which had long been aspiring for membership: Greece (the Accession Treaty signed on 28 May 1979), as well as Spain and Portugal (the Accession Treaties signed on 12 June 1985). These events not only caused a shift of emphasis in the Community towards the Mediterranean, but also highlighted the need for structural changes in the EEC, now consisting of states with more diverse economic potentials and different political and cultural traditions.

Negotiations led to an agreement on the key provisions of the future treaty which would modify the Treaties of Rome. They eventually took the form of the Single European Act (SEA), signed by all EC Member States on 17 February 1986, in Luxembourg and on 28 February 1986, in the Hague.

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4 The Schengen Agreement was initially signed by France, Germany and the Benelux states, and later other EC countries followed (as well as Norway and Iceland). The United Kingdom and Ireland, who want to keep their border controls, have still not signed the Agreement.
The Act was of major importance; it crowned 40 years of efforts in the field of European integration and laid the foundations for a qualitatively new structure, the future European Union. The SEA introduced a number of institutional and legal changes, e.g. by modifying decision-making procedures for Community bodies, increasing the powers of the European Parliament and creating a better legal basis for the functioning of the European Council and the European Political Cooperation (to which it provided a legal basis). The most important proposal in the field of economy was the internal market, which was to be created by 1992 (in place of the common market) and the Economic and Monetary Union, also to be created by 1992. The modifications made to the EEC Treaty by the Single Act consisted also in including new areas, such as social policy, scientific research and environment protection into the Treaty.

The SEA provided a new impulse to the processes of integration aiming at the creation of the European Union. Following a series of initiatives in this area, the Madrid summit in June 1989 approved the ‘Delors package’, prepared by Jacques Delors, who was at that time the President of the Commission. The package envisaged gradual implementation of the Economic and Monetary Union; the first phase of implementation began on 1 July 1990. One of the key institutional elements of the Union would be the establishment of the European System of Central Banks, as a first step towards the creation of the future common European Central Bank.

In the political sphere, the ideas of a political union were still present, which resulted, among others, from Western Europe’s need to face new challenges in the international arena and from the shortcomings of political solutions in the Single Act. An additional issue was the need to extend the Community competence in the field of social policy. Consequently, at the Strasbourg summit in December 1989, the heads of the Member States adopted the Community Charter of the Fundamental Social Rights of Workers (the Charter was not adopted by the United Kingdom).

The co-operation in the field of internal affairs continued, especially in the fields of immigration policy and fight against drug trafficking (the European Committee to Combat Drugs, CELAD, was established in 1989). Activities aimed at solving social problems and at environmental protection were also being further developed.

The Common Commercial Policy, or, more generally, the external policy of the EC was also actively pursued. In the years 1986–1988, the process of establishing closer co-operation with the EFTA countries was initiated and the membership applications submitted in 1990 by Cyprus and Malta were accepted.

At the turn of the 1980s and 1990s, the European Communities also needed to develop a policy towards the ‘Autumn of Nations’ in Central and Eastern Europe, which was disturbing the traditional balance of power on our conti-
nent. The collapse of the communist system had great significance not only for the countries of the region, but also for the whole of Europe. The Communities developed treaty bonds with the new democracies relatively quickly, by signing agreements on trade and economic co-operation (the ‘first generation’ agreements).5

On 16 December 1991, Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia signed the Europe Association Agreements (also referred to as Europe Agreements or ‘second generation’ agreements). In this regard, accession of the former German Democratic Republic to the EC was a special case. As of 3 October 1990, it became an integral part of the Federal Republic of Germany, the Dublin summit in April 1990 decided that formal accession requires only the use of simplified adaptation procedures.

In December 1989, at the meeting in Strasbourg, the European Council made the important decision to continue further reforms, bearing in mind the strategic objective, which would be the creation of the European Union. There were, however, some essential differences of opinion between the UK, playing the role of the main opponent to the expansion of supranational powers of the future Union, and Germany and France, acting in solidarity, supported by the majority of other Member States. Eventually, the process of negotiations which was to lead to a common position was successfully completed.

Stage four: 1992–2004

On 7 February 1992, in the Dutch town of Maastricht, twelve Member States signed the Treaty on European Union (Treaty of Maastricht). Its provisions were certainly of historical significance and defined the shape and direction of integration processes throughout the continent until the twenty-first century.

The Treaty of Maastricht, providing for the creation of the European Union, did not replace the founding treaties, nor did it liquidate the existing Communities – they still remained subjects of international law. From a formal point of view, the European Union was not a new international organization and had no international legal subjectivity. The Treaty had a characteristic structure, consisting of three ‘pillars’.

The first pillar regulated fundamental issues concerning mainly economic integration, in which the main role was to be played by the reformed EEC, under the name European Community. It was equipped with extensive powers,

including – in addition to common policies and specific policies – a power to take actions leading to the establishment of the Single Market and the Economic and Monetary Union. This task was divided into several stages, and one of them was the introduction of the euro on 1 January 1999, which required the operation of harmonized economic and monetary policies of the Member States.

The second pillar covered the Common Foreign and Security Policy (which replaced the European Political Cooperation), conducted at the intergovernmental level and not at Community level. Its main objectives included the strengthening of international peace and security of the Union and its Member States. This should be achieved by developing common positions and actions on issues of foreign and defence policy. One of the intended steps was to incorporate the Western European Union into the European Union, while maintaining close co-operation with the NATO in the field of defence.

The third pillar covered intergovernmental co-operation in justice and home affairs. It included issues such as immigration and asylum policy, border control, combating international crime and terrorism, co-operation between judiciary systems (in civil and criminal matters), as well as customs and police services (e.g. through the establishment of the European Police Office: Europol).

The provisions of the Maastricht Treaty addressed a comprehensive combination of economic issues and social problems, accompanied by political issues. An example of such a holistic view was the establishment of the ‘European citizenship’ (which did not replace the citizenship of the Member States, but for example, provided joint diplomatic and consular protection to EU citizens in third countries). The European Union was to be based on the principles of subsidiarity, while maintaining the acquis communautaire, i.e. the existing legal and institutional achievements of the Communities.

The main institutions of the European Union (formally the European Communities) were still: the European Commission, the Council of the European Union, the European Parliament, the Court of Justice (including the Court of First Instance) and the Court of Auditors, while advisory bodies were the Economic and Social Committee and the newly formed Committee of the Regions. Formally, the European Council was not a Community body, but in practice it still played a great political role. It made important decisions at its meetings held every six months in the country which currently presided over both the

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6 Generally speaking, in this case, the principle of subsidiarity means that the European Union’s bodies should restrain from taking decisions on any issues in which decisions taken at lower levels (national, regional or local) would be more effective. Decisions should be made at the European level only in the cases when they exceed the capabilities of states or local authorities.
Council of the European Union and the European Council (an institution called the Presidency).

The Treaty also established a pan-European institution of the Ombudsman, who receives complaints from citizens on the activities of Community institutions. It also formed the European Monetary Institute, the germ of the present European Central Bank, which supervises the Union’s financial policy.

The Treaty encountered some difficulties along the process of its ratification. Nationwide referendums were held in some countries (France, Ireland, Denmark); the French expressed their approval by a minimum majority, while the outcome of the first vote in Denmark was negative. As a result, it was necessary to renegotiate Denmark’s obligations, and in consequence the Treat entered into force almost a year later than expected, on 1 November 1993.

The Maastricht Treaty was an important stage in European integration, after which numerous further obstacles emerged. For example, the partial collapse of the European Monetary System in mid-1993 was a great blow to the concept of Economic and Monetary Union. However, there were also some successes in solving such problems as regulation of the European Community budget financing (the ‘Delors II package’), and the implementation, by 1 January 1993, of a set of projects for the functioning of the Single Market.

Intensive efforts have also been made to implement the next stage of the monetary union. This required Member States to comply with the convergence criteria (conditions set out in Maastricht concerning, inter alia, the government deficit and inflation rate). By meeting these criteria, 11 Member States were able to adopt the common currency, the euro, on 1 January 1999 (it was consistent with the concept of ‘enhanced co-operation’, which meant that specific integration actions could be taken by a group of interested countries instead of all Member States). As part of the implementation of the monetary union, the European Central Bank was also established.

The Treaty of Maastricht included a declaration on the need for further reforms and provided for the next Intergovernmental Conference to be convened for this purpose. The Conference started in 1996 in Turin and ended a year later in Amsterdam. Its work was devoted to solving the existing problems, as well as the emerging ones, especially in the functioning of the institutions of the expanding Communities. This was of particular importance for Poland and for other associated countries, since the start of accession negotiations depended, among others, on the adoption of a program of institutional reforms in the Union). A catalogue of these problems and the proposed solutions were the subject of the report drawn up by the Reflection Group, acting under the direction of the Spanish diplomat C. Westendorp.

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7 The UK, Denmark and Sweden did not want to join the eurozone, while Greece initially did not meet the Maastricht criteria and was allowed to join the eurozone only on 1 January 2001.
Finally, the Treaty of Amsterdam was signed on 2 October 1997 in Amsterdam, and entered into force on 1 May 1999. Its provisions touched upon several key areas, including the creation of ‘the area of freedom, security and justice’. In this field, emphasis was placed on civil and human rights guarantees; some important decisions were also made to provide for the gradual incorporation of the Schengen Agreement to the _acquis communautaire_ (which, by then, had expanded to include several new states), which also meant that Community competence would from then on cover a substantial part of matters governed by this agreement. In the field of relations between the EU and its citizens, the Treaty stressed the importance of social issues, introducing chapters on such issues as employment or health and consumer protection. Moreover, it highlighted the need to apply the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality.

Relatively little progress was achieved in the field of institutional reforms. The Treaty increased the powers of the European Parliament, simplified the codecision procedure, extended the range of decisions which could be made by Community institutions by a qualified majority of votes, defined the competence of the Court of Justice within the third pillar. Finally, it provided for a broader application of ‘enhanced co-operation’, but on the condition that the consistency and the legal basis of the EU would not be infringed.

The provisions of the Amsterdam Treaty were also devoted to the effectiveness and consistency of EU external policy. The most important provisions in this regard concerned the possibility of transferring the Common Foreign and Security Policy into the sphere of EU competence, while retaining a number of safeguards to protect the sovereignty of the Member States. It also created the institution of the High Representative for CFSP.

A new approach to security and defence was also shown by intensive activity in this area in the 1990s. The European Union engaged, for instance, in the implementation of the ‘Petersberg Missions’ formulated by the WEU in 1992, set up a Common European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), which complemented the Common Foreign and Security Policy, and also determined the establishment of its own rapid reaction force.

One of the key issues the European Union had to deal with in the 1990s was its territorial expansion. In the debates on this subject the Member States sought to determine whether they should first deepen the existing integration
bonds or expand the area of the EU (according to the formula: deepening or widening). As a result, pragmatic considerations prevailed, combining both approaches, since it is clear that these issues were dialectically linked with each other – in a sense, the enlargement forced institutional reforms, without which it would be impossible itself.

The process of establishing closer co-operation with EFTA countries, which had already been initiated, was concluded by signing the agreement on the European Economic Area (EEA) on 2 May 1992, binding this group of countries with the EU (except Switzerland). The real significance of this agreement was relatively small, since most of the EFTA countries had already submitted applications to join the European Union. This was true of Austria, Sweden and Finland, who signed their accession treaties on 1 February 1994. Norway, on the other hand, for the second time in history, rejected membership in the EU by way of a referendum (the first time was in 1972).

The essential thing, however, was to continue the process of enlargement of European integration structures to include the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Further association agreements (‘second generation’ agreements) were concluded with Romania (1 February 1993) and Bulgaria (8 March 1993). Agreements on trade and economic co-operation were concluded over the years 1993–1995 with Slovenia and the Baltic states. In 1994 the EC also signed special agreements with Russia and Ukraine. Most of these countries were accepted as members of the Council of Europe.

The Visegrad Group (Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia) stood the greatest chance of a relatively quick accession to the European Union. These countries had also undertaken other types of integration efforts, e.g. working together within the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA), which had existed from 1 January 1993 (since 1998, Slovenia, Romania and Bulgaria have also been members of the CEFTA).

The concept of expansion to the East was not generally and unreservedly accepted in the EU. While Germany was a staunch supporter of this concept, France and the other Mediterranean Member States, having more precise and vital interests in this part of the continent, referred to it less favourably. What added to this was the fear of being too hasty in the geographical expansion of European integration while the necessary process of internal reforms within the EU was not yet completed.

However, the fundamental political decision concerning the accession of Central and Eastern European countries into the EU was taken at the Copenhagen summit in June 1993, at which the Member States formulated the ‘Copenhagen criteria’ specifying the political (democratic functioning of the rule of law and protecting human rights) and economic conditions for the Candidate Countries, in particular all the requirements of a free market economy. After a positive assessment of the candidate’s efforts in a special document
‘Agenda 2000’ in 1997, the Union invited Poland and the other Candidate Countries from the so-called ‘Luxembourg group’\(^{11}\) to launch accession negotiations on 31 March 1998 (for more information on the Polish road to the EU see the next section).

As for NATO membership, at the Madrid summit in July 1997, the NATO countries decided to initiate negotiations with Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary. On 16 December of the same year, a relevant protocol to the Washington Treaty was signed, and on 12 March 1999, the three countries officially became members of the NATO.

Difficult negotiations at the next Intergovernmental Conference led to the signing of the Treaty of Nice on 26 February 2001 (it came into force on 1 February 2003). It was an important event in the development of the European Union, also in the context of its enlargement. Its main task was to introduce solutions to complete the institutional reform, without which the effective functioning of the Union was threatened, especially in view of the significant increase in the number of Member States in the near future.

The main changes concerned the organizational shape, the activities and decision-making procedures of the main EU bodies. This applied mainly to the European Commission and the Council of the European Union (modification of the distribution of votes favourable to countries such as Spain, and Poland in the future) as well as other organs (e.g. the future composition of the European Parliament). The Treaty also provided for important reforms in the area of extending the possibility of voting by qualified majority (i.e. limiting the unanimity rule), and efforts were made to bring the Union closer to its citizens, thus reducing the ‘democratic deficit’, among others by starting work on the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.

The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union was solemnly proclaimed on 7 December 2000 at the Nice summit. The drafting of the Charter was entrusted to a special Convention composed of representatives of the Member States and Community bodies. The Convention was chaired by the former German President Roman Herzog.

Generally, we can distinguish two groups of rights in the provisions of the Charter. The first group is derived from the idea of inalienable human rights pertaining to every human individual, such as dignity, freedom, etc. The second group are the rights pertaining to individuals under EU citizenship, and thus not universal. The most important of them include the right to elect the members of the European Parliament or the right of complaint to the European Ombudsman. The Charter of Fundamental Rights was not, however, a Community law (i.e. its provisions were not binding for the Member States), but

\(^{11}\) The other countries were: Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Slovenia and Hungary.
rather a political declaration containing a catalogue of values which should underpin the European integration processes.

With regard to the process of enlargement to the East, in December 1999, the EU decided to invite another group of Central and Eastern European countries to accession negotiations (the ‘Helsinki Group’). This way, the process gained an unprecedented nature, while finally marking the end of the Yalta order in Europe and covering most of the countries of the continent with integration processes. The number of EU Member States has almost doubled (from 15 to 27), with a still open list of countries with aspirations for membership. Turkey and Croatia are presently Candidate Countries, and further on the list are other Balkan countries, and possibly Ukraine.

Negotiations with most of the candidates were completed on 13 December 2002, during the Copenhagen summit. As a result of the final decisions, on 16 April 2003, on the Acropolis in Athens, ten candidate countries and fifteen European Union Member States formally signed the Accession Treaty. The process of its ratification required conducting referendums in most of the Candidate Countries and was successful in all of them (in Poland the referendum was held on 7–8 June 2003).

In addition to the enlargement to the East, the processes of European integration since the end of the 1990s have also been shaped by the successful completion of the Economic and Monetary Union and the introduction of a common European currency. The year 1999 saw the beginning of the third and final phase of EMU – the launch of the European Central Bank and the European System of Central Banks, and of the single currency euro, which was introduced in non-cash transactions. After three years of successful operation, on 1 January 2002, euro was introduced into cash transactions and the process of withdrawing the existing national currencies began (only three EU Member States of that time: the UK, Denmark and Sweden, decided to keep their national currencies).

Another factor influencing the future of European integration processes were the events of 11 September 2001. The terrorist attack on the United States provoked a sharp reaction from the Americans, which initially met with full support from the European Union. However, the form and scope of the war on terrorism waged by the USA led to increasing protests from the majority of EU countries. It did not stop the Washington administration from starting a military operation against Iraq in 2003 without the appropriate resolution of the UN Security Council. The most severe critics of this policy were France and Germany, which led to a clear political conflict between them and the United States.

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12 These were: Bulgaria, Lithuania, Latvia, Romania, Slovakia and Malta.
13 Only negotiations with Bulgaria and Romania lasted longer.
The case of Iraq proved to be a double defeat for the European Union. On the one hand, it showed the weakness of integration in the Common Foreign and Security Policy, thus making it evident that the EU was not able to exercise influence on the conduct of important international events. On the other hand, it highlighted the rifts between the Member States and the Candidate Countries. The latter largely supported the United States, and Poland even took direct part in military operations and in the administration of the territory of Iraq.

The challenges faced by the European Union at the turn of the millennium became the background for a wider debate on the institutional reform started in Nice. The Treaty of Nice came into force in 2003, with a delay caused by the negative result of the Irish ratification referendum (in the second referendum, the Irish voted in favour of ratification, which in practice allowed the enlargement of the EU). The provisions of the Treaty contained a number of institutional changes indeed, but it was also obvious that the Nice solutions were only temporary. In December 2001, at the meeting in Laeken, the European Council decided to call for a special Convention, which would debate on the future shape of the Union and which was to prepare draft amendments.

The European Convention, chaired by the former French President Valery Giscard d’Estaing, began its work in February 2002. It was composed of representatives of the Member States, the European institutions and the Candidate Countries.

In addition to the preparation of the draft EU Constitution, the Convention also undertook the task to outline a long-term vision for the further development of European integration. The key agenda included the issues of the division of powers between the Union and the Member States and between EU institutions, the effectiveness of EU external policy and the elimination of the ‘democratic deficit’ in its functioning. The final outcome of the Convention was agreed by way of consensus, and then served as the basis for the work of the next Intergovernmental Conference.

The draft Constitutional Treaty provided for, among others, extending the list of issues resolved by the Council of the European Union by a majority vote. The most controversial issue was the departure from the voting system established in the Treaty of Nice in favour of the ‘double majority rule’ (decisions would be taken by a majority of the Member States inhabited by a majority of EU citizens). Furthermore, the draft Treaty proposed the establishment of a permanent head of the European Council in place of the six-month rotational Presidency. In the area of foreign relations, the draft called for the appointment of an EU Minister of Foreign Affairs, combining the existing functions of the Commissioner for External Relations and the High Representative for CFSP. It also proposed the strengthening of the role of national parliaments. Thus, the draft Constitutional Treaty contained a number of proposals for major changes,
and also included – as its integral part – the text of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, so that it would become binding.

In late 2003, the Intergovernmental Conference was supposed to finally complete and adopt the text of the Constitutional Treaty. There were, however, some fundamental differences of opinion, particularly with regard to decision making in the Council of the EU. Departing from the Nice voting rules in favour of the double majority procedure aroused strong opposition of Poland and Spain, who regarded this change as detrimental to their vital national interests, while Germany and France strongly supported the idea. Both sides have shown a lack of flexibility: Poles rashly adopted the demagogic slogan ‘Nice or death’, while Germany and France have shown no willingness to compromise. As a result, this led to the failure of the Brussels summit in December, where, contrary to expectations, the heads of the Member States failed to sign the Constitutional Treaty.

Stage five: after 2004

Spring of 2004 saw the emergence of some signs indicating the possibility of breaking the deadlock and reaching an agreement. They were associated primarily with the historical event which was the formal accession to the European Union of ten new members, including Poland, on 1 May 2004 (the other new members being: Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Cyprus and Malta). The practical functioning of the New and Old Member States within the same integration structures started to contribute to constructive resolution of disputes, especially that Poland found the first years of membership very beneficial in economic terms. We experienced, among others, growing exports to EU countries, the introduction of direct payments to farmers and significant support from the Structural Funds.

The tendency to compromise in the new, enlarged European Union also stemmed from fears of the danger of a deepening political crisis within the EU, as well as the changed positions of most of the partners, in particular the reorientation of the pro-American foreign policy of Spain, caused mainly by the aftermath of the terrorist attacks in Madrid on 11 March, as well as the more flexible positions of Poland, Germany and France. As a result, the Brussels summit in June agreed on the content of the new treaty, and on 29 October 2004, 25 Member States signed the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe. Its text was based extensively on the recommendations of the European Convention.

The procedure of its ratification, however, proved to be fraught with difficulties – although half of the Member States ratified it, France and the Netherlands rejected the Treaty (guided primarily by their inner political reasons) in
referendums held in May and June 2005. In this situation, some of the other Member States suspended their ratification procedures, thus placing the fate of the Constitutional Treaty under a question mark.

In the same period, one could see some attempts to mitigate the controversy between Europe and the United States as regards the conflict in Iraq, raised for instance within the NATO. These attempts were shown by some specific joint undertakings, of which the most clear example was the decision of all NATO member countries to take part in the military stabilization mission in Afghanistan. The mission has been officially conducted under the auspices of the NATO, but the actual leadership belongs, naturally, to the United States. The involvement of the EU Member States in the operation in Afghanistan was significant, as it essentially differed little in political and military terms from the intervention in Iraq, while being a very costly undertaking in every respect. All this means that in the case of the intervention in Afghanistan, the Europeans stood – unlike in the case of Iraq – unanimously and decisively by the side of the USA.

The long-planned process of NATO enlargement has also continued – in March and April 2004, seven post-communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe officially joined the NATO: Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Slovakia, Romania, Bulgaria and Slovenia.

The European integration processes already covered the vast majority of our continent, which was shown mainly by the accession of Romania and Bulgaria to the European Union on 1 January 2007. In 2005, the Union also undertook difficult official negotiations on the Turkish membership, though this issue arouses much controversy in the Member States. The fact that the negotiations were suspended as a result of Turkey’s refusal to recognise the Republic of Cyprus shows that they were indeed turbulent. The prospects for Croatia, on the other hand, are much better. There is a chance that the accession negotiations will be closed in 2011 and Croatia will become the 28th EU Member State within two years.

The difficulties with the ratification of the Constitutional Treaty did not mark the end of the very idea of reforms to improve the functioning of the EU. Intensive work on a new treaty was launched in early 2006. France made a significant contribution to this, by proposing to remove the most controversial provisions from the text of the Constitutional Treaty. This made it possible to convene another Intergovernmental Conference in mid-2007, whose work resulted in the adoption of the new EU Reform Treaty. As a result, on 13 December 2007, in the capital of Portugal, the 27 Member States signed the Lisbon Treaty.

As agreed, the new treaty no longer included the controversial – though sometimes only symbolic – provisions concerning the EU anthem and flag or references to the Christian tradition in the preamble. In fact, however, the essential achievements developed in the Constitutional Treaty were maintained,
including in particular the new decision-making system in the EU Council, based on double-majority voting – a decision should be supported by 55 per cent of Member States (minimum 15), representing 65 per cent of EU citizens. The new system was not to be introduced until 2014. Other important provisions worth mentioning include the reduction of the number of commissioners in the European Commission to 18. This means that although each country still has the right to appoint one commissioner, they would hold the office rotationally. Moreover, the Treaty established a permanent office of the President of the European Council, while retaining the rotational Presidency in a modified form. Furthermore, it increased the powers of the European Parliament and introduced the right of citizens’ initiative, allowing the start of the legislative process at the request of at least one million EU citizens.

The Lisbon Treaty is not any new ‘constitution’, but is based on two existing instruments: the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty establishing the European Community (now referred to as the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union). It abolishes the division into the EU and the EC, making the European Union the only legal entity. Other important changes include providing the EU with international legal subjectivity and, in general, strengthening its capacity to act in the international arena, by, among others, creating the actual office of the EU minister of foreign affairs, having his own diplomatic service – as proposed in the Constitutional Treaty (as a sign of departure from controversial provisions, this position is now called the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy).

It was expected that the ratification procedure would be closed early enough for the Treaty to come into force in early 2009. However, problems appeared, as in June 2008 the Irish said ‘no’ in their referendum, which placed other partners in a difficult situation. Eventually, another referendum was held in Ireland in October the following year, and the result was positive this time. Thus, the last obstacles to the ratification procedure disappeared, and the procedure was completed by all other Member States (including by the Polish and Czech presidents who delayed their signing of this act). As a result, the Lisbon Treaty entered into force on 1 December 2009.

The situation in the European Union has been greatly complicated by the global financial and economic crisis which began in autumn 2008. Its effects were particularly severe for the euro area, primarily for its weakest members, such as Greece and Portugal, but also for countries who could not maintain sustainable development: Ireland, Spain and Italy (the Polish economy looked quite well against this background, for it has maintained – despite the budget deficit – a high growth rate). The tensions caused by the crisis could threaten the cohesion of the entire European integration project, particularly given the concerns of Germany about the legitimacy of providing aid to the partners undergoing bankruptcy. In the end, the Union managed to take remedies,
including in the form of ‘pumping’ huge financial grants into the Member States’ economies, as well as creating a number of monitoring and controlling institutions, aimed at preventing the re-emergence of such dangerous collapses.

Conclusions

For Poland, the accession to the European Union is a historical event of paramount importance, comparable with such key events in our history as the christening of Mieszko I and the Polish-Lithuanian Union. Although only the future will show how the integration processes in Europe will further develop, it can already be said that there are no significant political and economic alternatives to these processes, and even though there are some inevitable obstacles or difficulties, the future of our continent will be defined by the notion of European unity, which has long been a part of its history.

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The process of system transformation in Poland, which has been taking place during the last twenty years, has always been closely connected with the process of integration with the European Communities. The interdependence and interpenetration of these processes, characteristic of all the Central and Eastern European countries aspiring to EU membership, is considered beneficial to economic development and to achievement of stability. Therefore, since the early 1990s, the membership in the EU has become a strategic goal of the Polish foreign policy and an important determinant of the economic policy. Thus, Poland’s actions were largely conditioned by the procedure of accession to the EU, although its willingness to enter into the rhythm and directions of changes in the Union was accompanied by efforts to develop its own procedural and institutional model, and even its own integration strategy.

**Motives and goals of Poland’s integration with the European Union**

According to the opinion of most major political powers and opinion leaders in Poland, a reduction of the delay in the civilizational development of our country and a significant increase in the level and quality of life could best be achieved by joining the European Union as early as possible.

The political objective of EU membership was actually associated with the idea of returning to the family of Western countries in terms of culture and civilization, derived from the Christian tradition and respecting the principles of democracy and the rule of law.

The economic objectives were associated with the opportunities to overcome the development gap between Poland and Western Europe, which took the form of a civilisational collapse and the reduction of which had to be an absolute priority for our country and for the other countries in the region.
The position of the Polish government presented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs at the opening of accession negotiations, as well as most government positions and documents addressed to the Community in 1990–1998, shows the elements which motivated Poles to take part in the process of European integration. These included in particular:

– Sharing similar values based on a common foundation of Europe’s civilizational heritage;
– Increasing the chances for the development of individual Member States, regions and social groups;
– The underlying principles of equality, solidarity and subsidiarity.

Poland’s integration with the EU lay in the general interest of the whole Europe as well, as it increased its stability, security and prosperity, as well as opened up opportunities for a better understanding between the nations and for overcoming the artificial political divisions.

The aim of Polish membership in the European Union was first and foremost:

– To co-create the European security system together with other countries;
– To create a free market economy, strengthening the basis for development leading to increased competitiveness of Polish enterprises and to job creation;
– To contribute to a pan-European cultural cooperation;
– To cooperate with other EU Member States in the struggle against international organized crime;
– To contribute to the development of mutually beneficial relationships and partnerships with third countries.

Poland has made its special contribution to the elimination of the communist system and building a new Europe, but a few years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, political arguments – very important for Poles – gave way to a pragmatic attitude of the European Union, which pursued its goals through economic development. Therefore, the basic arguments contained in the documents and positions presenting Poland as a candidate for membership focused primarily on economic criteria for membership. Meanwhile, the state of the Polish economy against the background of the results achieved in EU countries meant that EU membership was to be treated from the beginning as an opportunity, but also as a serious challenge for Poland.

Stages of Poland’s integration with the European Communities/European Union

Poland’s integration with the European Communities/European Union can be divided into three stages:
– The pre-accession stage (1988–1991), covering the period from the establishment of diplomatic relations to the conclusion of the negotiations of the Europe Agreement;
– The stage of implementation of the Europe Agreement (1992–1997), covering the period from the entry into force of the Interim Agreement to inviting Poland to the accession negotiations with the EU;
– The stage of the actual accession process (1998–2004), covering the period of the accession negotiations and the ratification of the Accession Treaty;
– The stage of membership, from 1 May 2004.

During the dozen years which elapsed from the establishment of diplomatic relations with the European Communities to the EU membership, there have been huge political, economic and social changes, both in Poland and throughout Europe.

Most of the countries of Central Europe – Poland in particular – conducted basic reforms that made up the process of transformation from the undemocratic political system and centrally planned economy to the Western European political and economic model, and integration with Western European structures was one of the fundamental objectives of their foreign policy.

In this period, the EC Member States formed the Single Internal Market, and then created the European Union, under which 12 countries started implementing the Economic and Monetary Union and adopted the single currency. The territory of the Community, covering 12 countries at the beginning of the 1990s, has expanded to an unprecedented size, now covering 27 countries. This required a consistent implementation of the accession procedure, including not only formal but also actual integration of different economies and political and social systems.

The stages of Poland’s integration with the European Union resulted from the specific historical situation and from the very nature of integration processes, which required programming activities, negotiating the terms and gradual implementation of commitments. Due to the political and economic distance between the two sides, the adjustment processes taking place as part of the association proved necessary in practice for the preparation of Poland to the membership, and the Community countries had the necessary time to learn to trust our country as a partner.

The pre-accession stage

Polish diplomatic relations with the European Economic Community were initiated in September 1988, that is when Poland was still a member of the former socialist integration structure, namely the Council for Mutual Economic
Assistance (CMEA). The more and more visible weakness of the political and economic system in the eastern bloc was followed by a substantial weakening of economic ties between the countries of the CMEA, which resulted in a shift of trade activity towards the European Communities. Soon after the establishment of diplomatic relations, the government of the People’s Republic of Poland began trade negotiations which were concluded after the political transformation in Poland, on 16 September 1989, with the non-preferential Agreements on trade and commercial and economic cooperation.

During the system transformation which started in early 1989, Poland received practical support from the Western countries, including financial assistance under the PHARE programme 1, designed initially for Poland and Hungary. The programme, administered by the European Commission, became an important instrument to promote and guide political and economic transformation in the countries of our region. In addition, our country was covered by the preferential tariff system (Generalized System of Preferences, GSP), and the Community suspended the quantitative restrictions on imports from Poland, which had been applied until 1990.

With the end of the period without agreements in trade relations with the EEC began a period of creating new forms of economic exchange, leading gradually to the dependence of the Polish economy on the trade with the Community, in spite of the low importance of Poland as a trade partner back then.

For the Community, the bilateral trade agreements concluded with individual countries of Central and Eastern Europe were primarily of political importance, while for countries in that region – including Poland – the important aspect were the tangible economic benefits. This was one of the first examples of fairly significant discrepancies between the objectives of Poland and the EC. It should be noted, however, that bilateral agreements were an instrument of in-depth and comprehensive economic and institutional cooperation, and formed the basis for relationships and experience in subsequent periods.

According to Western politicians, the future status of relations between Poland and the EC did not include the prospects of membership in the Communities. They presented different concepts of limited cooperation, such as the concept of concentric circles 2 or of affiliate membership 3. All these concepts led to the development of a formula for political membership, which did not meet the expectations of Poland. Such a position of the EC Member States

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1 Poland and Hungary Assistance for Restructuring their Economies.
2 According to the concept of concentric circles, the EC Member States would form the core of the European system, surrounded by a circle of EFTA countries and an external circle of Central and Eastern European countries, and possibly an additional circle based on the CSCE.
3 According to the concept of affiliate membership, the affiliated countries would obtain the rights and assume the responsibilities of Member States only in selected areas, without the need to adopt the full acquis communautaire.
resulted, among others, from focusing on preparations for the establishment of the European Union, as well as from the political and economic absorption of the impact of German reunification.

Nevertheless, at the extraordinary meeting of the European Council in Dublin in April 1990, the EC Member States expressed willingness to conclude association agreements with the countries of our region who meet the relevant conditions. Therefore, the Polish government soon made an official request to start negotiating the EC Association Agreement. The negotiations were opened in December 1990 and ended with the signing of the Europe Agreement on 16 December 1991.

The adoption and implementation of the Europe Agreement

Poland, as well as Hungary and Czechoslovakia, consistently and clearly expressed the desire for the earliest possible membership in the European Communities, treating the association as a preliminary step to full integration. Despite the determination of Polish negotiators, this aspiration led only to the inclusion in the preamble to the Europe Agreement of a unilateral declaration that ‘the final objective of Poland is to become a member of the Community and that this association, in the view of the Parties, will help to achieve this objective’. Europe Agreements go beyond the traditional association agreements, for instance through the establishment of ‘political dialogue’.

The position of the Western countries was marked by a specific mixture of altruism with the need to protect their own interests. The discrepancies in the approach of both parties to the Europe Agreement, which could affect the course of negotiations, were shown by the final effects of the Agreement.

The Europe Agreement was a new type of association agreement under Article 310 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU). It entered into force on 1 February 1994, i.e. 13 months after the introduction of the Single Market and three months after the entry into force of the Maastricht Treaty establishing the European Union.

According to Article 1, the main aims of the Europe Agreement were:
– To provide an appropriate framework for the political dialogue, allowing the development of close political relations between the parties;
– To promote the expansion of trade and the harmonious economic relations between the parties and so to foster the dynamic economic development and prosperity in Poland;
– To provide a basis for the Community’s financial and technical assistance to Poland;
– To provide an appropriate framework for Poland’s gradual integration into the Community.
The most extensive and the most important – in practical terms – part of the Agreement was the provisions on the liberalization of the movement of goods, which led to the establishment, during the transitional period, of a free trade area covering industrial goods. The area was established upon the abolishment of last customs tariffs at the end of 2001. The liberalization of trade certainly contributed to the development of mutual trade transactions, and as a result of the ‘diversion effect’, the European Union has become Poland’s major trading partner, which indicated a high level of real economic integration.

The reduction of customs tariffs took into account the formal asymmetry in favour of Poland, which in practice proved to be insufficient to stop the growth of a negative trade balance in our exchange with the Community, despite the fact that the Europe Agreement contained numerous safeguard clauses (bilateral and unilateral) for Poland as the weaker partner in economic terms. It turned out, however, that they did not have any significant impact on the restructuring of the Polish economy forced by the liberalization of foreign trade.

Among the various consequences of the Europe Agreement, we should especially highlight the process of harmonization of Polish legislation with EU legislation under Articles 68–70, which was consistently implemented, also during the preparation for EU membership. Generally, a variety of action plans were designed under the Agreement, providing for measures to adjust our economy and legal system to the requirements of the Agreement; there were also some adjustment procedures in place which in the most part became the procedures of preparation for EU membership.

In practice, the implementation of the Europe Agreement in the industry took the form of pressure from foreign competition and forced modernisation of individual companies and entire branches of industry wanting to stay in business. A simple but effective mechanism of gradual, progressive pressure, however, did not apply to the farms, although it covered the food processing industry. In other areas, the adjustment processes were the result of planned changes, market pressure and economic incentive instruments introduced by states.

The basic institutional structure responsible for the association process were the bodies established under the Europe Agreement:

- The Association Council;
- The Association Committee and its subcommittees;
- The Association Parliamentary Committee (also called the Joint Parliamentary Committee).

The decisions of the Association Council, which met once a year, contributed to the proper functioning of the Europe Agreement. In addition, the association bodies could provide a forum for cooperation in the field of preparations for the membership. In practice – because of the frequency of meetings
and their short duration – the Association Council, which was the main decision-making body, did not go beyond the framework outlined by the Europe Agreement and the EU strategy towards the candidates. Only the Joint Parliamentary Committee, as a forum for political dialogue between the representatives of the Sejm and the Senate (the Polish Parliament) and the European Parliament, repeatedly raised the problem of prospects and conditions for the Polish membership in the EU.

The strategy and procedure of Poland’s accession to the EU

The decision taken in 1990 to launch association negotiations was accompanied by Poland’s conviction that the process leading to the membership would last no longer than 10 years. The ‘Visegrad Memorandum’ adopted in 1992 by the governments of Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland and addressed to the EC Member States showed a determination to apply for membership and join the EU by the end of the 20th century. It was based on the provisions of the Maastricht Treaty, under which each European country observing the common principles of the Member States, such as freedom, democracy, respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms and the rule of law, may apply to become a member of the Union.

Moreover, the Polish Prime Minister sent a letter to the European Council before its meeting in Copenhagen in June 1993, in which he expressed the hope to start accession negotiations in 1996. As if in response to the letter, at the meeting, the Council formulated a set of political and economic conditions for the Central and Eastern European countries aspiring to join the EU, known as the Copenhagen criteria.

These criteria were as follows:

– Stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights, respect for and protection of minorities;
– The existence of a functioning market economy;
– The capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union;
– The ability to take on the obligations of membership including adherence to the aims of the political, economic and monetary union.

The criteria were formulated in such a general way that it is difficult to find an unambiguous interpretation, which may be considered their drawback. At the same time, however, they did not contain the requirement to reach any precisely set indicators, which would be difficult to achieve by the candidate countries, which may be considered their merit. The criteria were later the basis for formulating assessments of the state of preparations of Poland and of the other Candidate Countries for EU membership.
The basis for the opening of the accession process was the application for EU membership submitted by the Polish government on 8 April 1994 in Athens. As a result, already in July the same year, the European Commission proposed a ‘structured dialogue’, the essence of which were regular meetings between representatives of the associated countries with the members of the main EU bodies and institutions meant to explore issues of mutual concern.

The Commission’s proposals were confirmed in a document adopted by the European Council in Essen, in December 1994, entitled: ‘The strategy to prepare the Central and Eastern European countries for membership’. The aim of the Strategy was to present the associated countries with a general action plan for their preparations for the membership. The basic idea was to gradually prepare them for the integration with the Single Market through the successive adoption of the *acquis communautaire*.\(^4\) The Essen strategy met with critical opinions, both in the Candidate Countries and in the Union itself, but it identified a number of instruments which became a reference point for the candidates, who had not yet developed their own accession strategies.

At the meeting in Cannes in June 1995, the European Council made an assessment of the state of implementation of the strategy for the preparation of Candidate Countries and adopted a White Paper on preparing the associated countries for integration with the Single Market, compiled by the European Commission in accordance with the recommendations of the European Council in Essen. The White Paper proved to be an important guide and help in the efforts related to the adoption of *acquis communautaire* by Poland.

At the next EU summit in Madrid, in December 1995, it was concluded that ‘the enlargement is both a political necessity and a historic opportunity for Europe’. In addition, it was declared that after the Intergovernmental Conference planned for the following year, the European Council would take the decisions necessary to start negotiations on memberships. As it was important for Poland to have a clear accession calendar, this declaration has provided a clear prospect of the beginning of accession negotiations.

The efforts to establish the date of accession were characteristic of the whole Polish accession strategy. Obtaining a declaration from the EU concerning the date of accession would undoubtedly help mobilize the entire society, economic entities and public institutions to take increased adaptation efforts, necessary to meet the membership criteria. Already during the period

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\(^4\) The following measures to implement the strategy were identified: a structured dialogue; the preparations for the enlargement of the Single Market; the preparation of alternative strategies in agriculture; promoting the inflow of foreign investment; cooperation in the second and third pillars and in the field of the environment protection; expansion of the Trans-European Networks (TENs); the development of culture and education; financial cooperation (modification of the PHARE rules); intraregional cooperation; promotion of the good neighbourhood policy.
of association, Poland and the EU significantly opened their markets to mutual trade. Consequently, there was a need to ensure that Poland joined the common policies for reducing development gaps as soon as possible, and this could be achieved through EU membership.

However, the ‘calendar strategy’ was in conflict with the need to negotiate the best conditions for membership. Therefore it was necessary for Poland to formulate its own national strategy in this regard. It was primarily meant to prepare internal adjustment processes to meet the requirements of membership, such as increasing the competitiveness of the economy and providing social support.

The basic elements of the Polish strategy of integration with the European Union were, among others, the goals, mechanisms and measures to implement the strategy. The mechanisms of integration included: the market mechanism; a consistent government policy (creating the appropriate framework for the free movement of goods, services, capital and people); the harmonization of laws and informing the public about the threats and opportunities of European integration.

In January 1997, the Council of Ministers adopted the document entitled National Integration Strategy (NIS). It covered the ‘tasks arising from the adjustment process in the period preceding negotiations, during the negotiations, as well as in the first period of membership’ in order to properly prepare the central administration to carry out changes in the legal, economic and institutional sphere and to prepare the Polish society for the membership.

The Polish integration strategy was primarily a strategy to adjust to the conditions of membership. However, to a very limited extent, it stressed the general visions of economic and social policies aimed at reducing the development gap between Poland and the EU in the pre-accession period. The underlying idea was that efforts should be made to obtain the membership at the current level of development, and the necessary development activities should be carried out once Poland is already within the European Union.

The strategy accelerated and streamlined the work of government institutions, contributed to the increase of the society’s awareness of the possible consequences of membership, and thus gave a new dimension to the preparations for the accession negotiations. The description of adaptation and integration tasks, however, was different from the usual form applied in strategies, due to an excess of aims (almost all possible aims were taken into account) and insufficient implementation measures. As a result, the ‘National Integration Strategy’ proved to be the first and only such document issued in the associated Central and Eastern European countries.

In April 1996, the European Commission gave Poland a questionnaire to prepare its opinion on the state of the Polish preparations for accession, containing questions on 23 different areas of life, not only economic, but also polit-
ical and social. The response made up 26 volumes, with a total of 2664 pages, and was delivered to the Commission in mid-July the same year.

A year later, on 16 July 1997, the European Commission published a set of documents called ‘Agenda 2000’, containing proposals for changes to the rules of functioning of the Union, so as to make it ready for the expansion to the East. Part of this document was entitled ‘Reinforced Pre-Accession Strategy’ and contained proposals to strengthen the Essen strategy to better prepare the Candidate Countries.

An integral part of the Agenda 2000 were the Opinions (Avis) of the European Commission on the applications for membership submitted by 10 countries of Central Europe and Cyprus. Poland was in the first group recommended for accession negotiations. The Avis were accepted at the Luxembourg summit in December 1997 and became the basis for the decision to start negotiations with the countries called henceforth the ‘Luxembourg group’ (Poland, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Slovenia, Hungary and Cyprus).

The Reinforced Pre-Accession Strategy was based on the ‘Accession Partnership programme’, adopted for Poland in 1997. Its purpose was ‘to set out in a single framework the priority areas for further work identified in the »Opinion«’ (the priorities were recommended by the Commission).

In addition to the priorities, the European Commission specified the main instruments to be adopted by Poland as adapting measures. They included in particular: ‘The joint assessment of economic policy priorities’, ‘The pact against organized crime’, ‘The internal market road map’. Particularly important was the ‘National Programme of Preparation for Membership’ (NPPM or NPAA), as planning and specifying financial aid from the EU was linked with the priorities contained in the Programme, while providing further tranches of financial assistance – with fulfilling the commitments under the NPAA by the Polish government.

The opening of accession negotiations with Poland took place on 31 March 1998 in Brussels. Our country expressed willingness to accept the entire acquis communautaire and to join the EMU in the future. By entering the negotiations, the Polish government intended to fully adopt the acquis communautaire and become ready for EU membership by the end of 2002.

This tight deadline was publicly supported by prominent politicians representing the leading Member States. Also, the European Council meeting in Helsinki in December 1999 declared that the European Union would be prepared to accept new members at the end of 2002.

In the short and medium term, the priorities included, among others: economic reforms, restructuring of the industry, strengthening of the institutional and administrative potential, internal market, justice and home affairs, agriculture, environment, transport, employment and social affairs, regional and cohesion policy.
Over the next months of 1998, the European Commission, together with the representatives of the Candidate Countries, performed a review of the state of adjustment of law to the \textit{acquis communautaire} (acquis screening). Following the screening, on 10 November 1998, the negotiating teams of Poland and the European Union launched the proper negotiations.

In December 1999, the European Council in Helsinki invited another group of countries to negotiations (the ‘Helsinki group’: Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Malta). Thus began a ‘race’ of the 12 Candidate Countries for EU membership.

The rules of the accession negotiations, applicable to all enlargements, were as follows:

– Positions of the parties on a negotiation problem in one area do not affect their positions in other areas of negotiation;
– Partial agreement reached during negotiations is not considered final until the agreement is concluded in full, i.e. until the final text of the Accession Treaty is agreed upon;
– At the beginning of the negotiations, the Candidate Country declares its willingness to adopt the EU acquis;
– Proposals for transitional periods may be submitted both by the Candidate Country and the European Union.

As expected, out of 30 areas (fields), the biggest differences between the parties emerged in the field of agriculture and free movement of workers, where, at the request of the Community, Poland had to accept transitional periods on its way to full membership. The Polish side, in turn, requested transitional periods in the following areas: competition policy, energy, social policy and employment, transport policy, freedom to provide services, free movement of capital, the environment and taxes.

In total, Polish negotiations lasted 57 months, which was a long period in comparison with the negotiations before the previous enlargement in 1995 (13 months) and at the same time a short one compared with the negotiations with Portugal (80 months) and Spain (76 months). On 13 December 2002, in Copenhagen, the European Council closed the negotiations, adopting the final provisions of the draft Accession Treaty concluded with ten countries. The consent from the European Parliament to adopt the Treaty, expressed by an absolute majority of votes, as well as the unanimous decision by the Council of the EU approving the final content of the Treaty paved the way for the formal signing of the Accession Treaty in Athens on 16 April 2003.

In accordance with the Annex to the Treaty, from January 2003, Poland was included in the information and consultation procedure, which was further transformed into the status of an active observer after the Treaty was signed. The presence of Polish representatives in the intergovernmental EU bodies before the actual accession was essential not only for gaining experience,
but also because of the important decisions to be taken, such as the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (adopted in June 2003 in Luxembourg) and the debate over the final shape of the Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe.

The enlargement to the East required comprehensive preparation also in the European Union. Among the preparatory activities, the one of particular importance for the conditions of the Polish membership and for the other Candidate Countries – although adopted without their participation – was the institutional reform provided for by the Treaty of Nice adopted on 11 December 2000. The reform enabled institutional preparation for the enlargement of the Union. The Treaty introduced new regulations and clarified the conditions of accession of new members in respect of the composition, voting procedures and the distribution of seats in the institutions of the enlarged EU.6

In general, the EU accession policy towards Poland and other Candidate Countries was based on the following principles:

– The use of the traditional accession procedure, already used in previous enlargements of the European Communities/European Union;
– The systematic development of a strategy, refining the criteria and specific conditions of the accession process and monitoring the progress of candidates in their preparations for the membership;
– Maximizing the requirements for the adoption of the *acquis communautaire*, indicating a desire to turn the candidates into ‘ideal Member States’;
– Asymmetry in the adjustment of the EU to the enlargement and of the Candidate Countries to accession, often regarded as a unilateral adjustment of the candidates;
– The use of a ‘floating’ enlargement schedule, gradually refined and treated conditionally, depending on the internal situation in the Union;
– The introduction of competition among the Candidate Countries;
– Carrying out actions for deepening integration within the EU and implying the conditions of membership for the Candidate Countries.

Despite the low public support of the enlargement in some EU Member States,7 the ratification of the Accession Treaty proceeded without trouble. As required by its Constitution, Poland carried out a nationwide referendum, in which the citizens gave their consent to the ratification of the Treaty by the President. The referendum held on 7–8 June 2003 was attended by nearly

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6 The most significant of the provisions of the Treaty of Nice was the one granting 27 votes in Council to Poland, which was the same as for Spain and only two votes less than for the ‘Big Four’: Germany, France, the UK and Italy.
7 The lowest support for the membership of Poland was expressed by Austrians, Germans and the French.
60 per cent of those eligible to vote, of which almost 80 per cent were in favour of the membership in the EU.

The Accession Treaty entered into force on 1 May 2004. As of this date, Poland became a full Member State of the European Union.

Conclusions

The accession of Poland to the European Union concluded the processes of adjusting the Polish economy, politics and social life to European standards which had lasted for 15 years. This adjustment brought Poland undeniable progress in all fields and the experience gathered in the process can provide a valuable lesson to other countries engaged in European integration processes, such as Ukraine.

The membership in the EU does not herald an end to the modernisation processes. On the contrary, Poland, as a Member State of the European Union, faces many challenges, both old and new. By joining the EU, Poland has regained its place in the European family of democratic and developed nations. At the same time, the accession has broadened our possibilities of acting and, consequently, improved our chances on future sustainable – political, economic and social – development.

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Part II

Poland’s Experiences in the Process of European Integration
Poland in the new global economic order

Order in the national arena is not an unanimous notion. In social sciences, various tools are used to describe and assess it. The realist school speaks of interests and a balance of powers, the liberal school stresses institutions, while the most ephemeral and internally diverse current in constructivism favours the notion of norms, which are supposed to order our world. However, the notion of order is not only and solely the domain of theoreticians of politics or international relations. Such an order really exists, changes, functions and lives in reality; it reflects the current situation in the world, the balance of powers, tendencies and even opinions at a given point in history.

The domination of neo-liberalism in the post-Cold War World

After the dissolution of the USSR and the collapse of the Cold War order, which was the predominant force in shaping the world order in 1945–1991, the world defined as the real distribution of power entered a ‘unipolar moment’ (Charles Krauthammer) when the global distribution of power was unprecedentedly dominated by the USA, which, after 1991, became a superpower in the fields of politics, economy, military, science, technology, as well as in the domain of ‘soft power’, i.e. influence in the fields of ideas, media and mass entertainment. In this sense, we could speak of the USA as an omnipotent superpower, which – as no one before – dominated all possible domains. Small wonder that the USA, as the triumphant state, wanted to impose their system onto all other subjects in the world. In other words, in the opinion of politicians and experts from the USA, after the fall of Communism and of the Eastern Bloc, the world had no other choice as to unanimously vote for liberal democracy and neo-liberalism in economy. The synonyms of American domination of that time were the well-known concept of the ‘end of history’ by Francis Fukuyama (i.e. a political and ideological triumph of the USA, for whom there
would be no alternative) and the concept by John Williamson – also much renowned and, indeed, implemented in many places – which instructed other economies to implement the Washington Consensus, that is a certain neo-liberal catalogue which would comprise, among others, the concept of economic freedom, market domination, liberalisation of trade and privatisation of the public sector. Under this concept, the state should be weak and the private sector strong and efficient. So, the whole world was to copy the American model – in politics, in the economy and in the sphere of ideas.

The problem connected with the unipolar order, as it has been aptly named, was that no one has formally constituted it. Indeed, as far as institutions are concerned, the institutions of the ‘Bretton Woods system’ – i.e. the Washington-based and US-controlled most important institutions of the world financial, monetary and credit system, starting with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank – were providing real support for the USA. However, in the normative sense, after the Cold War, there was no new Treaty of Vienna, which ended the Napoleonic Wars, or any new Treaty of Versailles, which ended World War I. In the formal legal sense, no one has ever confirmed and accepted the new unipolar order. Since the second, parallel system after World War II, which actually existed and which was related to the functioning of the United Nations (UN), also experienced a crisis after the fall of the bipolar system, as it reflected the distribution of power from the times of the San Francisco Conference (1945), and not the present state, Zbigniew Brzeziński was certainly right to say in the early 1990s that the world was a dangerous place and ‘out of control’. In other words, there was a need for an ‘ordering element’ in the world arena. Obviously, directly after the collapse of the Cold-War order, only the USA aspired to play this role.

When the United States took over the role of the ‘world’s policeman’, which they did for the first time in the Balkans in the late 1990s (Kosovo), by doing this they not only proved that they intend to shape the world according to their own will on all continents, but they also developed a disease which was well defined by the scholar examining world empires in history, Paul Kennedy, who called it the ‘imperial overstretch’. Essentially, this should be understood as referring to the fact that all historical superpowers took on too extensive obligations, that – sure of themselves, confident of their superior strength and power – they exceeded their capabilities. As we know, in the case of the USA, this sickness deepened even more after the disastrous terrorist attacks on the centres of American power (financial – the WTC, and military – the Pentagon; the attack on the Congress failed) on 11 September 2001. President George W. Bush answered these attacks by declaring a war on terrorism, which translated into the invasions in Afghanistan (December 2001) and in Iraq (March 2003). Both decisions proved to be extremely costly, literally as well as figuratively. As the well-known economist and Nobel prize winner in economy Joseph
Stiglitz has calculated, the war in Iraq alone, already after the first few years of waging it, cost 3 trillion dollars.

America’s external debt constantly grew, both in the economic and in the military aspect. The former ones translated into a rapidly growing public debt, unprecedented in terms of magnitude and rank, which – according to IMF data – amounted to USD 14.46 trillion in 2010 (i.e. 98.6 per cent of the GDP). Unfortunately, these debts have been constantly growing, even after the outbreak of the world financial crisis in September 2008. In the global perspective, it was significant that a substantial part of these American debts was taken over by China (44 per cent of the total amount), and a certain symbiosis emerged in the first decade of the 21st century: The Americans consumed and imported a lot and the Chinese produced and exported even more. The effect of this is that, at this point, China has the largest foreign exchange reserves in the world, which amount to more than USD 3 trillion.

In mid-2011, the USA even faced the dilemma of what to do next, as their debt reached the maximum legally permissible level. In such a situation a state either needs to raise this level or cut its expenses, e.g. in the social (pensions, medical care) or military spheres. Meanwhile, according to the data on military debt provided by the respected and reliable Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), the USA alone spend more on armaments than the next several – or even dozen – countries on the list of highest military expenditure.

Table 1. The ten countries with the highest military expenditures, according to SIPRI

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Military expenditure, 2010 (millions of USD)</th>
<th>% of GDP, 2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>687 105</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>PRC</td>
<td>114 300</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>61 285</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>57 424</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>52 586</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>51 420</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>46 848</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>42 917</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>38 198</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>34 816</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to a rather widespread opinion, the best way to reduce these expenses is constantly decreasing the USA’s involvement in Iraq, which we have been witnessing since the beginning of the administration of President Barack Obama (since 2009), as well as the announcement by the President that after 2014 the US forces will be gradually withdrawn from Afghanistan. However, it is uncertain whether this will be enough, for the sources of the American debt, including the government debt, are much more complex than that. What is worse, American external debt coincided with huge internal expenditure. The American society, living in the spirit of neo-liberalism and evidently beyond their means, did not make savings, took easy loans and consumed a lot. The cult of consumption and the carefree attitude, not subject to any control of banks or financial institutions, was defined rather quickly by George Soros as ‘the American bubble’ in markets, i.e. liabilities and loans exceeding the financial potential. However, his warnings were not considered seriously. The United States have constantly increased their internal and external debt. This could not have lasted forever.

The moment of truth came in mid September 2008, when important institutions of the American financial system, like Lehman Brothers, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac started to collapse. In the context of the economy, the ‘unipolar moment’ proved very short and ended quite soon. A well-known American strategist, Robert Kagan, aptly described the essence of this process of the symbolic redefinition in the title of his book: Return of History and the End of Dreams. Thus, the dreams of ‘the end of history’ and of unprecedented American domination ended and it became necessary to find a new order. Instead of just one pole, there again emerged several of them, and once again the world became multipolar, at last in economic sense.

The framework of a new institutional order

The fact that the first G-20 summit was convened in Washington, in November 2008, two months after the outbreak of the crisis on the American market, followed by crises on global markets, should be considered symbolic. The G-20 is nothing other than a creation and emanation of the G-7, which has existed since 1975 (later turned into G-8, when Russia was added), and which is a grouping of the strongest capitalist economies in the world, including: the USA, Canada, United Kingdom, Germany, France, Italy and Japan. As proved by practice and available documents, this grouping quite quickly went beyond strictly economic matters and started dealing with other most important global issues as well, such as world terrorism, climate change and the so-called global challenges.

The transformation from the G-7 into the G-20, formally established (on paper) in June 1999, and actually constituted in November 2008, should be con-
sidered an important act in practical terms, and probably also in institutional terms. This is how the strongest economies in the world were joined by a group of new countries, often of a completely different origin and character. They included the democratic but post-colonial India and Brazil, the Muslim Indonesia, Turkey and Saudi Arabia, the autocratic China and the half-autocratic Russia. But the most important distinguishing feature of the new grouping was that the economically strongest countries were joined by a group of ‘emerging markets’, including, in particular, countries only little affected by the crisis of 2008. Undoubtedly, the key role among them was played by China, which, firstly, never accepted the guidelines of the Washington Consensus (while Russia in the times of Boris Yeltsin tried, although without success), and secondly, as a result of internal reforms conducted from late 1978, had an average growth of 10 per cent per annum over the past three decades, which was unprecedented in historical terms. The rank of the Chinese success is raised by the fact that it is the most populated country in the world. On the other hand, in terms of ideology and programme, it has been very important that the authorities in Beijing have rejected the Washington Consensus, and even opposed it. One of the Western analysts, Joshua Cooper Ramo, called it the Beijing Consensus (however not referring to the Beijing authorities), which, as opposed to the former one, is based on the power of a state, not just on the strength of the market, and which proclaims the need to preserve control over economic processes. According to a growing number of observers and analysts, the effectiveness of the Chinese economy and its incredible dynamics seem to indicate that the Chinese model, though not yet fully developed (the economic and legal reforms have not been followed by political ones) proved more effective than the western model, which should give us a lot to think about.

France has already submitted an idea of establishing a permanent Secretariat of the G-20, but the idea was torpedoed by the other members (South Korea, also a member of this group, proposed the establishment of a ‘cyber-Secretariat’). At a number of previous summits (Washington, London, Pittsburgh, Toronto, Seoul; and in the autumn of 2011, Cannes) the G-20 has shown that at the moment, it is probably the most important body which can cope with the crisis of 2008, that it is considering a reform, or even replacement of the Bretton Woods system, that it puts on the agenda suggestions how to deal with the major global challenges. In this sense, we are observing the emergence of the most important body which makes decisions on global economic matters, more efficient than UN agencies. The criticism of the G-20, most strongly expressed by Norway, that it is a ‘self-appointed group’, shows the Achilles’ heel of this group – the lack of proper legitimacy, which may, but does not necessarily have to be a serious trouble in its future activity.

The G-20 was followed by another institutional solution – the BRICS group, which was set up in June 2009 at the summit in Yekaterinburg and which
gathers the most important emerging markets. Initially it was composed of Brazil, Russia, India and China (hence the name), and then, in 2011, under pressure from China, it was joined by South Africa as the most important economic representative of the African continent (hence the name change from BRIC to BRICS).

The emergence of BRICS is yet another proof that the centre of world economy (and soon, as indicated by many factors, also high technologies) is shifting from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Today it is already estimated that the Asia and Pacific region produces 55–57 per cent of world GDP. Moreover, the functioning of the BRICS confirms that it is essential to the continued smooth functioning of this group (as well as the world order) to ensure economic efficiency and productivity of the two Asian giants – India and China, which has been rapidly increasing recently. In addition, these two are not only the most populated countries in the world, but also ancient civilisations, which in some sense have survived and retained their historical continuity; what is more, they are not merely countries, but also continents or subcontinents. Thus, they are not trivial entities, which can in any way be ignored. Their further conduct will be crucial for the future of the world – regardless of what the West thinks about this.

If we add one more organisation to the G-20 and BRICS, namely the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), which brings together China, Russia and the Central Asian countries (and there are more countries interested in this cooperation, among others: India, Pakistan, Iran and Mongolia), that is countries which have nothing to do with the broadly understood West, this configuration seems to bring quite important conclusions.

The most important of them are that:

– The emergence of the G-20 and BRICS can hardly be considered a coincidence. Their functioning proves the growing role of the emerging markets, which not so long ago were included in the group of ‘developing’, third-world or post-colonial countries. In this sense, we are dealing with a completely new phenomenon, which consists in a relative decline of the economic importance of the broadly understood West (apart from the USA, this also refers to the European Union, strongly affected by the crisis after 2008, as shown on the example of the PIIGS group – Portugal, Ireland, Italy, Greece and Spain – which has serious internal economic problems and which undermines the role of the euro as the single currency) and a very substantial rise in the importance of the emerging markets.

– None of the new organisations, neither the G-20 or the BRICS, nor the SCO (described by some Western analysts as the ‘anti-NATO’) has emerged as the result of some major international agreement. So, neither of them is the basis or the pillar of a new world (economic) order, which, so far, has not been proclaimed by anyone. In this sense, only some foundations of a new order exist, but essentially, there is – unfortunately, and rather to the regret
of us all – simply still no such order on a global scale. The UN is still in crisis and it does not meet the expectations associated with global governance, while the Bretton Woods system has entered a crisis as a result of the internal problems of the USA.

– The organisation which is closest to filling the gaps in the global institutional system in the context of the problems of the UN and the Bretton Woods system is, of course, G-20; however, it should be emphasized that the group was not founded under any international treaty, but by political decisions of the strongest actors (states) on the globe. So, in a practical dimension, it has been efficient and functional, but as regards the legal dimension, it is easy to undermine and negate, as it has no legal personality.

– The functioning of the SCO, the BRICS, and the substantial share of non-Western countries in the G-20, are proofs of the dynamic changes taking place in the global arena at the beginning of the 21st century. It is not yet a foregone conclusion that the emerging markets will remain a permanent determinant of the new distribution of (economic) power in the world. Undoubtedly, in this regard most depends on China, and also, in no small extent, on India and Brazil, that is on the strongest players (and most populated at the same time). If China (and India) sustain the high growth recorded in the past decades, there is no doubt that the foundations of the new global economic order in question will be solidified. But if anything collapses in one of the above, especially in China, which still has not completed its process of transformation, the new economic order in the world will continue to be subject to dynamic changes; and the direction of these changes will, of course, depend on what goes on in the internal arena of China and India. Therefore, which also should be considered a novelty, at the end of the first decade of the 21st century, looking at the problems of the world as a whole, we should take into account not only the views and opinions coming from Washington, Brussels, London and Paris, as it was before, but also increasingly from Beijing, New Delhi and Moscow. This is also a new quality emerging on the global stage.

The European Union in the new global order

The European Union is an independent entity at the meetings of G-20 (Spain and the Netherlands secured for themselves the status of observers at the G-20 summits). As a group of 27 (soon 28, after the accession of Croatia) countries, the EU is the largest – next to the USA – economic operator in the world (it has already been disputed for several years who is actually the largest, and different institutions provide slightly diverging data on the subject, see Table 2 and 3).
Table 2. The most important world economies in 2010 according to the IMF

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>GDP (millions of USD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>—</td>
<td>World</td>
<td>62,909,274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>—</td>
<td>European Union</td>
<td>16,282,230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>14,657,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>People's Republic of China</td>
<td>5,878,257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>5,458,872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>3,315,643</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>2,582,527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>2,247,455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>2,090,314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>2,055,114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>1,574,051</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>1,537,966</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 3. The most important world economies in 2010 according to the World Bank

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>GDP (millions of USD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>—</td>
<td>World</td>
<td>63,048,823</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>14,582,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>—</td>
<td>Eurozone</td>
<td>12,174,523</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>People's Republic of China</td>
<td>5,878,629</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>5,497,813</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>3,309,669</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>2,560,002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>2,246,079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>2,087,890</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>2,051,412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>1,729,010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>1,574,052</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The EU is regarded as an economic giant and a political (and military) dwarf. It has not managed to stand up to the Balkan crises in the 1990s, and even now, after the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty on 1 December 2009, it still has trouble with defining the common objectives and the common position under the Common Foreign and Security Policy. In short, the EU is not yet a fully defined, single actor on the international stage. National interests of individual Member States, often very particularistic, still play an important role within it. In the context of the emerging markets, including such large and fully aware of their interests as China, Russia, India and Brazil, this is not a good trait because these internal contradictions and diversities can be – and often are – played out externally, based on the millennia-old principle: ‘divide and conquer’.

What is worse, the EU has been severely hit by the crisis of 2008, as evidenced by the emergence of the PIIGS group – a group of countries having serious problems with maintaining fiscal and financial discipline in their internal markets. Public debt in these countries – per capita or in relation to GDP – often exceeds even the debt of the USA. According to current (2010) data, the largest debtors in the EU (percentage of GDP) are: Greece – 125.3, Italy – 117.4, Portugal – 80.8 Ireland – 72.3 Hungary – 72.1 Spain – 58.9. As we can see, many EU Member States have difficulties in meeting the Maastricht criteria, according to which the level of debt of 60 per cent of GDP may not be exceeded. The scale of the problem, as well as the depth of crisis in Europe, is best illustrated by the fact that the 15 most indebted countries in the world, all of which are highly developed countries, are responsible for 90 per cent of the total world debt, while just before the crisis of 2008, they brought only 3 per cent of the global economic growth, and their contribution has even declined since the beginning of the crisis, mainly because it was the Western countries that have suffered from the deepest recession and crisis.

In the context of the dramatic developments in Greece, as well as serious turmoil in Portugal, Spain and Italy, the EU was forced to convene some extraordinary European Council in gatherings in 2011, as well as many special meetings at the ministerial level. It was made no secret at these meetings that one of the most important issues to be decided is the future of the euro as a common currency and the permanence of the eurozone, which, after Estonia’s accession to it in early 2011, now has 17 Member States. Thus, on the one hand, the euro area is still expanding, but on the other hand, it is experiencing a crisis unprecedented since its establishment on 1 January 1999.

Seeking remedies, the EU began to seriously think about restricting immigration to its territory, a process which had been strongly accelerated by the unexpected outbreak of the ‘African Spring’ of 2011, in which the dictatorships in Tunisia and Egypt were overthrown, and Libya, Yemen and Syria experienced serious internal conflicts, with the West intervening in Libya, under UN
resolution. The massive influx of new refugees, mainly from Tunisia and Libya, symbolised by the dramatic situation on the Italian island of Lampedusa, first provoked a reaction from Denmark, which has restored control at its borders, and then opened a debate about the tightness of EU borders, which is also a dispute about the future of the Schengen Agreement. There are concerns that in order to protect domestic markets, the EU will much more rigorously protect its borders.

Poland and the new global economic order

Poland is not among the G-20 countries, although its GDP places it exactly on the lower end of this group, because depending on the research and estimates, it ranks at positions 19 to 22 in the rankings of countries by their GDP. In 2010, Poland was exactly 20th on the lists of the IMF, the World Bank, or even the CIA World Factbook Poland, with a combined GDP of USD 465–467 billion, after Switzerland and before Belgium (see Table 2 and 3). This fact alone provokes a debate taking place in the internal arena, though with varying intensity, whether Poland should apply for entry into the G-20, and the opposition has often accused the government that it ‘failed to defend Polish interests’, not trying for the membership hard enough.

The Polish authorities have repeatedly stressed that the country had walked dry-shod through the crisis after 2008, as evidenced by the fact that in 2009 Poland was the only country in the EU with a positive economic growth and not in the state of recession, although, of course, due to its geographical location and economic links (about ¾ of Polish trade falls on EU Member States), its growth has slowed down.

Military spending is not too high in Poland (according to SIPRI: 1.8 per cent of the GDP, 8.38 billion USD in 2010, which gives Poland the 23rd position in the world – as in Table 1). However, the Polish presence in Iraq and Afghanistan was the subject of – often serious – controversy, at least in the media. Polish political elites, regardless of their origins and political options, were clearly in favour of participation in these interventions, referring to our commitment as NATO allies (Afghanistan) or a military alliance with the United States (Iraq). Initially, both on the domestic scene, and on the intra-European one, more controversy was raised by the issue of the engagement in Iraq. The Polish authorities, in contrast to Germany or France, were among the biggest supporters of this intervention, despite the variety of public opinions on this subject. Less controversy was raised by the issue of the engagement in Afghanistan, where the Polish contingent has grown steadily until the present (2011) level of 2,600 people. However, over time, this intervention also became the subject of public dissent and political dispute.
Poland was very proud of being one of the first post-Communist countries to join the NATO, in April 1999, along with Hungary and the Czech Republic. Due to its geographical location, i.e. the proximity of the countries (Belarus) and territories (Kaliningrad) which are not going to join the NATO or the EU in the near future, Poland believes, perhaps rightly, that the best guarantor of the country’s external security is the NATO, and not the EU, which was additionally proved by the course of the Balkan crises (wars) in the 1990s. Hence the emphasis of the Polish elites to maintain the closest military relations and alliance with the United States.

As a result of this strong ‘Atlantic option’, the Polish authorities did not in time recognise the dynamic changes in the global arena and, firstly, did not opt for membership in the G-20, and second, have not developed adequate strategies towards the emerging markets, starting with China and India. Part of the reason for this ‘dormancy’ was probably also the fact that Poland has managed to cope with the effects of the 2008 crisis relatively better than its nearest neighbours and the whole EU.

Conclusions

Polish political elites did not carry out a strategic debate on the crisis in global markets in September 2008. Although often internally divided, they remained faithful to the directions set just after the fall of Communism, in order to ‘anchor’ Poland in the institutional system of the West as well as possible (NATO, EU, OECD, Council of Europe). Taking over the Presidency in the European Council on 1 July 2011 (the Presidency of the EU), Poland constantly emphasized how much it is in favour of ‘a strong Europe’, an effective EU, integration and cooperation on the continent. What is important, the membership in the EU is rather commonly – and quite aptly – regarded as the best guarantee of the country’s internal security and the most effective ‘anchor of modernisation’. Only because of the current crisis in the eurozone Poland has stopped setting dates of its accession to it, as it had done before.

Polish membership in the NATO and the commitments under it are also not subject to any discussions (except the mission in Afghanistan). During the presidency of Barack Obama, Poland experienced some disturbance of faith in the ‘strategic alliance’ with the USA, especially after the decision of the US administration to cancel the missile defence shield project on the Polish territory – a project regarded by some part of the Polish elites as a guarantee of further strengthening of the alliance. The American crisis, resulting from the ‘imperial overreach’, or excessive internal and external liabilities (public and external debt), was, as it seems, much less important in the calculations of the Polish
An important direction in the Polish strategy is the attitude towards the nearest neighbours. After 2007, Poland did much to rebuild the mechanism of cooperation within the Weimar Triangle, and thus strengthen the alliance with Germany and France. It seems that this project has brought surprisingly good results, especially in the case of Germany (in June 2011 there was even an unprecedented joint meeting of both governments, similar to the Franco-German meetings). The overwhelming pro-Western option in Polish diplomacy is not subject to any changes.

The complicated matter of our Eastern neighbourhood looks somewhat different. After 2007, Poland has restored, to a large extent, good relations with Russia (which was not hampered even by the tragic accident of the Polish government aeroplane with the Polish President on board, on 10 April 2010 in the forest near Smolensk), but these relations are still complex and uneasy. The comprehensive report issued in 2008 by a special bilateral Group for Difficult Matters in Mutual Relations: *Białe plamy – czarne plamy: sprawy trudne w relacjach polsko-rosyjskich* (White Spots – Black Spots: Difficult Matters in Polish–Russian Relations 1918–2008) shows how extensive the catalogue of these issues is, from the history and mentality (stereotypes and prejudice) to very practical and tangible economic and trade issues (Russia remains Poland’s main supplier of energy resources).

The Eastern neighbourhood is not just Russia. Poland confirmed it by developing, together with Sweden, the Eastern Partnership project – a cooperation with six pro-Soviet countries: Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia. As the first pan-European (EU) project developed by Poland, it came into force in 2008 and is, of course, at this moment, properly exposed during the Polish Presidency of the EU. The aim of this project is to prepare association agreements with the countries mentioned above, concluding free trade agreements with them, and liberalisation of visa regimes. Unfortunately, the situation which arose in the first half of 2011 in North Africa and the Middle East is not favourable for achieving these goals. The main political forces in the EU are now more interested in what is happening in the South than in the East. In this sense, the realisation of the original Polish goals has become more difficult than expected.

The huge changes in the global arena described in this text only slightly influenced the behaviour of the Polish authorities in the international arena. So far, the directions remained the same: the pro-Western and pro-Atlantic option, the strong presence in the NATO and in the EU, the alliance with the USA, backed by the best possible relations with Germany, France and other strong partners in the West. A somewhat new matter is the mutual attempt to settle the
relations with Russia, as well as accommodating the wishes of some former
Soviet countries in the form of the Eastern Partnership.

What is happening further to the East – the fast economic development of
China, India and the Far Eastern tigers, as well as the activity of the BRICS and
the SCO – does not evoke, as it seems, much emotions from the Polish authori-
ties. While they have noticed the dynamics of the Chinese and Indian economy,
because it is hard not to notice it, both the structure and the level of trade with
those partners (in both cases, and in particular in the case of China, Poland
recorded a huge deficit in trade) seems to indicate that they are still not consid-
ered vital partners from the point of view of Polish interests and calculations.
Poland is satisfied with its participation – only recently achieved, after all – in the
Western world, and therefore it has not been, so far, interested to an appropriate
degree in what is going on outside the Western world. However, as we have tried
to demonstrate in this study, and as evidenced by the data originating from a
growing number of analytic centres or rating agencies, the most interesting part
of the developments in international markets happen more and more often out-
side the Western world. It would be advisable for Warsaw to notice it soon too.

As rightly pointed out by a Polish expert (Stanislaw Bieleń): ‘Poland is fac-
ing the task of redefining its own national interests in the context of the deeply
changing system of international relations (the new roles of superpowers, includ-
ing the return of Russia to the superpower arena, the perception of the super-
power status of China and the aspirations of India). We need not only more ini-
tiative and creativity, vision and strategic thinking, but also the art of consistent
and effective acting. This primarily requires identifying the policy that would
enable, on the one hand, harmonisation of the national interest with the interests
of the Community and our allies, and on the other, the implementation of Poland’s
own interests in the increasingly uncertain world, determined by growing com-
petition and rivalry of forces in the sphere of economy, politics and civilisation’.

What is important, this is not an isolated voice in the world of Polish schol-
ars. Another expert, Roman Kuźniar, wrote: ‘The crisis of 2008 will probably
be regarded as an important turning point in the transition from Western dom-
ination to a more balanced world, and in the future maybe to one dominated
by non-Western superpowers (...) The crisis of 2008 has strengthened the posi-
tion of the rest of the world in relation to the West (...) the change accelerated
by the events of 2008 must affect the shape of the international order’.

The world has changed a lot since 2008. The emerging markets have gained
strength and importance. Undoubtedly, the catalyst of this new order – in a pos-
tive or negative sense – will be China, supported by India, which has recently
been nearly as dynamic, and Brazil. Poland, like its neighbouring countries and
the EU Member States, has to draw the right conclusions from this as soon as
possible.
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Dariusz Milczarek

A United Europe or the United States?
Choices of Poland’s foreign and security policy

Poland’s membership in the European Union acquired seven years ago, and the accession to the NATO earlier on, resulted in a qualitatively new situation in every area of Polish political, economic and social life. This especially relates to the area of foreign relations, which has quite naturally become the fundamental forum for redefining and reformulating the country’s vital interests following the accession to such important structures of international integration.

One of the most important axioms of Poland’s foreign policy (as well as of the foreign policies of most of the other new EU Member States from Central Europe) remains the alliance with the United States. Such an alliance is regarded by Poles as the fundamental and absolute priority, both as concerns political relations and military ties within the US-dominated North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. This is particularly manifested in the way subsequent governments remain unanimous in this very respect. No matter which political option they represent, they all have the same attitude and, moreover, support it with particular decisions, such as sending a Polish military contingent to Iraq, purchasing U.S. aircraft or negotiating on the establishment of the American anti-missile shield in Poland.

In such a context, the political and military aspects of Poland’s membership in the European Union – generally advocated – appear as relatively less important from the point of view of strategic national interests. Since having regained full independence, Poland has followed a resolute policy of close relations with the United States and with the US-controlled NATO. It is in this political/military alliance that Poles tend to see their principal guarantees of safety against Russia’s neo-imperial ambitions. Besides, whilst they generally tend to regard the European Union as a structure of economic integration which is favourable or even indispensable for their further development, they are much less keen on treating it as a form of political or defensive integration,
quite understandably, if we consider the deficiencies of the EU foreign and security policy.

The adoption of such a strategy provokes objections and sometimes irritation in some of our Western European partners. However, it should be remembered that Poland and other Central European countries are not the only ones to behave this way. Indeed, they belong to a broad group of EU Member States manifesting pro-Atlantic attitudes, including the United Kingdom (traditionally the USA’s faithful ally) as well as Italy and several other countries which have been providing political and military support to the USA too.

One can argue, therefore, that the pro-American policy of the EU’s new Member States, Poland in particular, rather than bringing brand new elements to transatlantic relations, in fact consolidated – perhaps very much so – a political option favouring close co-operation with the United States. Such an option had in fact been present in the European Communities’/European Union’s foreign policies for quite a long time.

In other words, Poland’s position was only inscribed into the already-existing controversies – both internal (especially along the France–UK line) and external (EU–USA), but by no means had provoked them. This should be emphasised in the context of some inapt opinions of American politicians – such as the former Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld – who sometimes contrast the ‘new Europe’ of the EU’s newly-accepted and USA-supporting Member States with the ‘old Europe’ of the long-standing Member States ill-disposed to the USA. As a matter of fact, such disputes are held along quite different dividing lines.

One must not, however, deny the aptness of the question, whether such a pro-American option is the only effective one or – as some people believe – the only one right for Poland’s foreign and security policy. It should be pointed out that, apart from unconditional support, it also stirs a great deal of controversy and objection, both as regards the very essence of strategic importance of that option (discussed below) and some specific issues of lesser importance.

In the case of Poland, this relates not only to minor problems, such as the USA’s negative attitude towards the abolition of the visa requirement for Polish citizens, but also to much more serious matters, such as the well-justified doubts to sense and consequences of Poland’s involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan or of the cooperation with Americans in the construction of their anti-missile defence system on the territory of Poland.

Therefore, the fundamental question is which real opportunities Poland’s foreign/security policy actually faces. At this point it should be underlined that we have to deal with political matters, i.e. ones not being subject to normatively evaluating assessments, since a choice of any specific political option is up to sovereign authority and to the society. This, however, doesn’t preclude analyses in political science, made from a point of view of functional effi-
ciency of a given solution. This is the method applied in the present study. Before we focus thereupon, however, it is appropriate to extend the scope of our remarks.

**General evolution of foreign and security policy**

While the matters considered below are broadly discussed in literature, it is nevertheless worthwhile to briefly recall the basic arguments. Firstly, it needs reminding that the notional scope of both foreign policy and security policy terms underwent a significant transformation over the last twenty years.

As regards foreign policy, we should appreciate how the way this category is perceived has evolved. This can be seen, among other things, in the fact that distinguishing between the two levels of applying a policy by actors of international relations, long-established and traditional in both science and practice, namely *high politics* and *low politics*, has relatively been abandoned. The former level was understood as proper foreign policy run by states, mostly identified with the use of traditional diplomatic and military instruments, while the latter category included more ‘down-to-earth’ areas of foreign trade-related, economic or other relations. There is, in fact, much evidence that we are presently witnessing a sort of change between these two categories. Consequently, economic and trade relations are growing much more important compared to the purely political ones (some go as far as to speak of ‘foreign economic policy’), or the differences between the two levels simply disappear.

This is accompanied by a profound evolution of the notion of national sovereignty, which is no longer limited to its traditional meaning of a state’s authority over all the areas of its relations with the outside world. In modern form, instead, this category means the necessity to acknowledge numerous inter-relations or even restrictions faced by all actors of international relations – no matter how powerful – in the present world, with its intense phenomena and processes of globalisation.

The same relates to the way international structures operate, such as the European Union, within which a new category of sovereignty is developing. On the one hand, the Member States delegate some of the traditional attributes of national sovereignty to the EU, but, on the other hand, their actual scope of possibilities to act has extended, as they have acquired a much stronger influence upon their partners and the EU as a whole.

What is most peculiar in the evolution of the category of security is that this category includes many more aspects than just the military one. Now it takes social, economic, environmental and other types of threats into account. This means that the military potential alone is no longer the fundamental guarantor of security for the actors of international relations. Moreover, the nature
of most important threats to international security has changed as well. In the bipolar era of two major opposing blocks, the principal, obvious threat was that of an outbreak of a global armed conflict (especially one involving nuclear weapons). In the present days, in turn, there are many types of threats. Apart from various local or regional conflicts (not only involving states, but all sorts of extremist organisations as well), they include international terrorism and organised crime, as well as the so-called humanitarian disasters, in the form of massive migration of refugees and famine, natural disasters (floods, earthquakes, etc.) or by human activities, in particular in the form of environment pollution (cf. Chernobyl and Fukushima).

It should also be observed that this catalogue of threats, shaped in the early nineties, underwent no major change in the wake of the events of 11 September 2001. Contrary to the widely published – although sometimes too hasty – opinions, no fundamental revolution seems to have taken place in the way the notion of international security is understood. Terrorist attacks against the United States should be seen as no more than just another (while very important, of course) stage in the terrorists fight. After all, the latter has been fought since long ago by various extremist forces and in different ways against the USA and the Western world in general. An important new thing in this respect is that 11 September constitutes a turning point, in the sense that it was a direct impulse, stimulating the United States to resolute anti-terrorist action and additionally it implied changes in US relations with their European allies.

The conclusion is that in analysing Poland’s foreign/security policy one should take its contemporary, broad context into account, together with various and variable international conditions. In particular, the above-mentioned evident blur of differences between purely political and economic aspects of foreign policy should be reckoned with, as should changes in the way the concept of national sovereignty is perceived, as well as the evolution of the notion of international security.

It is also a must to take into account the actual power arrangement on the global scale, and especially in Europe. A number of different models may be used to study it, basing either on some theoretic assumptions or on the actual political and military balance of power. Whilst there is no real consensus among scholars and politicians as to the typology of such models, generally three basic models of the European security system can be distinguished: (1) the Atlantic model, based upon the NATO, (2) the European model, basing upon the European Union, (3) the universal security model, basing upon the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

Leaving description of these models aside, it seems only fit to notice that together they form a complex system of mutual relations, some of them having complementary natures, while others being contradictory or even antago-
nistic. This may be illustrated by the relatively highly complementary relation between the Atlantic and European models on the one hand, and, on the other hand, their contradictory relation with respect to the OSCE-based model. The latter model (with all due appreciation to the organisation’s achievements in building political and military trust in the continent) reveals no real potential or structures enabling it to operate in the military area. In fact, it is politically weak, as a result of – among other things – the participation of a large number of partners, often having quite different political and military visions or interests. Considering its weaknesses, it represents no serious option to Poland’s foreign/security policy.

The Atlantic or the European model?

This leaves us with two valid options: the Atlantic model and the European one. Due to their far-reaching complementary nature, a number of scholars treat them as one specific whole. It seems, however, that in an ever-changing international situation they should nevertheless be regarded as clearly differentiated – if not different – options.

The Atlantic model

The Atlantic option in Poland’s foreign policy has been based upon the North Atlantic Treaty Organization which is, quite evidently, dominated by the United States. Efforts of Poland and of the other Central European countries to become members of the NATO were perfectly justified geopolitically and fortunately proved successful (which by no means had been a matter foregone, considering a very reserved attitude of some Western European countries, France in particular). It should be remembered, however, that from a formal and legal point of view this membership constitutes the only form of Poland’s political and military alliance with the USA. This means that the United States, in fact have no obligations towards Poles in this area whatsoever, apart from those provided for in Article 5 of the Washington Treaty stipulating the *casus foederis*. These, however, are of very general nature and actually only oblige allies to express mutual solidarity and provide consultation should one of them be attacked.

Accordingly, should a hypothetical crisis take place, Americans – contrary to any pompous declarations both partners may exchange – while being entitled to, are not at all obliged to automatically support Poland, either politically or, the less so, militarily. Leaving all rhetoric aside, we have to realise that the scale of actual US support is only going to depend upon how Americans evaluate Poland as their partner on the global scene. Situation in this respect depends both on the geopolitical situation and on the economic, political, mil-
itary and other potentials, and, contrary to what many Poles may imagine, these are not at all high.

Of course, Poland is reckoned with as an ally and as one of the most pro-American countries in Europe, but in calculations of Washington-based strategists, its importance is lesser than that of other European countries – not only of the strongest ones, such as Germany, France or Russia (which is quite obvious), but also than that of other neighbouring countries, such as Ukraine (even Zbigniew Brzeziński describes Ukraine’s position as that of a geopolitical pivot or even regional power, whilst attributing a much smaller role to Poland). While Poland’s role, in the US diplomatic plans, may be that of a card to be played in their relations with the ‘old Europe’ or with Russia, it is obvious that in case of any crisis or conflict, the United States are perfectly free to choose whether they want to back Warsaw or not. The proof for this is the evident lack of interest for our region on the part of the administration of President Obama, who very lightly abandoned the plans of the former, Bush government to build the anti-missile shield in Poland and in the Czech Republic. This all is concluded from a simple fact which the Polish enthusiasts of the pro-American option seem to overlook: namely, that what we have to deal with is actually an alliance of an ant with an elephant.

With respect to alliances within the NATO, we should realise that Poland’s position and role in the system of European security is not yet fully developed. Apart from the reasons we could control (such as insufficient effort in consolidating the Polish defensive potential), this also stems from reasons beyond our control, related to the evolution of both the global and the European power arrangement. Wishful thinking aside, membership in the NATO failed, in fact, to solve all problems regarding Poland’s security in the international arena. The fact of belonging to the world’s strongest political and military alliance has enabled Warsaw to get out of the Central European security ‘grey zone’, but has provided no absolute guarantee of security. Beside the above-mentioned vague provisions of Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, this situation stems from the fact that the NATO itself is undergoing an intense evolution as well. The first became evident during early nineties, with transformations in the way the very category of security was perceived and with shifts in the global balance of power. However, so far, no clear, final effect of these changes can be seen.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization seems troubled with inner contradictions that occur on several levels. First of all, its nature and objectives need redefining: it has to be specified whether it should remain just a political and military alliance, or whether its formula should be extended to become politically more comprehensive and enable it to enter into closer co-operation with other actors of international relations (Russia, for example). Moreover, the issue of a new strategic doctrine has not been fully explained either – its exten-
sion by including such tasks as the European Union’s ‘Petersberg Missions’ (i.e. preventing and suppressing local conflicts or undertaking humanitarian actions) has been insufficient to come up with the post-Cold War era demands.

Despite all this, generally, the NATO fits well into the developing architecture of European security based upon an updated understanding of that category (as mentioned above), but the process is all but easy. Apart from obvious successes, such as solving dilemmas concerning the eastward enlargement (after that of 1999, the subsequent one followed in 2004) and almost unanimous support and engagement of all Member States in NATO’s intervention in Afghanistan, we are witnessing a great deal of indecision. This is well illustrated by the attitude towards Russia (whose inclusion into the NATO’s decision-making structures may result in them being paralysed) or, especially, by intents of the EU Member States that tend, in a more or less resolute and consistent way, to form their own, autonomous defensive potentials.

All that should encourage the Polish society and political circles to a thorough reconsideration of the scale of the involvement in the Atlantic option. It has to be emphasised that this is certainly not about rejecting the alliance with the United States and with the NATO – which would be pure political rashness, if not plain madness. Instead, this is about finding suitable solutions to combine benefits from close ties with the USA and from NATO membership with adoption of the European option as the fundamental one for Poland’s foreign/security policy.

Such consideration is all the more needed as we are witnessing a kind of dissonance between the European Union and the United States as regards the strategic visions of the modern world. This means that, in the long run, Poland and the other Central European countries – as members of both the EU and the NATO – would face the difficult choice of one of the sides in the dispute between – let’s call it so – the American paradigm and the European one.

**EU–USA disputes**

In short, the essence of the dispute between those paradigms boils down to different political philosophies. The European Union’s actions in the global arena – all possible objections regarding inconsistency or ineffectiveness taken into account – are carried out in line with a specific canon of EU foreign policy. This canon includes promoting democracy and human rights, using conciliatory and peaceful methods, renouncing military measures, etc. This way the EU appears in the international arena as an actor who is best described by the concept of a ‘civilian power’. Such a power can be defined as one which influences the international system using mainly economic, financial and political means, rather than military force. Other features include the priority of political and diplomatic actions in solving global problems and the use of mechanisms and structures of international organisation to achieve its goals.
The above-mentioned principles are certainly familiar to the United States’ foreign policy as well, however, it is obvious that what we find in their case is not just the same accents put in another way. It is a thoroughly different practice, basing upon different assumptions. According to what American themselves, like Robert Kagan, declare, Washington diplomats divide the world into good and evil; into foe and friend; they prefer coercion to persuasion and to punish than to motivate. Europeans, on the other hand, rather attempt to influence others indirectly, using more subtle methods, usually preferring peaceful solutions, prioritising negotiation, diplomacy and persuasion over coercion. While schematic and simplified, such assessments seem to hit the point. What we see, in fact, are two very different political philosophies: a ‘harder’ American one and ‘softer’ European one.

Therefore, we have to deal with a situation where fundamental doctrinal and political differences are revealed in the way foreign and security policy is perceived in the European Union and in the United States. This mainly regards a different attitude towards the key issues of the modern world. In short, we can say that (according to Kagan’s diagnosis mentioned above) Americans clearly tend to divide the world into good and evil in a Manichaean way, to give priority to firm actions basing on pressures and coercion rather than persuasion and to reaching for military power with little hesitation (as we have seen a number of times).

Furthermore, another peculiarity of the US foreign policy which has recently gained importance is its unilateralism, not only observed in political practice but reflected in official strategic concepts as well. As an example of such a unilateral attitude, we might quote the so-called Bush doctrine, announced in 2002 and still valid under Obama’s administration. According to it, the United States award themselves the right to assess situation in the world on their own (that is even in opposition to the United Nations and their own allies) and to undertake any actions they deem appropriate, including the use of military power against what they call ‘rogue countries’. Even more importantly, such actions may be of preventive nature, which makes them hardly consistent with logic of contemporary international law, the principles of which clearly provide for sanctions for its infringement ex post rather than ex ante. The unilateral military intervention in Iraq in 2003 became the best example of such attitude. So far, the new attitude toward the US foreign policy, adopted by President Barack Obama, seems to be more rhetorical than real.

1 One should always remember, in this context, about the difference between the potential to run an effective foreign policy by a single power, such as the USA, and by the European Union, which constitutes a group of sovereign States that struggles to develop its foreign policy formula, in most cases as a compromise between the interest of the Community and those of its members.
All this is in contradiction to the attitude represented by the European Union. As emphasised above – but still worth repeating – EU politicians, no matter how different their positions, tend to see international problems in their complexity and subtlety and firmly prioritise persuasion and peaceful solutions using political or economic instruments. Moreover, Europeans are clearly in favour of multi-lateral actions, preferably under the patronage of the United Nations or, in any case, actions subject to consultation and agreements made on a broader forum, such as within the NATO.

As an apt illustration of those differences we might mention quite a different attitude towards one of the key problems that has become a global one by now, i.e. that of international terrorism. It is evident that transatlantic allies had divergent opinions on how the problem should be solved. Americans, as evidenced by their interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq, mostly reached for military solutions, using political measures only to a lesser degree. Instead, most EU Member States, in particular Germany and France, were quite resolute about the inverse course of action, i.e. using all political possibilities first, especially involving the United Nations, and using military power only as the last resort (as already mentioned, the United Kingdom was an important exception, as well as several other countries, including Poland). This really seems to mainly stem from the different political philosophy of European politicians, as outlined above, rather than from the fact that the EU Member States’ military potential is much weaker than that of the USA, thus making Europeans simply short of appropriate possibilities to act.

This type of differences could easily be seen as a ‘family quarrel’ within the Western world. Nevertheless, one has to point out that, in the long run, such disagreements could weaken the transatlantic alliance. An example of this could be seen in the fierce controversy about the American intervention in Iraq. The USA and the EU Member States addressed serious accusations against each other. Americans accused Europe of passive or even cowardly behaviour in the face of global threats, while charges of political and military irresponsibility and an urge to play the role of a ‘global gendarme’ were aimed the opposite way. Both opponents were partially right, although it seems that it is the American policy that has provided more reasons for concern and doubts.

An additional argument may stem from the fact that the United States have gradually increased their distance from their European roots, concurrently reinforcing their ties with regions from which principal streams of immigrants flow to the USA, i.e. with Latin America and South-Eastern Asia. It is quite likely, therefore, that America will become less and less interested in Europe. At the same time, clearly opposing trends in social and cultural areas emerge on both sides of the Atlantic – the on-going secularisation of European societies, contrasting with growing religiousness in America being one of the most evident examples. This is also reflected in political attitudes – American visions of
global combat between Good and Evil are largely based on orthodox religious beliefs.

Generally, the present balance of power in the world, basing on US domination, is subject to more and more criticism not only on the part of the European Union. The EU, however, is certainly one of its main opponents, as its general vision of contemporary international relations (including, especially, methods of solving principal problems of global security) seems to be different than the American one. At the same time, Europe should not be perceived as having declared itself against the United States as such or in defence of its own interests or hurt ambitions (even if it did, it was only a part of the truth). It seems, instead, that we have to deal with a bold attempt to reconstruct a polycentric world, free from an overwhelming US dominance; the world in which Europe, along with other leading global powers, would have more to say in response to the American unilateral model.

All these considerations should be taken into account while formulating options for Poland’s foreign policy. Indeed, a sober analysis of the pro-Atlantic option reveals its weaknesses, including, in particular, the lack of firmly binding obligations on the part of the USA and the NATO. Such obligations, if any, have rather been based upon general political reasoning than on real common interests resulting from Poland’s potential or geopolitical position as a relevant partner. Also important is the above-outlined difference between strategic concepts and visions of the modern world, adopted and implemented by the United States on the one hand and by the European Union on the other.

The European model

It should be strongly emphasised that the European Union has been Poland’s principal partner, not only economic, but political and military as well. This is illustrated by Warsaw’s participation in the application of the EU’s Common Foreign and Security Policy, established in 1992 under the Treaty of Maastricht. Another example is the Polish involvement in particular undertakings in that area – all Polish governments (no matter which political option they represented) have supported some specific initiatives in that field, such as the formation of the so-called Battle Groups or the establishment of the European Defence Agency. This means that Warsaw has actually adopted EU’s concepts in the field of foreign policy, including those that are contradictory to American views.

This leads us to a well-justified question: is Poland, all those circumstances taken into account, going to be able to maintain privileged political and mili-

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2 Battle Groups have been composed of armed troops delegated by particular EU Member States, while the European Defence Agency is meant as a structure that co-ordinates and manages the development of the EU Member States’ military potential.
tary relations with the United States in the long run, at the same time restricting its relations with the European Union to issues mainly concerning economic integration?

A thorough analysis of the European option reveals that its long-term potential is the same or maybe even bigger than the Atlantic one. Of course, the European option has its weaknesses and limitations as well, including, notably, a peculiar rebirth of national egoism manifested by several EU Member States, especially the largest of them, such as France and Germany. All this is proof of the evident crisis experienced these days by the EU foreign and security policy, manifested by the lack of a common position as regards the key problems of the modern world (including, in particular, fighting international terrorism) and by difficulties encountered in building rapid deployment forces or in the establishment of the common European potential in the field of military industry.

Central European Eurosceptics (like the Czech President Vaclav Klaus) have taken advantage of this situation to criticise the very idea of consolidating European integration in political and defensive areas. In that criticism they use political or ideological arguments, such as general prejudice to federalist concepts and restriction of European unity just to the ‘Europe of Homelands’. They have also raised the above-mentioned issue of national egoism, especially in France and Germany, criticising those countries – quite justifiably, by the way – for manifesting lack of solidarity the Union calls for.

It seems that the proper attitude should reach beyond narrow, short-sighted understanding of Poland’s and other Central European States’ strategic interests. Firstly, it should be considered that achieving a sort of consensus between the EU and US foreign policies is possible, and during the last two-three years – after the election of President Obama – even quite probable. That assumed, it seems rather unlikely that the American ally is going to pay any more attention to Central Europe’s interests than they will to the interests of Germany or France (some actions taken by the new Washington administration seem to prove it).

Accordingly, to stand in opposition to those driving forces of European integration would be politically senseless or even unwise. Moreover, in the long run, Poland’s active involvement in the development of the EU’s foreign/security policy seems very advisable. In fact – although some Poles don’t seem to appreciate this – Poland’s scope of possibilities within the structures of European integration (including, in particular, the possibilities of acting in the international arena) could be the same or even wider than in the case of the Atlantic option.

Contrary to what the opponents of the European Union are anxious about, Poland is not at all supposed to be a ‘second category’ Member State. Poland has always been an important part of Europe and its aspirations towards full
involvement in the processes taking place in the Old Continent stem naturally from its historical growth. Poland may be proud of it and it is going to rank as a significant contributor to the unity of Europe as a whole. After all, Poland belongs to the largest Member States, second to Germany, France, the United Kingdom and Italy and comparable to Spain.

As far as fears of being dominated by Germany are concerned, one has to remember that Germany is Europe’s most powerful country this way or another, while Poland can be Germany’s valuable ally and partner, enabling the EU’s political and economic ‘gravity centre’ to move further East. This is concurrent with both Polish and German national interests. Such a concurrence of interests is something brand new – which needs underlining – in over a thousand years of a complex, troubled history of the relations between both nations. The same argument explains why German governments (despite any frictions that occur in the neighbours’ mutual relations) have essentially been Poland’s advocates, supporting Polish endeavours towards integration.

After all, one basic fact should be fully acknowledged: only within the EU is Poland going to be able to influence decisions made by the Union as the whole, including Germany and France. Taking no part in the EU decision-making structures, Poland would end up debarred, on a permanent basis, from any involvement in deciding upon matters of our continent and, in effect, upon ourselves as well. Modern Europe is in fact a complex system of communicating vessels, where everything and everyone are dependent on each other, but also where those who are absent have no vote and can easily be reduced to playing the role of a poor, provincial supplicant. Instead, as a true European Union Member State, Poland enjoys quite a unique scope of competence that Poles would never be able to get any other way.

In what other way could Poland truly and effectively influence specific behaviours of other European countries, including, in particular, such powerful ones as Germany or France, unless as a member of the EU structures? This is, of course, a purely rhetorical question. Provisions of the Lisbon Treaty (contrary to the political fuss over that matter) award Warsaw a prominent position in the EU decision-making bodies. In fact, Poland’s position is perhaps even better, in a certain sense, than its true political and economic importance would justify. This means that it is only going to depend on Poles’ very efforts and talents whether they will succeed in taking advantage of that potential in order to acquire appropriate benefits from the EU membership.

In synthesis, it can be argued that membership in the European Union – combined with the membership in the NATO – makes it easier for Poland to take on challenges brought by contemporary international relations, concerning virtually any aspect: economy, politics, defence, culture, and so on. Being on a par with other members of the world’s most powerful integration group, comparable to the United States in many respects, Poland is able to secure an
appropriate position for itself and to take proper care of its interests and safety in the international arena. On its own, however, with no important support from other EU partners, Poland wouldn’t be able to solve the problems it faces – neither the old nor the newly-emerging ones. Poles would have to face and handle such problems anyway, even if the European Union did not exist at all, and within its structures their task becomes much easier.

Conclusions

The future of Poland’s foreign and security policy will largely depend on whether and how several important issues are solved. This regards, among other things, the way the organisational and doctrinal formula of the NATO will develop, as this is the principal guarantor of Poland’s national security. Different scenarios are possible in this respect, from an optimistic one (that of considerable reinforcement of political and military structures) to the pessimistic vision of an alliance with no power and influence in the world.

Moreover, it is quite unclear what effects can be expected from the European Union’s efforts to create a truly efficient common foreign and defensive policy and, in time, a system of common defence too. The presently binding formula of the ‘Petersberg Missions’, while perfectly justified, is obviously insufficient, even if supported with specific actions to enhance their efficacy, such as the decision on the establishment of the European rapid deployment force in 1999 or the first military interventions abroad, carried out under the EU flag (for example the peace-keeping operation in Congo in 2003).3 Here, again, different scenarios are possible – from that of building, by the EU, of an effective military potential enabling it to play the role of a true global power (or even the world’s second superpower) to preservation of the EU’s status as a non-military power.

No matter how the situation unfolds, the shape of Poland’s foreign policy will depend on its position in the context of political and military relations between the European Union and the United States. Poland is going to belong to two security structures formed, jointly or separately, by our most important allies and partners: within the NATO, in fact subordinated to the USA, as well as within the EU’s Common Foreign and Security Policy. Admittedly, relations between those structures include at the same time elements of rivalry and cooperation. Not only Poland is in this situation. For example, the United King-

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3 The importance of the operation in Congo was the more significant that – for the first time – it was performed outside the territory of Europe. Moreover, in 2004, a special mechanism for financing such undertakings out of the EU’s budget was established under the name ‘Athena’.
dom is still capable of playing both roles – i.e. that of the USA’s closest ally and of an important EU Member State – at the same time.

However, the main question is if Poland, together with some other Central European countries, will find it necessary to make the really difficult choices between favouring the line of foreign/security policy of either the United States, or the European Union?

The extremity of these choices is partly mitigated by the fact that the European Communities and the United States have been involved in a very dense and complex network of all sorts of relations, since both parties are each other’s closest allies. Apart from the fact that they are one another’s largest economic partners, roles they play against each other in the political area can hardly be overestimated, either. The United States, as the history reveals, have played the role of the principal guarantor of security of the integrating Europe for more than half a century now. Europe, in turn, has been USA’s natural ally of an enormous geostrategic importance. All this considered, the mutual relations between the USA and the EU should not be regarded in terms of a zero-sum game where one party either wins at the cost of the other or tends to dominate it. Accordingly, it can be expected with all likelihood that the possible clashes will not break up the unity of the transatlantic alliance, as there are too many common values and interests binding both partners together.

This means that no significant changes should be expected in the institutional sphere. Poland will remain a member of the NATO and will participate in preparation and implementation of the EU’s foreign and defence policy. Furthermore, we can expect that as structures of European integration are extended eastward, Poland’s role and position may relatively increase, in particular in relation to smaller Central and Eastern European countries.

However, in terms of political practice, the dilemma of choice between the Atlantic and European options may lead to the emergence of some difficulties in implementation of Poland’s foreign policy. As a matter of fact, Warsaw has already become the object of a certain pressure (which could intensify in the future) from its EU partners who insist that Poland and other Central European Member States declare themselves in a more consistent way in favour of the European model of foreign and security policy.

Therefore, we should understand that EU membership is more important to Poland in political, economic, military and social terms than close, but strategically relatively less significant ties with the USA and the NATO. It has to be firmly stressed once more that in order to adopt such an option Poland doesn’t really have to question the direction of its foreign/security policy taken so far. What Poles have to do is only – or as much as – to fully appreciate the actual situation in the contemporary Europe and in the world and, by drawing the right conclusions, be able to take proper care of their strategic national interests in a reasonable and modern way.
D. Milczarek – A United Europe or the United States? Choices of Poland’s...

References


By joining the European Union on 1 May 2004, Poland became a full participant in its institutional system. It should be noted that the European Union’s institutional system has been formed as the result of a long process, during which many changes were made to the functioning of the bodies of the European Communities/European Union. The current institutional system is the result of the entry into force of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union on 1 December 2009. The Treaty, commonly known as the Lisbon Treaty, lists the following institutions of the European Union:

– The European Council,
– The European Parliament,
– The Council (Council of the European Union),
– The European Commission,
– The Court of Justice of the European Union,
– The Court of Auditors,
– The European Central Bank.\(^1\)

These bodies make up the European Union’s institutional system.

The European Council

The European Council is a political and intergovernmental body established in 1974.\(^2\) It was formed rather late in relation to the establishment of the

\(^1\) The European Central Bank is an institution of the Economic and Monetary Union, to which Poland does not belong.

\(^2\) It functioned informally as early as in the 1960s, under a different name, as the Meeting of Heads of States and Governments, but it was not yet an official institution provided for in the Treaties. For the first time, it was mentioned in the 1986 Single European Act.
European Communities, as at the beginning their activities focused on economic aspects.

The political nature of the European Council is determined by its composition, its members being the highest officials/politicians of the Member States – the Heads of State or Government – who enjoy the greatest actual power in their countries (hence, there are no monarchs in the body). The meetings of the Council are chaired by the President of the European Council. The President of the Commission, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HR), and the Secretary General of the EU Council also participate in the summits of the European Council, but do not have the right to participate in the decision-making process. The members of the European Council may decide each to be assisted by the competent minister. The President of the European Parliament may also be invited to the meetings ‘to be heard’ by the European Council. This is, however, not much more than a courtesy and it happens very rarely.

One of the most important decisions made by the Lisbon Treaty is the establishment of a new position – the President of the European Council. The President is elected by the European Council by qualified majority for two and a half years, renewable once. The person who holds this position may not hold any other political functions in any of the Member States. The first President, elected in 2009, was the former Prime Minister of Belgium Herman Van Rompuy. The tasks of the President of the European Council include: preparing, chairing and driving forward the work of the European Council, ensuring the continuity of its work and acting as a mediator to facilitate consensus within the European Council. After each meeting, the President of the European Council presents a report to the European Parliament. The President’s tasks also include the external representation of the Union, without prejudice to the powers of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. When the President cannot fulfil his duties (for instance, due to an illness), he is temporarily substituted by the head of government of the country holding the Presidency of the EU Council.

**Competences**

According to the Treaty of Lisbon, the European Council gives the EU the necessary impetus for its development and defines the general political directions and priorities thereof. This is a fairly general provision, confirming the political nature of this institution; on the other hand, due to its generality, it leaves space for a very broad interpretation, and thus provides great power. However, based on its many years of activity, we can describe its prerogatives in more detail.

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3 Usually the minister of foreign affairs, economy or finance.
The European Council defines the middle- and long-term policy of development and activity of the EU and coordinates the directions of actions in the field of deepening and stabilising the process of integration; it sets the pace for EU’s development by making decisions on institutional reforms, enlargements and international agreements; it controls the activity of the Commission in preparing documents specifying the development prospects for the EU by thoroughly censoring such documents.

Its most important competences are in the field of external activity of the EU. The Lisbon Treaty provides that the European Council, acting by a qualified majority, appoints the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HR).\(^4\) The HR can also be dismissed by the same procedure. The European Council also takes decisions on the Common Foreign and Security Policy.

It also has prerogatives in the fields of free movement of persons, judicial cooperation in criminal matters and police cooperation. In the field of the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice, the European Council sets the strategic directions of the legislative and operational planning. As regards the economic policy, the European Council sets out the general directions of economic policies of the Member States and the EU, and adopts conclusions on the state of employment in the EU.

In addition to appointing the High Representative, the European Council can also appoint: its President, as well as (jointly with the European Parliament) the President of the European Commission and the Members of the Commission. The European Council can also change the number of Members of the Commission. It elects the President, the Vice-President and the members of the Board of the European Central Bank.

As the European Council has a superior political role in relation to the Council of the European Union (due to the subordination of ministers to their heads of government), it always examines conflict cases which cannot be resolved within the Council.

The rules of functioning

The European Council meets twice every half year (so-called EU summits); the President may convene an extraordinary summit in case of crucial international or internal events. All formal meetings of the European Council are held in Brussels, but, in exceptional cases, the President may choose a different place for a meeting. The summit then takes place in a city in the country which currently holds the Presidency.

\(^4\) In fact, there is no voting because the members of the European Council try to reach a consensus on all decisions.
The meetings of the European Council are prepared by its President and the EU Council (composed of ministers for European affairs – the General Affairs Council), mainly by the General Secretariat of the Council. The summits usually last two days.

The meetings are closed and the media are not admitted to them. They consist mainly of negotiations, during which the real role and power of each EU Member State is shown, and the decisions are reached by consensus. The summit always ends with a press conference, at which its decisions are communicated to the public.

**Poland in the European Council**

In the European Council, Poland is represented (in accordance with our constitution) by the Prime Minister. The Polish President can also participate in some summits if he believes that the given meeting is within his competence.

The importance of each country in the European Council depends mainly on the ability to form coalitions to achieve its interests. The first years of Polish activity in the European Council have shown that our politicians are still in the process of gaining experience and building their position in this body. But it should be noted that since 2007, the Polish activity in the European Council has intensified and Polish politicians have achieved successes. Poland started to be perceived as the most important country on the eastern flank of the European Union, who knows how to effectively build political coalitions made up of the Visegrad Group states and Baltic states. For the first time, this could be observed during the preparation for the EU budget outlook for 2007–2013. However, after 2008, when it became clear that we have a large influence on the European Union’s eastern policy, the importance of Poland grew significantly. Poland, along with Sweden, was the co-author of the ‘Eastern Partnership’ project developed under the European Neighbourhood Policy, a new proposal for regional cooperation addressed to Eastern Europe and South Caucasus.

Poland also managed to gather the countries of Central and Eastern Europe around itself in the European Council, in order to develop a common position regarding the cooperation between states to deal with the economic crisis and to create an energy and climate package in 2009. Poland’s coalition-building skills have also been confirmed at the European Council summit in the same year, when the issue of financing the prevention of climate change was discussed by the EU. Poland stood at the head of a coalition of countries of Central and Eastern Europe which blocked decisions unfavourable to them, i.e. decisions on high contributions to the EU budget. With a skilful diplomatic game played by Poland, a compromise was reached which significantly reduced the prospect of financial burden for the poorer EU countries, including Poland. It should also be noted that the compromise was made possible
through the support of our position by Germany – the most important partner for Poland in the European Council, with whom Poland has maintained exemplary relations in recent years. The quintessence of these outstanding relations was the joint meeting of the Polish and German governments in July 2011.

The role of Poland in the European Council has also grown due to the Polish Presidency in the Council of the European Union (in second half of 2011); it requires close cooperation and coordination of activities between the President of the European Council and the Polish Prime Minister and his government.

The European Commission

The Commission is a supranational Community institution reflecting the federal dimension of the EU. This is shown by its aim – its role is to represent the interests of the Union as a whole, and not the specific interests of individual Member States.

Assuming a position in the Commission, each Member takes an oath not to accept any instructions from their governments, to refrain from activities which are incompatible with the duties of the Commissioner; they are also not allowed to perform other professional activities. State governments undertake not to exert any pressure on their Commissioners. The Commission’s term of office is five years, and the term of each Member is renewable. The Commission’s seat is in Brussels. The composition of the Commission must be approved jointly by the European Council and the European Parliament.

In the term 2009–2014, the Commission is composed of 27 Commissioners, one for each Member State.\footnote{Upon the accession of Croatia to the EU, one Croatian Commissioner will join the Commission, but only until the end of the present term, i.e. until 2014.} Under the Treaty of Lisbon, from the next term, which begins in November 2014, the number of Members of the Commission will correspond to two thirds of the number of Member States, based on rule of equal rotation reflecting the demographic and geographical diversity of the Member States. The Treaty, however, leaves it for the European Council to take the final decision on the number of Members of the Commission.

An important innovation introduced by the Lisbon Treaty is the decision that the functions of the Commissioner for External Relations (with the rank of Vice-President of the Commission) and the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (member of the EU Council) will be held by the same person. Therefore, the two functions in two different EU institutions – the European Commission and the Council of the European Union – were combined in one person in order to consolidate EU external policy.
The current President of the Commission (2009–2014) is José Manuel Barroso of Portugal, and the Commissioner proposed by Poland for this term is Janusz Lewandowski, who is responsible for the EU budget.

A Commissioner’s term of office may end in several different ways. In case of a breach of the oath or any abuse by the Commissioners, the European Parliament may vote to dismiss the whole Commission en bloc (it cannot dismiss individual Members). In the event of serious misconduct of or inability to exercise the function (for instance, due to a chronic disease) by a Commissioner, the Court of Justice may (but only at the request of the Commission or the Council of the European Union) decide to dismiss the Member of the Commission. Commissioners can also be dismissed by the President of the Commission, but with the approval of the other Members of the Commission. Resignation can also be voluntary or natural (death). In the event of a vacancy, the position in question may remain vacant until the end of the term or a new Commissioner (from the same country) may be appointed by the European Council, by qualified majority voting, but also only until the end of the term.

The rules of functioning

The Commission is a collective body, which is reflected by the fact that decisions are made jointly by its Members. Commission meetings are convened by the President at least once a week. Each Member of the Commission is responsible for a certain range of topics (one or more sectors). According to the Lisbon Treaty, portfolios are distributed among the Commissioners by the President working jointly in this regard with the Member States. However, practice shows that the division of responsibilities is carried out by negotiations between the countries. Major sectors are managed by the Commissioners from the so-called strong countries.

The Commission’s administrative structure includes Directorates General (such as DG Trade, DG Budget, DG Agriculture), with specialised working groups operating within them. In total, the Commission employs over 20,000 officials.

Competences

The main role of the Commission is to control and monitor the correct application of Community law. This institution observes the correctness of actions of other Community institutions and Member States and national entities. Within its powers, the Commission may bring an action before the Court of Justice if it discovers an infringement of Community law.

Another important competence of the Commission is the making of law. The institution’s legislative activity involves the adoption of legal acts – regulations, directives, permits, etc. – which execute the decisions of the Council.
or under the direct authority from the Treaty; the latter is very rare and applies, for instance, to public enterprises.

The Commission also has the direct legislative initiative – legislative proposals must come from the Commission.

In taking the legislative initiative, the Commission must consult the proposals in advance with the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, which represent an opinion on the content of the proposed act.

Another important function of the Commission is conducting current policy, i.e. an executive and coordinating function. In this capacity, the Commission executes the regulations of the Council and the Parliament, implements the EU budget and is responsible for it, presents annual reports on the functioning of the European Union in the Parliament and the Council.

The last important prerogative of the Commission is international activity. On behalf of the European Union, the Commission maintains diplomatic relations with other international organisations and countries. Delegations from the Commission represent the EU with other entities (e.g. the Commissioner for Trade always represents the EU at the meetings of the World Trade Organization). The Commission (but only after obtaining a mandate for negotiations from the Council) negotiates international agreements on behalf of the Communities with other entities, such as trade agreements and customs agreements, association agreements with third countries, cooperation agreements with countries and international organizations, accession agreements of new countries. The European Commission also has certain powers in the field of external activity (it has an impact on the development and functioning of the European External Action Service), mainly by trying to achieve consistency in the positions of EU Member States in the international arena.

Poland in the European Commission

Despite the fact that the Members of the European Commission are officially independent and do not execute any instructions from the states, in fact, the Commissioners secretly care about the realisation of the priorities of countries from which they originate. For this reason, every time when it comes to the selection of the European Commission, very difficult negotiations are conducted between governments on the distribution of portfolios.

Each country fights for the portfolio which is most advantageous for them in relation to the implementation of their priorities over the following five years. Given the scope of competence of the Polish Commissioner for the term 2004–2009, we can consider it a success of Poland. Commissioner Danuta Huebner was responsible for regional policy and Structural Funds, the implementation of which most certainly belonged to the Polish priorities – to stimulate the Polish economy. Except for the Common Agricultural Policy, expen-
The Council of the European Union

In the Treaty of Lisbon, this institution is referred to as ‘the Council’. However, by the decision of 1993, it named itself the ‘Council of the European Union’ and it is usually referred to in this way. Unlike the Commission, which is a supranational body, the Council is an institution whose main purpose is to represent the interests of Member States and has an intergovernmental nature. The Council of the EU consists of ministers of the Member States (who’s task is to implement the priorities of their countries), but it is not a permanent group of the same representatives. The composition of the body varies depending on the subject of the meeting. For example, a debate on agriculture would be conducted by ministers of agriculture, whereas a meeting on transport would be attended by ministers of transport. In total, there are ten configurations of the Council. The most important of them, however, is the Foreign Affairs Council, composed of foreign ministers. This meeting is chaired by the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. It is a new function, introduced by the Treaty of Lisbon Treaty.

The High Representative is also a member of the European Commission in the rank of Vice-President, who deals with the EU’s external relations. He is appointed by the European Council by qualified majority voting, but also must be approved as a member of the European Commission by the European Parliament. The term of office of the High Representative is 5 years. Currently, Catherine Ashton from the UK is the High Representative.

Ministers of European affairs meet in matters of general policy and coordination of Council policy. This configuration is called the General Affairs Council. This Council is responsible for the preparation of the European Council meetings and the cooperation with the President of the European Council and the Commission. The problems of the Economic and Monetary Union are examined by the Council composed of ministers of economy and of finance (called ECOFIN). The Foreign Affairs Council, the General Affairs Council,
the ECOFIN and the Agriculture Council meet most frequently, at least once
a month, while the remaining configurations meet only a few times a year.

Thus, we have one Council in several different forms. Due to the special
composition of this institution, it has no terms of office.

The seat of the European Council in Brussels. Three times a year (April,
June, October), however, the Council meets in Luxembourg City.

As mentioned above, the Council members do not meet too often (after
all, the ministers perform their duties in their home countries), therefore they
are assisted by the General Secretariat (supporting the administrative activi-
ties of the Council) and the Committee of Permanent Representatives
(COREPER).

The COREPER (with a seat in Brussels) is composed of ambassadors of
the Member States, who examine the legislative proposals of the Commission
before the Council meetings and try to prepare legislation to relieve their own
ministers.

**The rules of functioning**

An important element of the functioning of the Council is the Presidency,
under which one Member State performs the function of the Council’s presi-
dent for six months (from January to June or from July to December). The min-
ister of the country holding the Presidency of the EU Council chairs the Coun-
cil meetings in all configurations, except for the Foreign Affairs Council, which
is always chaired by the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security
Policy. Since each country holding the Presidency tries to achieve mainly its
own priorities, the Council experienced lack of continuity in its work. There-
fore, the Treaty of Lisbon introduced the principle of presidency trios. States
holding the Presidency consecutively were combined in trios and given the task
of setting common priorities for a period of 18 months.

**Competences**

The most important competence of the Council is its law-making function.
Until 1993 (entry into force of the Treaty of Maastricht) the Council was the
only Community institution serving as a legislative body; thereafter, in most
cases it co-creates the law (through the ordinary legislative procedure, formerly
known as the co-decision procedure) with the European Parliament.

The EU Council also has indirect legislative initiative; it may force the
European Commission to initiate the legislative procedure. The Council itself
does not have, however, independent direct legislative initiative.

Another important prerogative is the power to establish other bodies and
their composition. The Council elects representatives to the Committee of the
Regions, the Economic and Social Committee, elects the judges of the Court
of Auditors. The Council also determines the salaries and retirement pensions
of the highest EU officials, including: the President of the European Council, the High Representative, judges of the Court of Auditors and Court of Justice, as well as Members of the Commission.

Another important function of the EU Council is to control the implementation of Community standards by the Member States and enterprises. This applies mainly to the functioning of the EMU and the Common Commercial Policy. An extremely important field of competence is the coordinating function, which requires the Council to coordinate economic policies of the Member States in order to implement the single market.

The last, but equally important prerogative is the Council’s role in the international sphere. The Council (jointly with the Parliament and the Commission) initiates and concludes international agreements on behalf of the Communities with other actors in international relations, takes decisions necessary for the implementation of the CFSP (while trying to maintain unity, consistency and effectiveness of the EU).

The decision-making process

The Council of the European Union can make decisions by way of three different procedures:

– unanimity,
– simple majority,
– qualified majority.

Under the Lisbon Treaty, unanimity remains the method of decision-making in the field of judicial cooperation, police cooperation, fiscal policy, the financial aspects of environmental policy, migration and asylum policy. Unanimity is also still applied for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, concluding international agreements (Association and Accession Agreements), as well as revisions of treaties and adoption of uniform laws on elections to the European Parliament.

Simple majority is the decision-making procedure applied only in procedural and organisational matters (and thus non-substantial ones).

The qualified majority decision-making procedure was meant to make the cooperation between the EU Member States more effective. Currently, until 31 October 2014, the Nice formula is applied. Passing a legislative act requires meeting all the three following conditions: obtaining a sufficient number of votes and the required number of states representing a sufficient part of the EU population.

Every country was allocated a pool of votes: Germany, the United Kingdom, France and Italy – 29 votes each, Poland and Spain – 27 votes each, Romania – 14, the Netherlands – 13, Greece, Belgium, Portugal, the Czech Republic and Hungary – 12 votes each, Austria, Bulgaria and Sweden – 10 votes each, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Slovakia and Lithuania – 7 votes.
each, Luxembourg, Latvia, Slovenia, Estonia and Cyprus – 4 votes each, Malta – 3 votes.

The total number of votes for the current 27 Member States is 345. The qualified majority required for adopting a law accepted on a proposal from the Commission is 255 votes cast by the majority of countries (over 50 per cent of countries). However, to adopt a legislation which does not originate in the Commission, a majority of 255 votes cast by at least 2/3 countries is required. Any Council member can also request verification that the Member States constituting the qualified majority represent 62 per cent of the total EU population. If this condition is not met, the law cannot be adopted.

The Nice formula proved to be quite troublesome for efficient decision making within the Council of the European Union. The main problem is certainly the requirement to meet the three conditions to pass a legislation.

The Treaty of Lisbon was intended to streamline the decision-making process. It was agreed that from 31 October 2014, the new decision-making process in the Council will be applied, based on two tests: a sufficient number of countries representing the required amount of the EU population.

In cases where a legislative proposal originates from the European Commission or the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the qualified majority is at least 55 per cent of countries (not less than 15 members) representing 65 per cent of the population of the European Union. The blocking minority must consist of at least four Member States representing over 35 per cent of the EU population.

When the Council does not act on a proposal from the Commission or from the High Representative, the qualified majority is defined as at least 72 per cent of the members of the Council representing Member States comprising at least 65 per cent of the population of the EU.

It was also agreed that the period from 1 November 2014 to 31 March 2017 will be a transitional period, when the new formula adopted in the Lisbon Treaty will be applied, but at the request of a Member State it will be possible to return to the Nice voting formula. In the transitional period, it will also be possible to apply the Ioannina formula, under which it is easier to block decisions. The Ioannina formula was a concession to the countries which feared that they could be easily outvoted. According to this principle, in order to oppose a legislative proposal it is sufficient to gather 3/4 of countries or 3/4 of the population required to form the ordinary blocking minority.

After the transitional period, i.e. from 1 April 2017, the Ioannina formula will still apply, but in an amended form. In order to express opposition to a legislative proposal it will be enough to gather 55 per cent of countries or 55 per cent of the population required to constitute a blocking minority. In such case, the Council of the EU must find a satisfactory solution within a reasonable time.
Under the Lisbon Treaty, decision making by qualified majority is applied in most cases and correlates with the ordinary legislative procedure.

**Poland in the Council of the European Union**

Throughout the history of the functioning of the principle of qualified majority voting in the Council, the Member States avoided it, always trying to find a solution by consensus. In all matters covered by the principle of qualified majority voting, over 80 per cent of legislative acts have been adopted by acclamation. It is questionable whether the procedure of qualified majority is needed at all. The fact that countries apply it very rarely does not mean that it is redundant; the Member States realize that it is possible to pass or block a decision by voting, and this is what “subconsciously” motivates them to find a solution by consensus at any price. However, when it comes to qualified majority voting, the countries forming a coalition usually rely on the rule of reciprocity of the other coalition partners, counting on their support for potential future votes on legislation, and therefore having the highest number of votes by a Member State is strategically important. Thus the role of Poland, currently holding 27 votes in the Council of the European Union, is significant.

There is no such notion as permanent coalitions in the European Union. Depending on the project concerned and the priorities of the countries in the discussed field, various coalitions are formed. Hence, countries are highly flexible with regard to shaping their attitudes and participation in coalitions. There have been different coalition divisions: advocates of the free market against protectionist countries, rich against poor, northern against southern, supporters of the intergovernmental attitude against those seeking to deepen the integration process, the recipients of structural funds against net donors to the budget. Poland is trying to use its negotiating position resulting from the large number of votes. The recent years of participation of Polish ministers in the Council have shown that we are an important player, skilfully shaping coalitions to meet our own interests.

**The European Parliament**

The European Parliament (EP) has existed since the beginning of the Communities, i.e. since the establishment of the ECSC. Originally, it was called the ECSC Common Assembly; after signing the Treaties of Rome establishing the next two Communities, the name was changed to the Parliamentary Assembly. In 1962, yet another resolution was passed to rename the institution to the European Parliament, and it is still in force today.

The seat of the European Parliament is in Strasbourg (where most of its plenary sessions take place), but some plenary sessions and the meetings of
parliamentary committees take place in Brussels. Luxembourg City is the seat of the EP General Secretariat.

Until 1979, the European Parliament had no direct legitimacy because its members were representatives delegated by national parliaments. The first direct elections to the European Parliament were held in 1979. From this point, we can definitely say that the European Parliament is supranational and is an institution whose structure and composition are the best examples of the transformation taking place in the integration process.

So far, no uniform election law was adopted for all EU Member States. The MEPs are elected by direct universal election in accordance with the election laws in each Member State.

The Lisbon Treaty established that the composition of the European Parliament comprises no more than 750 MEPs and the President. The allocation of the number of seats for each country was made on the basis of demographic factors and was accepted unanimously by the Council.

Table 1. The composition of the European Parliament in the term 2009–2014

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Number of MEPs</th>
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<th>Number of MEPs</th>
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<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>Austria</td>
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<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
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<td>Finland</td>
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<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>Denmark</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
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<td>Slovakia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
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<td>Lithuania</td>
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<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
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<td>Ireland</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
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<td>Latvia</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>Greece</td>
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<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
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<td>Luxembourg</td>
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<td>Belgium</td>
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<td>Estonia</td>
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<td>Hungary</td>
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<td>Cyprus</td>
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<td>The Czech Republic</td>
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<td>Malta</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>18</td>
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Source: http://www.europarl.europa.eu

The final decision on the composition of the Parliament is taken by the European Council after approval by the European Parliament. If Croatia joins the EU before the end of the EP’s present term (ending in 2014), the number of MEPs in the present term will surely increase.
Despite the assignment of a specific number of seats to each country, no national groups may be formed in the European Parliament; only political groups are allowed (hence the supranational nature of the institution). For a political group to be formed, it must include 25 MEPs representing at least one quarter of the Member States.

The following factions were formed in the term 2009–2014: the biggest is the EPP – European People’s Party Group (265 MEPs), the second-largest is the S&D – Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats Group (184), third is the ALDE – Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (84); some smaller factions are the Verts/EFA – the Greens/European Free Alliance, ECR – European Conservatives and Reformists Group, GUE/NGL – the Confederal Group of the United Left/Nordic Green Left, EFD – Europe Freedom and Democracy and non-associated members.

The work of the Parliament is directed by the President, assisted by 14 Vice-Presidents. The term of office of the President and Vice-Presidents is half of the term of the EP, i.e. 2.5 years. The President elected for the first term in the Parliament 2009–2014 was a Pole, Jerzy Buzek from the EPP (it was the result of an agreement between the EPP and the S&D, so the next President for another 2.5 years will be a socialist from the S&D).

Competences

The European Parliament, in contrast to its national counterparts, has no law-making powers, it only co-creates law, sharing this competence with the Council. This power is realized through the ordinary legislative procedure, whereby the Parliament can block the adoption of a legislative act.

The European Parliament has no legislative initiative; officially this prerogative is exercised by the European Commission. However, the EP can exercise indirect legislative initiative by suggesting to the European Commission to prepare a legislative proposal.

Another important power vested in the EP is the control function. The EP has the right to interpellate, or to refer questions to officials of other institutions to enable the EP the evaluation of the other bodies; this concerns mainly the European Commission and the Council.

The European Parliament also has very important prerogatives in the field of budget; it gives a discharge to the Commission in respect of the implementation of the budget for the given year, and is involved in adopting the budget proposal jointly with the Council of the European Union.

The EP also has a creative function; it approves the President of the European Commission proposed by the European Council and then all members of the Commission. The MEPs may vote on a motion of censure of the Commission and dismiss it by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast, with a quorum constituting a majority of the members.
The Parliament is also consulted by the Council in the event of election of judges to the Court of Auditors; it also chooses the Ombudsman (whose term of office is 5 years), who examines complaints from the citizens or residents of the EU on irregularities in the execution of tasks of EU institutions and bodies (with the exception of the Court of Justice and the Court of First Instance).

The European Parliament also has prerogatives in the international sphere, takes part in the process of concluding international agreements between the Communities and other subjects of international relations, plays an especially important role in finalising accession agreements, which require its consent.

**Poland in the European Parliament**

The role of Polish MEPs in the European Parliament is extremely visible. First of all, the Pole Jerzy Buzek is the President of Parliament and directs its work. The election of a Pole for this position was preceded by extremely difficult negotiations, which Poland completed successfully, mainly owing to the support of German and French MEPs. The heads of parliamentary committees and their deputies also play very important roles in the EP.

In the current parliamentary term (2009–2014), Poles are heads of the following Parliamentary Committees: D. Hübner – Committee on Regional Development, B. Liberadzki – Committee on Budgetary Control, J. Wojciechowski – Committee on Agriculture, R. Trzaskowski – Committee on Constitutional Affairs. Also in the previous parliamentary term (2004–2009), Poles were very active and served, for instance, as: Vice-Presidents of the Parliament (Janusz Onyszkiewicz and Jacek Saryusz-Wolski in 2004–2007, Marek Siwiec and Adam Bielan in 2007–2009). Poles also held the positions of Chairpersons or Vice-Chairpersons of important parliamentary committees (e.g. Janusz Lewandowski – Committee on Budgets, Janusz Wojciechowski – Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development, Jan Olbrycht – Committee on Regional Development).

Poles certainly have an extremely strong position in the European Parliament in comparison with other countries of Central and Eastern Europe. This results, however, from the superiority in the numbers of our MEPs over other countries of the region.

**The Court of Justice of the European Union**

The Lisbon Treaty defines the Court of Justice of the European Union as an institution of the EU dedicated to the judicial dimension of the organisation. The Court of Justice of the European Union consists of: The Court of Justice (formerly the European Court of Justice – ECJ), the General Court (former Court of First Instance), and specialised courts (the former judicial panels).
The Court of Justice

The Court of Justice is in Luxembourg City. According to the Treaty of Lisbon, there is a judge from each Member State sitting in the Court – therefore, the Court currently has 27 members. The Judges are appointed by consensus between the governments of the Member States, after consultation with a panel appointed by the Council. The panel comprises seven persons chosen from among former members of the Court of Justice and former members of national supreme courts.

The Judges are supported in their work by eight Advocates-General, of whom five come from the largest Member States, and the remaining three are elected rotationally by the other countries. If necessary, the Council may, by an unanimous decision, increase the number of members of the Court, if requested by the Court.

The Court’s term of office is six years (there is no restriction in the number of terms of office), but every three years, half of the Judges are replaced (to avoid abrupt personnel changes in the body).

The Court of Justice is an independent body, the Judges and Advocates-General are European officials, and they take an oath at the time of election, declaring that they will have in mind only the common interest and respect for EU law and that they will not accept any instructions from their countries of origin. This highlights the supranational character of this body.

The Court always sits in compositions comprising an odd number of Judges, at plenary sessions or in smaller panels. Plenary sessions are convened in the most important matters, such as the dismissal of the Ombudsman (at the request of the Parliament), decision on dismissal of a Commission Member, sanctions against a member of the Court of Auditors. In the case of other contentious issues, the Court of Justice sits in chambers of five or three Judges. The deliberations of the Court of Justice are secret and the rulings are agreed upon by way of voting. The Advocates-General assist the judges by thoroughly analysing the case and preparing an objective opinion, which basically contains a suggested decision.

Competences

The Court of Justice is the judicial body of the European Union, whose main task is to ensure that Community law is observed and that this law has primacy over the national laws of the Member States.

The most important powers of the Court of Justice include: controlling the legality of legislative acts, examining complaints against EU institutions on refraining from action or on inaction (for instance, on failure of the Commission to prepare a legislative proposal necessary to implement the provisions of the Treaties), controlling the activities of the Member States (in carrying out their obligations under the Treaties), handling claims for damages (for instance,
actions brought by EU citizens on compensation for losses incurred as the result of mistakes made by EU officials).

The Court of Justice has an extremely important function in relation to international agreements. This is mainly an advisory role, involving the preparation of an opinion on compliance with the Treaty. The Court of Justice is also authorised to issue preliminary rulings (in response to questions referred to the Court by national courts of the Member States) on the interpretation of the Treaties, legislative acts of EU institutions and the European Central Bank, by-laws and rules of procedure of bodies established by the Council.

The Court of Justice also rules as the court of second instance in appeals against the decisions of the General Court.

To sum up, we can say that the Court of Justice acts as an administrative, international, constitutional, and labour court.

**The General Court**

The General Court (formerly the Court of First Instance) was founded in 1989 by a Council decision adopted under the Single European Act.

The seat of the General Court is in Luxembourg City. Its composition, method of selection, and character is analogous to the solution in the Court of Justice (27 Judges); it is presently not assisted by Advocates-General, although the Lisbon Treaty does not preclude their appointment, if needed.

**Competences**

The main competence of the General Court includes first-instance jurisdiction in the following fields:

- complaints by individuals (with the exception of EU officials, who are subject to the Civil Service Tribunal),
- claims for compensation for damage caused to legal and natural persons resulting from the activity of EU officials and bodies (except for actions against the Parliament and the Council, which are subject to the jurisdiction of the Court of Justice),
- actions for annulment of a legislative act, actions against legislative inaction, actions for damage against the EU.

In addition, the General Court is competent to resolve labour disputes and to rule on the basis of arbitration clauses (with the exception of those assigned to the Civil Service Tribunal or the Court of Justice). The General Court also has a limited power to prepare preliminary rulings, and is the court of appeal for appeals against decisions of the Civil Service Tribunal.

**Specialised courts**

The Treaty of Nice introduced a new element to the judicial branch of the European Communities – the judicial panels, which were renamed by the Lis-
bon Treaty to specialised courts operating at the General Court (formerly Court of First Instance). The specialised courts may be established by the Council and the Parliament through the ordinary legislative procedure. The members of these courts – persons of unquestionable independence – are appointed unanimously by the Council.

The only specialised court established so far is the European Union Civil Service Tribunal. It was founded in 2005 and deals in the first instance with disputes between the EU and its officials. The court of appeal is the Court of Justice. The term of office is six years. The seat of the Tribunal is located at the General Court in Luxembourg City. It now consists of seven Judges, this number may however be increased by decision of the Council, at the request of the Court of Justice.

Poland in the Court of Justice of the European Union

It should be remembered that the Court of Justice of the EU is a fully independent judicial institution. It is therefore difficult to consider the role of Poland in this body. It results mainly from the rule that each Member State has its judges in this institution. The Polish Judge in the Court of Justice is Prof. Marek Safian. His predecessor in the previous term was Prof. Jerzy Makarczyk.

During the negotiations on the Lisbon Treaty, the Polish government negotiated a provision that if the European Council decides to increase the number of Advocates-General in the Court of Justice, Poland will be entitled to appoint a permanent speaker. Thus, our country would gain the same rights as the largest countries of the EU. Until now, however, the European Council has not acted to increase the number of Advocates-General.

The Polish Judge in the General Court (former Court of First Instance) is Prof. Irena Wiszniewska-Białecka.

We can speak of an undoubted success of Poland in the context of the Civil Service Tribunal of the European Union, where one of the seven Judges is the Polish Judge Prof. Irena Boruta.

The Court of Auditors

The Court of Auditors was established in 1975 under an intergovernmental agreement concluded in 1975 in connection with the budgetary reform of the Community.

The seat of the Court of Auditors is in Luxembourg City. It is composed of 27 Judges representing each Member State. The Court’s term of office is six years. Its members are called judges, although this body is not a judicial, but a control organ. They are elected by the Council of the European Union, after an earlier opinion from the European Parliament. The Court is a supranational
body, composed of independent officials representing the interests of the European Union, and not the interests of their country of origin.

**Competences**

The Court of Auditors is the equivalent of the Polish national Supreme Audit Office, and its task is to control revenue and expenditure of the Communities and their organs. The object of control is primarily the general budget of the Communities and the activity of EU institutions in the area of loans and credits (it monitors the budgets of all agencies created by the Communities).

The Court of Auditors also controls the activities of the European Central Bank, but only as regards the effectiveness of management, and the financial sphere of the so-called European Schools and of the Europol.

At the end of each EU financial year, the Court of Auditors compiles an annual report, which is distributed to all EU institutions and is published in the *Official Journal of the EU*. The report is the basis for the discharge of the European Commission by the Parliament in respect of the implementation of the budget, which emphasizes the crucial role of the Court in the institutional system of the EU. In addition to annual reports, the Court also prepares special reports and opinions prepared upon special request of individual institutions.

**Poland in the Court of Auditors**

The Court of Auditors is, just as the Court of Justice of the European Union, fully independent and not subject to any pressure from the Member States. Therefore, we cannot speak of the role of Poland in this institution. The only role of Member States is the nomination of one candidate from each country to the Court of Auditors. Currently, the Polish member of the Court is Augusty Kubik, who took the position in 2010. His predecessor was Jacek Uczkiewicz.

**Conclusions**

As the largest country among the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, Poland undoubtedly plays an important role in the institutions of the European Union. Initially, this role was weak, due to the lack of experience in the negotiations held between the countries in the EU. Over time, however, Poland’s position has become stronger, as could be observed at successive summits of the European Council, where we tried to organise a joint coalition of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. This role is particularly visible in arranging a common position as regards shaping the budget, creating a common energy policy, the climate and energy package, and above all the challenges of building a relationship with the eastern neighbours of the European Union. However, we should not underestimate the fact that wherever we have achieved
success, it was associated with support for our position from Germany, who is undoubtedly our biggest partner in the European Union, and it is good for us to keep good relations with them.

References


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The European Union is undoubtedly the world’s largest trade power. According to the data from the World Trade Organization, the value of goods exported by the European Union in 2010 totaled USD 1,787 billion, which accounted for 15 per cent of global exports of goods. The European Union is also the world’s largest importer of goods. In 2010, the European market imported goods worth a total of USD 1,977 billion, which accounted for 13.5 per cent of global imports of goods. The position of the EU in the trade in services is similar. The European Union is not only a major global exporter and importer of services, but also occupies leading positions in the exports of different categories of services. In 2010, the EU provided services to the international market worth USD 684 billion, which accounted for 24.5 per cent of world exports of services. At that time, the EU market imported services worth USD 598 billion, which accounted for 22.1 per cent of the total world imports of intangible assets.

Reflecting on the causes of the current position of the European Union in world trade, we should analyse the principles of EU’s trade policies, which create conditions for the development of the trade exchange of the individual Member States and of the entire group. Due to the nature of this study, we should not only focus on the essence of the common commercial policy, but also consider changes to the Polish commercial policy related to Poland’s accession to the European Union.

Principles of the Common Commercial Policy

There is no detailed definition of commercial policy to be found in the official documents of the European Union. In practice, the European Commission treats it as all the measures governing trade with third countries. On the other
hand, the Court of Justice has held that commercial policy covers the same content as the national foreign trade policy. It can therefore be considered that the common commercial policy is a set of instruments for influencing international trade, involving a group of measures and economic and administrative tools aimed at maintaining the balance of payments in the European Union. For this reason, it functions mainly in the sphere of external economic policy and in principle fulfills the same functions in relation to the EU internal market, as each country’s trade policy in relation to its own market. One the one hand, the Common Commercial Policy covers unilateral (autonomous) measures, i.e. normative acts of secondary legislation adopted by EU institutions and administrative measures taken by the European Commission in particular. On the other hand, an important area of the Common Commercial Policy are also agreements (regardless of their names) between the EU and countries or other subjects of international law.

**Treaty provisions**

Now that the Lisbon Treaty has been adopted, the principles of the Common Commercial Policy are regulated by Articles 206–207 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU). Article 206 specifies the basic objectives of the Common Commercial Policy, which include the harmonious development of world trade and the liberalization of international economic relations, understood as the progressive abolition of restrictions on international trade and foreign direct investment.

Article 207 TFEU describes the practical aspects of the Common Commercial Policy. Under Article 207(2), upon entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, the commercial policy became subject to the regulations of the European Parliament and the Council. This provision has significantly contributed to the strengthening of the role of the European Parliament in establishing the EU commercial policy. The procedure of negotiating and concluding international agreements in the field of the Common Commercial Policy has not been essentially changed. Negotiations on the Common Commercial Policy are still conducted by the Commission, under authorisation from the Council. During the negotiations, both institutions are responsible for ensuring compliance of the negotiated solutions with the internal rules and policies of the EU. The Commission conducts these negotiations in consultation with a special Council committee (the Committee for Trade Policy, formerly known as Article 133 Committee1), to which it regularly reports on the progress of the negotiations. In this respect, a new obligation of the Commission under the TFEU is reporting on the negotiations also to the European Parliament.

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1 The name was changed upon the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon.
The basic procedure for voting in the Council in matters covered by Article 207 is qualified majority voting. Unanimity is required only for negotiation and conclusion of agreements in the fields of trade in services, commercial aspects of intellectual property, as well as foreign direct investment, provided that the conclusion of the agreement must be followed by adopting EU laws requiring unanimity within the Council. In other cases, the decisions in these areas are taken by qualified majority. Unanimity is also required if the negotiated agreement covers the field of trade in social, education and health services, if these agreements risk seriously disturbing the national organisation of such services and prejudicing the responsibility of Member States to deliver them. A similar voting procedure is also applied for cultural and audiovisual services, if agreements in these fields could risk prejudicing the Union’s cultural and linguistic diversity.

**Instruments of the Common Commercial Policy**

The instruments of the Common Commercial Policy include two groups of tools. The first group contains instruments of import policies aimed at protecting the internal market against external competition, which include import duties and safeguard measures taken in the event of dumping or subsidies, safeguards against excessive imports, special safeguard clauses in agriculture. The second group are the instruments of export policy, including, among others, safeguard measures in exports and measures for the promotion of exports.

According to the intentions of the creators of the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community, the basis for the common market was to be the customs union, as ensuring the free movement of goods in the internal market is not possible without common principles at its external borders. The formation of the customs union within the EEC was completed on 1 July 1968, a year and a half before the expiry of the transitional period stipulated in the Treaty. The customs tariffs between the Community Member States were completely abolished and a common customs tariff for third countries was established. At that time, the tariff rates of the Common Customs Tariff were the arithmetic mean of the 1957 national tariff rates in the Federal Republic of Germany, the Benelux countries, France and Italy. Upon the introduction of the Common Customs Tariff, customs policy was delegated by the Member States to the Community bodies. In accordance with the provisions of Article 31 TFEU, Common Customs Tariff duties shall be fixed by the Council acting by qualified majority of votes on a proposal from the Commission. The Commission in this case is guided by:

- the need to promote trade between Member States and third countries;
- developments in conditions of competition within the Union in so far as they lead to an improvement in the competitive capacity of undertakings;
the requirements of the Union as regards the supply of raw materials and semi-finished goods; in this connection the Commission shall take care to avoid distorting conditions of competition between Member States in respect of finished goods;

the need to avoid serious disturbances in the economies of Member States and to ensure rational development of production and an expansion of consumption within the Union;

The above shows that in the case of the European Union, customs duties are not only a financial category ensuring budget revenues but also an economic one. Duties are in fact a mechanism of protection and regulation of the internal market. They belong to the mechanisms determining the boundary conditions for running a business. Importers and producers must take into account the monetary value of duty in their economic calculation. This affects the calculation of operating costs, including the margins and ultimately the profitability of each business activity.

In addition to duties, the instruments of the EU imports policy also include actions to protect EU producers against imports conducted on terms which distort competition. In this case, these actions include the application of non-tariff trade policy measures by trade partners in the form of subsidies and dumping. EU laws on anti-dumping and countervailing proceedings are based on the Agreements binding for the members of the WTO, i.e. the Agreement on implementation of Article VI of the GATT 1994 and the Agreement on subsidies and countervailing measures. EU laws make it possible to protect EU producers not only against imports conducted on terms which distort competition, but also against imports conducted on fair terms. Protective measures can be applied where import is conducted on terms which cannot be regarded as reprehensible, but which cause losses for the EU industry. Council Regulation (EC) 260/2009 of 26 February 2009 on common rules for imports, which is applicable in such cases, is mostly a modified and more detailed version of the next WTO agreement, namely the Agreement on Safeguards. For imports of agricultural products, in addition to the general safeguard procedure against excessive imports, the EU may also apply a special safeguard clause (Special Safeguard – SSG) under the WTO Agreement on Agriculture.

The basic principle of the EU’s export policy is not to apply, with a few exceptions, any restrictions in exports.\(^2\) EU activity in this area includes attempts to create uniform rules to promote exports, so that the solutions applied do not lead to distortion of competition between enterprises. The EU

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\(^2\) The scale and structure of EU exports is regulated by the relations between demand and supply on the global market. There are certain restrictions in exports of specific goods, including national treasures, artistic goods, weapons. The main aim of export restrictions are security matters.
has no competence in the field of direct or indirect promotion of exports. This is still the domain of the Member States and subject to the commitments taken under the OECD. Much effort has been put in the approximation of the conditions of competition in the field of export credit insurance and credit guarantees. The Community is a party to the OECD Arrangement (Consensus) on Guidelines for Officially Supported Export Credit, which came into force in April 1978. The EU also conducts activities to promote exports in the form of trainings and seminars for small and medium enterprises and supports their participation in exhibitions and international fairs.

The instruments of the EU export policy also include measures to assist exporters against protectionist practices of third countries, if such practices are not justified in light of WTO standards. In accordance with Council Regulation (EC) No 125/2008 of 12 February 2008 amending Regulation (EC) No 3286/94 of 22 December 1994 laying down Community procedures in the field of the common commercial policy in order to ensure the exercise of the Community’s rights under international trade rules, in particular those established under the auspices of the World Trade Organization, each EU enterprise, or any association, with or without legal personality, acting on behalf of one or more EU enterprises, which considers that such EU enterprises have suffered adverse trade effects as a result of obstacles to trade that have an effect on the market of a third country, may lodge a written complaint. The European Commission decides to initiate the proceedings, and it conducts the proceedings. If, as a result of the investigation, the Commission finds that acting against the third country is in the interest of the EU, it may initiate litigation at the WTO forum or conclude a bilateral agreement with that country. In this situation, the Commission may also accept the unilateral actions of the third country in order to mitigate the effects of barriers to trade.

Trade agreements between the EU and third countries

The European Union’s trade policy is based on a political conception of a competitive European economy existing in an open system of world trade, based on multilateral rules supplemented by principles developed within the framework of bilateral and regional trade agreements. In addition to membership in the WTO and a number of international agreements within this organisation, the EU is a party to many international agreements which cover subjects included in the Common Commercial Policy. The diversity of these agreements makes it difficult to make a clear classification. There are two types of such agreements: (1) trade agreements (including customs agreements), which may be preferential or non-preferential and (2) mixed agreements (mainly association agreements, agreements on trade and economic cooperation, as well as partnership and economic cooperation agreements), which are more extensive than trade agreements.
The European Union has a well developed system of trade preferences. It contains two types of preferential trade agreements. The first of these provide for the mutual granting of certain concessions by the partners in the form of tariff reductions and/or reducing other trade barriers. The second type of agreements includes those under which the EU unilaterally grants preferences to its trade partners. The aim of the actions taken by the Union within the WTO and under bilateral trade agreements is to promote solutions favourable for building prosperity by ensuring internal stability and economic development of countries in different regions.

Since the founding of the EEC, many preferential agreements were concluded with trade partners. These agreements vary in nature, i.e. in the scope of the preferences granted. On the basis of the criterion of declining trade preferences (mainly customs duties), trade agreements concluded by the EU can be classified according to the so-called ‘pyramid of preferences’. Thus, we can distinguish the agreements or unilateral decisions of the European Union, which:

- establish a customs union between the EU and its partners (such as Turkey) which consists in abolishing trade barriers between the parties to the agreement, as well as in setting up a common external tariff (or equivalent level of customs duties) on imports from outside the union;
- build a free trade area (for example, with the Republic of Korea), which involves the removal of trade barriers (duties, quantitative restrictions and others) between the parties to the agreement;
- grant unilateral trade preferences (for example, to African, Caribbean and Pacific countries and to countries covered by the Generalized System of Preferences – GSP).
- establish no preferences (they guarantee the most favoured nation clause – MFN, based on the WTO agreements; trade agreements often only confirm the rules applicable in this system). An example of such a contractual relationship are the agreements concluded with the USA, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, Singapore and other countries not covered by customs preferences;
- treat partners less favourably in trade relations than the other partners of the EU (discriminatory treatment). In the past, such agreements were in place e.g. with the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA).

It should be noted that the unilateral customs preferences granted to ACP countries by the Community were contested by other developing countries within the World Trade Organization, which did not enjoy such preferences; as a result, the system of unilateral trade preferences for these countries initiated by the 1st Lomé Convention will be replaced by the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs). By replacing the unilateral preferences with mutual abolishment of customs duties, the EPAs are meant to ensure that relations between the EU and ACP countries are consistent with the rules of the WTO.
Another type of cooperation agreements concluded by the EU are Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (PCAs). The Community has concluded such agreements with Russia, Ukraine, Moldova, Kazakhstan, Armenia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan. These agreements were signed with countries which did not belong to the WTO, and their task was to introduce rules applicable between the members of WTO into the mutual trade relations. Upon accession to the WTO, the provisions of these agreements are replaced by the existing multilateral rules applicable within the organization.

The Polish trade policy in the context of EU membership

Poland’s accession to the European Union meant a fundamental change in the ability to conduct trade policy. As indicated in the previous section, since the signing of the Treaty of Rome, trade issues are resolved at Community level. Poland’s accession to the EU meant primarily its inclusion in the EU customs union, which had been in existence for many years. The direct effect of this process was the adoption of Community customs regulations, including the Community Customs Code and its implementing rules, the Community System of Reliefs from Customs Duties, the Common Customs Tariff, as well as EU solutions for non-tariff measures and the whole elaborate system of agreements with non-EU trade partners.

Since 1 May 2004, the duties collected by the Polish customs service have not constituted government revenue, but the EU’s own income. Each Member State is obliged to provide 75 per cent of customs revenues. The remaining 25 per cent of the revenue from customs duties is left to the Member State as the costs of collection. As a result of Poland’s accession to the EU, not only have the customs revenues been divided between Poland and the EU budget, but the revenues have also declined significantly. In the 12 months following 1 May 2004, compared to the same period before the accession, the value of duties collected by the Polish customs service was three times lower. Consequently, the Polish budget received only a quarter of the reduced customs revenues. EU share in the revenue from customs duties may therefore be regarded

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3 The PCA with Turkmenistan was signed in May 1998. It has not come into force.
4 Within the 12 months until 30 April 2004, revenue from customs duties registered as State Budget revenue reached PLN 4,026 million. In the year starting from 1 May 2004, it reached only PLN 1,301 million. In the first year of EU membership (May 2004–April 2005) the expenditures in the State Budget included PLN 779 million paid to the EU as revenue from customs duties. The positive effect for the Polish Budget as regards customs duties in the first year of membership was only PLN 522 million. A year earlier, when no payments were due to the EU, the total revenue from customs duties (PLN 4,026 million) contributed to the State Budget.
as a factor negatively affecting the balance of the state budget, if we ignore other financial flows between Poland and the EU.

The significant decrease of customs revenues should be attributed to several factors. First, as a result of the Polish accession to the EU, tariffs on agricultural products imported from the Member States and occasional additional duties imposed for the establishment of protective measures *erga omnes* were abolished. In addition, EU enlargement meant the abolition of such charges also in relation to the new Member States. Secondly, the adoption of the Common Customs Tariff reduced the average tariff rates in comparison with the rates previously applied in Poland⁵. Thirdly, the collection of duties has been transferred from Poland onto other EU countries, which has not been offset by additional revenue from imposing duties on goods imported by other Member States on the territory of Poland. Another factor which affected the amount of duties collected were changes which took place in the structure of Polish imports after the accession to the EU (trade diversion effect).

The accession to the European Union and the consequent duty-free movement of goods within it has not only affected the revenues from customs duties but also forced a change in the organisational structure of the Polish Customs Service. On 1 January 2004, the organisational structure of the Customs Service was composed of 14 chambers, 66 offices and 268 divisions. On 1 May 2004, most customs offices and divisions operating on the western and southern borders were closed down. As a result, at the moment of accession, the 14 customs chambers covered only 52 offices and 174 divisions. Further changes in the structure of the Customs Service, which were made in 2005, were related with the change of workload in some of the customs offices and divisions and with the process of adjusting the organisational structure of the Polish customs administration to the administrative division of the country.

After Poland’s the accession to the EU, changes in the functioning of the Customs Service concerned not only its organizational structure but also its tasks. In 2004, as compared with the previous year, the number of customs clearance procedures of goods from outside the EU fell, and therefore the workload of customs officers in the handling of customs declarations decreased. At the same time, the workload in the field of implementing tasks involving excise tax, the Common Agricultural Policy and conducting foreign trade statistics increased.

Upon the accession to the European Union, in addition to adopting the Common Customs Tariff, Poland also adopted the EU’s safeguard instruments,

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⁵ The arithmetic average conventional rate of the customs duty on agricultural products dropped from 33.8 per cent to 16.2 per cent, duty on fishery products was reduced from 18.5 per cent to 12.4 per cent, while the customs protection of industrial products declined from 9.9 per cent to 3.5 per cent.
including anti-dumping and countervailing proceedings, as well as safeguard measures against excessive imports. Replacing Polish legislation with Community legislation in this area had numerous consequences. Due to the limited scope of this study, the analysis of the effects of adopting these regulations will be limited to anti-dumping proceedings.

With the accession to the EU, Poland delegated the national competences in the use of anti-dumping measures to EU institutions. The motions for proceedings are submitted directly to the European Commission or the competent authority in a Member State, who forwards the motion to the Commission. The body responsible for conducting anti-dumping proceedings is the European Commission. The decision to impose definitive anti-dumping duties is taken by the Council after a discussion in preparatory groups (the Working Party on Trade Questions). After Poland’s accession to the EU, the fundamental consequences of anti-dumping proceedings consist not just in institutional changes in their implementation, but mainly in the scope of protection and the reasons for which proceedings are initiated. Poland can no longer change the scope of protection of the domestic market and apply its own instruments to enhance the protection of domestic producers against foreign competition. There are certain circumstances required by EU laws for initiating the anti-dumping procedure, e.g.: the occurrence or threat of loss, protection of EU interests.

Another important aspect of the changes which occurred in the area of trade policy after Poland’s accession to the EU, in addition to the possibility of using various tools of this policy, are trade negotiations conducted both within the World Trade Organization and outside the organisation, within the framework of bilateral economic relations with individual partners. As already mentioned, if there is a need to negotiate and conclude agreements with one or more third countries or international organisations, the Commission makes recommendations to the Council, which authorizes it to open the necessary negotiations. The Commission conducts these negotiations in consultation with a special committee appointed by the Council to assist the Commission in this task and in accordance with such guidelines as the Council may issue. The Commission reports regularly to the special committee and the European Parliament on the progress of the negotiations (Article 207(3)). As a result of such regulations, from 1 May 2004, Poland was deprived of the ability to conclude independent trade agreements, including presenting separate positions in the WTO. In order to show the changes which have occurred in this area, we can use the example of negotiations conducted under the Doha Round.

Under the provisions of Article XIX paragraph 1 of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), in early 2000, a new round of negotiations began (GATS 2000), aimed at deepening the existing obligations of WTO members.
While the international legal regulations of trade in services contained in the Final Act of the GATT Uruguay Round are considered to be a great achievement of the talks conducted in the years 1986–1994, the countries’ specific obligations contained in the detailed lists of national commitments (Schedules of Specific Commitments, SSC) are perceived quite differently. Poland was actively engaged in the new round of GATS negotiations. In 2002, Poland presented its initial proposals to Brazil, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Korea, Pakistan, the United States and Tunisia. Until the accession to the EU, Poland carried out bilateral negotiations in Geneva with the majority of WTO members, to whom it addressed the proposals to liberalise the services sector (one or two rounds of talks). Only Brazil consistently refused to engage in negotiations with Poland, despite repeated invitations from the Polish side. In addition to the negotiations with the partners whose market of services was in Poland’s sphere of interest, Poland also held bilateral negotiations with those WTO members who submitted their proposals addressed to Poland. There were, for instance, four rounds of negotiations with Switzerland. The last bilateral negotiations conducted independently by Poland took place in the first half of 2003.

Membership in the European Union essentially changed the situation of our country in GATS/WTO. Currently, our interests in the negotiations are represented by the Commission. The revised Polish demands were submitted to the European Commission and attached to EU demands, which were collectively presented in January 2005. Until May 2004, the Commission presented the position of Poland as an observer, and later as one of the Member States.

The possibility of influencing the directions and shape of the Common Commercial Policy by Poland

In the previous section, we discussed the most important changes which took place in the area of trade policy after Poland’s accession to the EU as regards the tools of this policy and the contractual trade relationships. The most important change in customs matters after the accession was the loss of autonomy in shaping the level and structure of the customs tariff. This does not mean, however, that Poland does not have any influence on its development. Individual Member States, including Poland, can in fact affect the shape of the Community customs policy through the participation of their representatives in

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[7] The revised EU-25 demands do not, however, take into account all the initial Polish demands. They do not include the reservations concerning the ‘sensitive sectors’, such as: medical and dental services, services provided by midwives, nurses, physiotherapists and paramedics, as well as social and health services. Upon delegating the GATS negotiations to the European Commission in 2003, Poland resigned from the demands which were submitted to GATS members in these sectors from 2000.
the work of the Council, the European Parliament and various committees consulting the legislation in customs matters. The possibilities of influencing the non-tariff trade policy instruments by Poland are also similar. This influence can be either direct or indirect. In the first case, it is by the participation of Polish representatives in the work of EU institutions. In the second, it is by the actions of the relevant interest groups and their lobbying. Domestic producers’ organisations, trade associations, representatives of regions – they all can affect the shape of future legislation by engaging in the functioning of European pressure groups.

Reflecting on the benefits of Polish participation in the customs union existing within the EU, we should underline the international dimension of the customs policy. EU membership increased the bargaining power of Poland in negotiations with third countries. Despite the limitations of Polish autonomy in matters of trade policy, we can still assume that our membership in the EU significantly increases Poland’s ability to achieve commercial goals, provided that it can get support from other Member States and thereby influence the actions of the European Commission. An example of this are the trade negotiations conducted within the WTO. So far, the role of Poland in the WTO, given its position in the global economy, was in fact minimal. Our share in world exports of goods is around 1 per cent, and around the same in the case of exports of services. The position of the European Union in this respect is completely different. As mentioned before, the European Union is undoubtedly the world’s largest trading power. For this reason, the EU’s negotiating ability in the World Trade Organisation is incomparably higher than that of most of the other WTO members. The realisation of the interests of the Polish economy depends on the activity of the Polish institutions responsible for formulating the trade policy at EU level. Effective protection of the interests of Polish entrepreneurs and of national interests depends on the effectiveness of these institutions. The realisation of Polish proposals in the WTO depends on whether these proposals are taken into account in the negotiating position of the European Union. Therefore, our activity within the Committee for Trade Policy (formerly known as Article 133 Committee) is extremely important, as the influence of Member States in the field of working out the principles of the Common Commercial Policy is associated mainly with the activities of the Committee.

The Committee for Trade Policy assists the Commission in negotiations on trade agreements and advises the Commission on matters of the Common Commercial Policy. The Committee is an advisory body, without prejudice to the functions of working groups for the relevant geographical areas, responsible for bilateral relations with third countries. A Polish representative is involved in the activities of the Committee. The meetings of the Committee are held in Brussels on a regular basis (usually twice a month) and in Geneva, during GATS/WTO sessions.
At the meetings, the Member States submit their demands and comments on the proposals of documents and positions on the agenda. The Council Committee for Trade Policy works on three levels: political (members), preparing the meetings (deputies) and expert, for discussing specific issues in specific areas of the Common Commercial Policy (steel, textiles and other industrial sectors (STIS) services and investments, mutual recognition). At the expert level, the Committee meetings involve issues such as services. In this area, the Committee conducts in-depth discussions on the problems of trade in services. This way, the Committee is a forum for the Member States to develop a common EU position on the common commercial policy in the field of services, which is then presented by the European Commission on the forum of GATS/WTO in Geneva.

The issues related to Poland’s participation in the Committee for Trade Policy are managed by the Department of Trade Policy in the Ministry of Economy. In addition to issues directly related to the functioning of the WTO, its tasks include:

- handling cases concerning the Polish position on trade policy tariff, non-tariff and safeguard measures proposed and applied in the European Union;
- handling cases concerning preferential agreements and other trade agreements concluded by the EU.

Due to the extension of the European Parliament’s competences in trade policy, the Parliament can also be used to develop the position of the Member States in this area. For, in accordance with Article 207 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU, the European Commission has the same obligations towards the European Parliament as it had so far towards the Committee for Trade Policy.

Conclusions

In conclusion, it is worth considering the consequences of adoption of the principles of the Common Commercial Policy by Poland for domestic producers and exporters. Poland’s accession to the European Union has changed the conditions of trade, not only in the legal and institutional sphere, but also in reality. These changes occurred as a consequence of joining the customs union, which is also the foundation of the EU internal market. The internal market has ensured the free movement of goods. As a result, we have a dual trade system, in which different rules apply in trade with the other EU members and with third countries. The instruments and means applied to trade are in fact restrictive in the relations between the EU and non-member countries and very liberal in the internal market, if we can still call it foreign trade in this dimension.
The benefits of creating a customs union are usually manifested in the form of two well-known economical effects: the trade creation effect and the trade diversion effect. The essence of this form of integration is that the elimination of trade barriers used so far between the countries forming the customs union launches the mechanisms mentioned above in the form of increased mutual trade and rational location of production (trade creation effect) and a shift of trade flows in favour of the countries which form the integration group and the decreased involvement of partners from outside the group (trade diversion effect). Both these effects influence various areas of life, not only in the economic sphere. On the one hand, they result in changes in the structure of market prices, on the other hand, there may be previously unforeseen social, or even political, consequences. The intensity of the trade creation effect in the case of the export capabilities of Polish producers varied depending on the sector – it was minimal for industrial goods and significant for trade in agricultural goods. The process of liberalisation of trade for the vast majority of industrial goods ended in fact even before the accession, with the exception of safeguard measures, including anti-dumping duties. After the accession, Polish exporters were no longer accused of dumping. This change has been particularly beneficial for those producers whose sales to the EU market had previously been limited due to the existence of barriers in the form of anti-dumping duties. Price commitments accepted by Polish exporters additionally contributed to the reduction in the supply of goods for the European market.

Agricultural trade was, in turn, fully liberalised by 1 May 2004. Changes in this sector consisted not only in the abolishing of barriers to the movement of agricultural products between Poland and other EU countries, but also in covering Poland with the mechanisms of the Common Agricultural Policy, an important element of which are the regulations of trade in goods with third countries, subject to the Common Commercial Policy as well.

It should also be noted that, as a result of Poland’s accession to the EU, the restrictions on the access to the Polish market were abolished too. Therefore, the competition for domestic producers has increased, as they can no longer use the instruments for protecting their economic interests against competitors from other EU countries. Safeguard measures are applied only to products originating in third countries, under revised Community rules. However, changes to the rules on the trade with third countries were not significant enough to cause a strong trade diversion effect. The changes in this area were largely mitigated by a significant adjustment of the Polish laws governing trade to EU laws already in the period of association under the Europe Agreement and additional agreements. In addition, it should also be stressed that many solutions for the Common Commercial Policy were already in place in Poland, since this resulted from the commitments made at the WTO forum.
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Regional Policy in selected Member States of the European Union

Introduction

Over the last decade, the disparities in the social and economic development between various EU Member States and individual regions were decreasing. In the light of the available statistical data, in most of the EU-15 Member States, the differences in GDP by purchasing power parity reached more than a dozen percentage points. This is true both for the rich states and for the so-called Cohesion Countries\(^1\), in which the economic growth in the years 1994–2001 reached a rate which greatly exceeded the EU average.

In Ireland, where the population increased annually by more than 1 percentage point, the GDP per inhabitant grew by almost four times the EU average (the annual growth rate was 8 per cent, while the EU average was 2 per cent). As a result, in 2001, the level of the Irish GDP by purchasing power parity exceeded the EU-15 average by 17 per cent, while in the early 1990s it was 25 per cent below it. The case of Ireland clearly shows the effectiveness of assistance provided under Structural Funds combined with a development-oriented state policy.

In the remaining three Cohesion Countries, the growth of GDP per inhabitant was more moderate, but until the mid-1990s it was still higher than in the rest of the EU. In the period from the end of the 1994 recession, the growth of GDP per inhabitant in Portugal and Spain maintained a rate above the EU aver-

\(^1\) The Cohesion Countries, i.e. countries entitled in the analysed period to benefit from the Cohesion Fund, are: Greece, Spain, Ireland and Portugal. Cohesion means harmony and striving for a sustainable development of the whole European Community through elimination of disproportions in development. In order to reach this state, regions requiring aid are provided assistance by means of special financial instruments, e.g. Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund.
age (in Greece this changed only in 1996), while until the end of 1994 it was always lower than the average.

At the turn of 1992 and 1993, GDP per inhabitant fell in all three countries and in 1994–2001 it was growing at a similar pace. It is a very optimistic fact that in the discussed period, there was interregional convergence in Spain, Portugal and Greece. In total, GDP per inhabitant grew from 68 per cent of the EU average to 79 per cent in 2001 and to 81 percent in 2002. During this seven-year-long period of economic boom in the EU, GDP per inhabitant grew in these states by almost 1 percentage point faster than the EU average.

It is worth pointing out the changes of GDP per capita in relation to the average GDP per capita of the whole European Union in states which joined the Community as the poorest ones. They benefited from the Cohesion Fund and most of their regions were covered by financing from Structural Funds under Objective 1, the main aim of which was the promotion of development and structural adjustment of poorly developed regions.

With the economic development, measured according to the GDP rate, employment grew as well, and in 2002 reached (in the said countries) the level of 60 per cent, i.e. only 4 per cent less than the EU average (64 per cent), see: Table 1.

### Table 1. Employment in EU-15 states, 1996–2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member States</th>
<th>Percentage of population in the age of professional activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UE-15</td>
<td>59.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohesion Countries</td>
<td>51.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>54.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>47.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>54.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>62.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The increase of employment in Ireland proved to be particularly high (10.1 percentage points) in relation to that in the other states and reflected Ireland’s quick economic development. In Portugal it was more moderate (by 6.3 percentage points) and the employment level – relatively high, only slightly lower than the target value for the EU set in Lisbon to 70 per cent by 2010.
Structural intervention in the Member States

From among the forms of structural assistance implemented in 2000–2006, the main role was played by Objective 1 and Objective 2 of regional policy. From the overall amount of assets in the EU budget allocated to Structural Funds under Objective 1, until 2006 approx. EUR 136 billion, i.e. 69.7 per cent, were used. In the regions covered by assistance under this Objective, the funds from Structural Funds were allocated to support for areas with low income, high unemployment, poor infrastructure and located furthest from the economic centre (such as the French overseas departments, the Canary Islands, Madeira, the Azores). In the years 2000–2006 the largest amounts from Structural Funds under Objective 1 went to the backward regions in Spain (29.6 per cent of the total amount of Structural Funds), in Italy (17.2 per cent), in Greece (16.4 per cent), in the eastern German Lands (15.0 per cent) and in Portugal (12.6 per cent).

In the case of Italy, assistance under Structural Funds went mainly to Southern Italy, or Il Mezzogiorno, which consists of: Campania, Apulia, Basilicata, Calabria, Sicily and Sardinia. In Germany, assistance was provided to: Brandenburg, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, Thuringia and East Berlin. According to estimates by the EC, the assistance under Structural Funds in regions included in Table 4 will amount on average to 0.85 per cent GDP. It will reach a level much higher than the average in: Portugal (2.30 per cent GDP), Greece (2.19 per cent GDP), the eastern Lands of Germany (1.14 per cent GDP) and Italy (1.16 per cent GDP), a level equal to the average in Spain (0.85 per cent GDP) and a level lower than the average in Ireland (0.38 GDP). As a reference we could add that in the years 1994–1999, the share of assistance under Structural Funds in the GDP amounted to: 3.2 per cent in Portugal, 3.4 per cent in Greece, 2.1 per cent in Ireland and 2.2 per cent in Spain.

Evidence of significant concentration of expenses under Structural Funds, allocated to assistance provided to selected regions (Objective 1), is, for instance, the level of expenses per one inhabitant, amounting on average to EUR 1273 in the years 2000–2006. In the Community as a whole, it reached EUR 220 and was therefore much lower than in the discussed regions, which is in accordance with the main objective of regional policy, that is supporting areas which are socially and economically most backward.

In the programming period 2000–2006, structural intervention was focused on the development of infrastructure, transport, production environment and human resources. The percentage share of assets under Structural Funds in regions of Objective 1 is presented in Figure 1 (see next page).

As shown in Figure 2, such a high share of funds allocated to the development of infrastructure (41 per cent) was to ensure primarily the development
of transport. It is assumed that a good transportation system is the basis for the development of regions, especially in the modern market economy, which is based on services and trade. The use of funds allocated to the development of infrastructure was different in the various EU Member States. Countries subject to assistance under Objective 1 benefited the most, spending these funds on the expansion of railroad, air, sea and city transport.

Communication with the regions was improved thanks to the construction or modernization of approx. 4100 km of motorways and 32 thousand km of other roads. Structural Funds have contributed to, among others, the development of transport and preventing the marginalization of regions, e.g. the cohesive ones. To sum up, the assistance granted resulted in the fact that Objective 1 regions have significantly reduced the distance to the other regions in terms of the GDP per capita and have smoothed out the differences between each other, which opens possibilities of further progress in intra- and interregional convergence.

The enlargement of the European Union on 1 May 2004 resulted in the accession of states which were significantly poorer than those belonging to the EU-15 and, in consequence, of much poorer regions. This enlargement constitutes a challenge to the regional policy in two dimensions: firstly, it leads to a more than twofold increase in the number of people inhabiting regions with a GDP per inhabitant lower than 75 per cent of the current EU average; and secondly, it causes an increase of the existing disparities. The statistical effect of admitting ten new states to the European Union is – in light of the Third report on economic and social cohesion – the drop of the average EU GDP level per inhabitant by 12.5 per cent and consequently a relative improvement of the position of regions in the ‘old’ EU.

![Figure 1. Distribution of aid under Structural Funds in the regions of Objective 1 in the years 2000–2006](image)

Source: own compilation on the basis of DG REGIO.
Structural Funds are to assist not only regions under Objective 1, but also areas contending with structural problems rather than delays in development. Until 1999, a total of 82 regions (17 per cent of the population of the EU) received assistance under Objective 2 meant for areas experiencing the effects of dropping industrial activity. Its value reached EUR 2.8 billion per annum, that is 11.5 per cent of all the assets in Structural Funds, raising the amount of assistance per person from EUR 16 to 44 per annum. In the period 2000−2006, the assistance amount was set at EUR 3.2 billion per annum, to be divided between rural and post-industrial areas on the decline. As far as the types of supported undertakings are concerned, the funds spent on infrastructure constituted 27 per cent of the overall amount in the period 1994−1999. They were mainly spent on rehabilitation of post-industrial areas and construction of new buildings, as well as on furthering enterprise, with special attention to facilitating access of SMEs to advanced services for business and counselling, promotion of financial engineering and supporting the involvement in international trade.

The incurred expenses have had a great impact on the restructuring of traditional industry and diversification of business activity. Interventions of Structural Funds have led to the creation of approx. 700 thousand jobs until 1999. At the same time, approx. 300 SMEs received assistance, which allowed them to improve the methods of production and raise their competitiveness in the Community market.

The activities undertaken allowed for quicker reduction of unemployment in these regions than observed in the other regions of the EU (on average by 3.1 per cent in the period 1996−2000, while in the whole EU by 2.3 per cent). This drop was particularly visible in areas with a significant majority of traditional branches of industry in the process of restructuring and which employed approx. 40 per cent of the working population. A reduction in the number of jobs in the industry was, therefore, more than compensated by the creation of new jobs, mainly in the services sector, which is the source of 67 per cent of production and 66 percent of employment.

Although the growth of the GDP per inhabitant in regions under Objective 1 was lower than in the whole EU (2.1 per cent in the years 1995–2000, in the whole EU – 2.4 per cent), this small difference indicates that the GDP drop has been halted. On the other hand, slightly lower GDP growth combined with larger increase in employment means that work output has grown in Objective 2 areas to a smaller extent than in other parts of the EU. The creation of new jobs was particularly influenced by financial support to research and development, innovation and technology transfer. Despite this, the ability of most Objective 2 areas, except for North Rhine-Westphalia or North West England, to sustain innovative potential is much less developed than in the other developed regions of the EU, their research basis is not very well harmonised with the regional economic structure.
The assistance from the Structural Funds also made it possible to achieve significant progress in thorough clean-up of post-industrial wasteland, modernisation of industrial areas and facilities (in Objective 2 regions, approx. 115 million square metres of industrial areas have been modernised). This has led to a radical change in the look of industrial areas and has allowed them to commence activities in new, productive fields, such as culture and entertainment.

**Regional policy in Poland**

The implementation of the premises of the European regional policy constitutes a possibility for Poland to use approx. EUR 12 billion from Structural Funds. This amount is comprised of co-financing of seven operational programmes, implemented under the Community Support Framework (approx. EUR 8 billion), co-financing of two initiatives of the Community (INTERREG and EQUAL, EUR 0.3 billion), as well as Coherence Fund assets (approx. EUR 4.0 billion).

Since the commencement of the programmes, agreements were signed or decisions issued on subsidising the execution of projects with the total value exceeding PLN 24.3 billion (EUR 6.3 billion), which constitutes 311 per cent of the allocation of Community assets for 2004 and 72.9 per cent for the whole programming period 2004–2006. The value of payments financed from Structural Funds collected on programme accounts under the seven operational programmes, as well as EQUAL and INTERREG IIIA, amounted to almost PLN 4625 million (EUR 1.194 million), which constitutes 59.2 per cent of the allocation of Community assets for 2004 and 13.9 per cent for the whole period 2004–2006.

In terms of the value of signed agreements, the Mazowiecki, Śląski, Wielkopolski and Dolnośląski regions were leaders, i.e. those with the highest GDP per inhabitant. In turn, the highest value of assistance per one inhabitant was received by the Dolnośląskie and Zachodniopomorskie voivodeships. The structure of Community assistance granted under operational programmes, Community initiatives and the Cohesion Fund is presented in Figure 2.

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2 Cf.: National Development Plan (NDP) 2004–2006, Warszawa 2003. NDP is a plan of structural activities which Poland, as a Member State of the European Union, intended to execute in the years 2004–2006. These activities are co-financed from EU Structural Funds. They refer to three basic fields of assistance: enterprises, development of infrastructure and development of human resources.
Until the end of 2008, under six operational programmes, the Community initiatives EQUAL and INTERREG, as well as the Cohesion Fund, more than 85 thousand agreements were signed, representing a total value of approx. PLN 54.5 billion. In accordance with the general tendency (maintained since 2005), the largest assistance is provided to regions which are economically strong and in which expenditures are focused on innovation activity, transport and development of the SME sector.

The analysis of the granted EU assistance shows that Structural Funds have a particularly strong impact on the increase of efficiency of the factors of production (both by means of raising qualifications of the workforce and by improving accessibility of technical and transport infrastructure), as well as have a positive influence on the increase in employment and decrease in regional diversification, thus contributing to an increase in competitiveness of the whole EU economy.

### Conclusions

The structural intervention which took place after 2004 resulted in economic growth due to both increased demand and the strengthening of the supply side of the economy (owing to the improvement of the condition of infrastructure and improvement of the human capital), which contributes to the development of cohesion processes. The regions subject to Objective 1 measures (the whole territory of Poland) have, to a certain extent, reduced the dis-
tance between each other due to an improvement of the conditions of growth and increasing employment owing to the development of innovativeness, increasing the abilities to adapt to economic and social changes, protection and improvement of the quality of the environment, as well as increasing the institutional effectiveness.

In particular the following are of great importance: the influence on the quality of the human capital in terms of training and educational activities, the assistance in preparing the necessary European strategic documents on regional (voivodeship) level, creating the necessary potential regarding identification and high-quality preparation of investment undertakings, as well as solving the problem of co-financing European funds with own means by economically weak towns and communes.

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During the 1990s and early twenty-first century, an evolution of Polish foreign policy towards the Asia-Pacific region took place. This was a consequence of processes and phenomena occurring at international, regional and domestic level. Poland’s accession to the European Union was an event of major importance. In the context of Polish foreign policy towards the Asia-Pacific region, this needs to be considered in two dimensions. On the one hand, it should be noted that the European and transatlantic focus of Polish foreign policy during the 1990s resulted in diminished activity with respect to non-European regions. However, following accession to the EU – the final strategic objective of Polish foreign policy – Poland was able to engage in establishing closer relations with other regions of the world. Furthermore, membership in the European Union enabled Poland to extend the tools of realising foreign policy objectives in the Asia-Pacific region. Moreover, the fact that the Asia-Pacific region is characterised by political, economic and cultural diversity, and that the region plays an increasingly important role in international economic and political relations, determines the need for careful selection of Poland’s strategic priorities with regard to each of its sub-regions.

Polish foreign policy towards the Asia-Pacific region prior to Poland’s accession to the European Union

Poland established diplomatic relations with most countries of the Asia-Pacific region in the 1940s, 50s, 60s and 70s. Presently, Polish relations with the countries of the region based on the structures of political, economic and

\footnote{1 \ Polan established diplomatic relations with the Republic of Korea in 1989, with Brune in 1996, and East Timor in 2002.}
cultural cooperation. These include official visits, consultations, legal and political agreements and trade missions. Cooperation is also conducted in the framework of international organisations (e.g. the UN). The end of the Cold War and internal factors constituted a challenge for Polish foreign policy in the Asia-Pacific region.

At the same time the breakdown of the bipolar balance of power in international relations, the changing nature of links between internal and external policies, increasing global interdependence and cross-border interlinkages since 1989, the processes of globalisation and integration (mainly economic), the changes taking place in the global economy forced Poland to clarify and intensify its activities concerning new areas of foreign policy, which includes developing countries.

The 1990s were marked by the opening of many developing countries to the global economy, launching policies of liberalisation and economic reforms (e.g. in 1991 in India), and regional economic processes. Developing countries, including those in Asia, began to play an increasingly important role in world politics. Moreover, developed economies of the Asia-Pacific region, particularly in East Asia, remained at centre of the global economy, alongside the US and EU. In addition, China emerged as a major economic force.

A number of Polish initiatives in relations with the countries of Asia-Pacific during the 1990s deserve mention. In 1996 Poland and China exchanged visits at the level of deputy prime ministers and reached agreement on the settlement and compensation of mutual debt. Furthermore, the level of political dialogue with the countries of ASEAN was raised. Warsaw was the venue for the 1st Poland – South-East Asia Economic Forum. During the visit of president of India in Warsaw in 1996, an agreement was signed concerning investment support and protection, as well as cultural and educational cooperation. The Polish prime minister and foreign minister visited Japan (1999) and Korea (2000). Economic relations with Vietnam were renewed, thanks in part to president Kwaśniewski’s visit in 1999 and the signing of an agreement on cooperation in science and technology in the same year.

During the 1990s economic relations between Poland and China were strengthened, as was cooperation between the governments of both countries. In September 1994 prime minister Waldemar Pawlak made an official visit to China, where he held talks with president Jiang Zemin and prime minister Li Peng. This was an indication of the high rank given to the visit by the Chinese

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2 In 1989 Poland maintained 17 diplomatic missions in the region, which was most among countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Poland also maintained a presence in multilateral institutions. From 1954 to 1975 Poland participated in the International Commission for Supervision and Control – Indochina; since 1953 in the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission in North Korea. In addition, Poland has cooperated with Asian states at the UN and in its peacekeeping operations.
side. From Poland’s perspective, the visit was successful as for the first time the Chinese expressed understanding for the Polish activities towards political and economic integration with the European Union and achieving membership in NATO. This was followed by successive visits of senior Chinese government officials in Poland, including the deputy chairmen of the Chinese National People’s Congress Chen Muhu and Bu He, Chairman of Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference Li Ruihuan, Deputy Prime Minister Li Lanqing and the heads of the General Staff of Chinese People’s Liberation Army Chi Haotian and Zhang Wanni. Polish politicians who visited China include speaker of the Sejm Józef Oleksy, Speakers of the Senate Andrzej Stelmachowski and Adam Struzik, deputy prime minister and finance minister Grzegorz Kołodko, chief of staff of the Polish Armed Forces Tadeusz Wilecki and deputy chief Henryk Szumski. In November 1997 president Aleksander Kwaśniewski paid an official visit to China, the first visit of the Polish head of state in thirty-eight years. The leaders of both countries signed a ‘Joint Communiqué of the People’s Republic of China and the Polish Republic.’ In December 2000 the Chinese foreign minister Tang Jiaxuan paid an official visit to Poland. In the course of discussions with president Aleksander Kwaśniewski, prime minister Jerzy Buzek, speaker of the Sejm Maciej Płażyński and foreign minister Władysław Bartoszewski, both sides confirmed their interest in developing of equitable, pragmatic and mutually beneficial relations, taking into account the new internal and external conditions in both countries. Poland and China expressed their willingness to revive contacts and cooperation at government and parliamentary level in the field of science and culture.

One of the main topics in Polish–Chinese relations was the issue of increasing Polish exports to China, which was also raised during the visit of foreign minister of China to Poland in December 2000. In this context it should be noted that Poland faced a difficult dilemma with regard to relations with China, concerning its critical approach to human rights abuses by the government in Beijing. In 2000, Poland withdrew its support at the UN Commission on Human Rights in Geneva for a resolution criticising China’s human rights record. The Polish government also maintained that its contacts with the Dalai Lama are unofficial in character, and are only an expression of admiration for his moral authority and are not intended to undermine the integrity of China. The beginning of the 21st century was also marked by a substantial increase in the number of contacts in Polish–Chinese relations. In 2002 there were 12 Chinese trade missions in Poland, and cultural contacts were also being developed. Poland has also intensified its relations with India. Following a relative waning of relations during the late 1980s and early 1990s, they have rebounded with new vigour since 1994, when Polish president Lech Wałęsa visited India. In February 2003, the Polish prime minister visited India for the first time since 1985. During this trip a number of agreements were signed, including one con-
cerning defence cooperation. In the same year cooperation was also established between the National Security Office in the Chancellery of the President of Poland and Indian National Security Bureau.

During the late 1990s and early 21st century, an evolution in Poland’s relations with Japan has taken place. In the last decade of the 20th century, there was limited interest in the development of Japan’s political relations with Poland, which resulted in the lack of greater involvement of Japanese business and the lack of significant direct investments in the Polish market. Signs of change appeared in the early 21st century, and since then Poland and Japan have presented similar positions on the most important international issues. In July 2002, the Japanese imperial couple visited Warsaw, the first visit of its kind in the history of bilateral relations, which raised Polish-Japanese political dialogue to a higher level. In August 2003, during the first visit of the Japanese prime minister to Poland in 13 years, the ‘Joint Statement towards Strategic Partnership between the Republic of Poland and Japan’ was signed. It covered all the major issues of current bilateral cooperation and specified the goals of further cooperation.

The intensification of Polish foreign policy in the Asia-Pacific region was visible in the establishment of closer relations with other partners. There is an increase in exports to Taiwan, an unofficial visit of President Aleksander Kwaśniewski to the Republic of Korea in 2002 and deepened economic relations with Mongolia. Numerous visits and consultations at high level contributed to the maintaining of political dialogue with India. In 2002, consultations took place at the level of foreign ministries. In 2003, prime minister Leszek Miller paid a visit to India. Malaysia and Indonesia became important partners in South-East Asia. In the case of Indonesia, the intensification of relations was supported by the fact that its government had taken measures to diversify the areas of interest of foreign policy, which came to encompass the development of economic cooperation with countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Relations with Malaysia became closer, particularly in the economic and defence domain, as evidenced by the visits at the highest level of A. Kwaśniewski in 1999, the prime minister of Malaysia in 2002 and Polish foreign and defense ministers in 2002. In addition, in 2002 the government of Malaysia decided to purchase Polish defence equipment (Polish tanks and associated equipment). A new impetus was given to relations with Vietnam, which was confirmed by the Polish president’s visit to that country in 1999 and the visit of president of Vietnam to Poland in 2003.

Economic cooperation continued to be the main problem in relations with the countries of the Asia-Pacific region. During the 1990s there was a reorientation of the geographical patterns of trade with foreign countries. The economic dimension of Poland’s relations with most Asian countries declined in importance. This was also due to other factors, such as the lack of a coherent
vision of policy towards Asian countries, as well as the problems and difficulties associated with Poland’s re-entry on Asian markets. During the 1990s Polish exports to Asian countries declined, while imports from these countries increased. This contributed to Poland’s negative trade balance with the countries of the Asia-Pacific region. For example, in 2002 the Polish trade with the countries of the region amounted to 63 billion USD (of which 56 billion represented imports, and 7 billion – exports).

However, Polish activity in the Asia-Pacific region, both in the economic and political field, was relatively limited. The main goal of Polish foreign policy during the 1990s was accession to NATO and the European Union, and the establishment of effective cooperation at bilateral, regional and international level with key partners in Europe and North America. Moreover, in the 1990s there was no comprehensive concept or strategy to implement the objectives of Polish foreign policy. The means and methods did not meet the new challenges and were inadequate to the new situation.

These factors, as well as the realisation that following EU accession Polish foreign policy will have new opportunities, but also challenges with regard to policy towards Asia contributed to strengthening the activities of Polish diplomacy in the region. An indication of this was the speech delivered on 22 January 2003 by Polish foreign minister Cimoszewicz. He stressed that Poland would continue to intensify its economic, political and cultural activity in regions outside Europe. It would also constructively mark its own identity, as Poland wants to contribute to the development and implementation of EU policy towards the region. In this context it should be noted that a step forward in Poland’s perception of the Asia-Pacific region already occurred at the beginning of the 21st century. The events of 11 September 2001 showed the connections between the situation in the Euro-Atlantic area and the situation outside Europe. Terrorism has become an important factor in stimulating the cooperation of Poland with Asian countries.

One example is the visit by the Polish president, Aleksander Kwaśniewski, to Afghanistan in October 2002. Poland became involved in the activities of the international coalition assisting in the economic and political reconstruction of that country. Polish humanitarian aid – delivered through NGOs and government programmes for Afghanistan – amounted to $1.6 million. In 2002 and 2003, foreign minister Cimoszewicz stressed the political and economic significance of countries in the Asia-Pacific region. During his visits to Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei, Cimoszewicz declared that following Poland’s accession to the European Union, the Polish government wants to take co-responsibility for shaping policy towards Asia. At the same time representatives of the countries of the Asia-Pacific region, such as Australia and New Zealand, expressed the hope that Poland would have a positive impact on EU strategy towards the countries of Asia.
The new dimension of Polish foreign policy in the Asia-Pacific following Poland’s accession to the EU

Poland’s membership in the European Union created new conditions for the growth of political and economic activity in Asia. Through the mechanisms of the Common Foreign and Security Policy, the Common Commercial Policy and other EU policies, Poland became capable of effectively engaging in EU policy towards the Asia-Pacific region. In the opinion of Polish diplomats, this involvement would not only strengthen Poland’s position in Asia, but in the European Union as well.

The process of Polish integration with the European Union was accompanied by changes in the institutional and legal framework of trade relations with Asian countries. This was due to the fact that following accession, Poland was required to assume certain obligations, related among others the Common Commercial Policy. In connection with the European Community’s exclusive competence to conclude agreements in this regard, even before accession to the EU, Poland terminated the 110 bilateral agreements regulating trade and economic cooperation with individual developing countries, including in Asia. Moreover, Poland was to also take an active part in the negotiation of new agreements that the EC and Member States intend to conclude with Asian countries. These conditions gave Poland new opportunities for developing relations with the countries of Asia.

It should be noted that following Poland’s accession to the European Union, Polish diplomatic activity has increased beyond the Euro-Atlantic sphere. The main region of Polish involvement was Asia. In October 2004, during the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) summit in Hanoi, Poland became a part of the ASEM process. During the Hanoi summit, the Polish prime minister held talks with leaders of Asian countries, which concerned both political and economic issues. Poland was particularly interested in reducing its trade deficit with the countries of Asia. It should be noted that despite the increase in exports of Polish goods to Asian countries since 2004, Poland continues to record a significant

\(^3\) ASEM is an informal process of dialogue established in 1996 to strengthen cooperation between the countries of Europe and Asia, in particular members of the EU and ASEAN. ASEM comprises 45 entities (27 EU member states, the European Commission, 10 members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations, as well as China, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mongolia, India, Pakistan and the ASEAN Secretariat.). The first ASEM Summit took place in March 1996 in Bangkok. ASEM’s activities are regulated in the Asia-Europe Cooperation Framework (AECF) adopted at the London summit in 1998. During the summit in Seoul in 2000 a new version of the document (AECF 2000) was adopted, including important new commitments on human rights, rule of law, good governance and setting out the objectives of the ASEM process for the first decade of the 21st century. ASEM member states produce 50 per cent of global GDP, represent 60 per cent of the world’s population and are responsible for 60 per cent of trade.
trade deficit with these countries. This was a strong factor in Poland’s determination to engage more actively on the Asian continent and to develop bilateral relations with major countries in Asia.

In June 2004, for the first time in the history of bilateral relations with China, president Hu Jintao visited Poland. The leaders of both countries focused on issues of economic, cultural and scientific cooperation. The Polish side was seeking to boost trade relations with China and to improve its balance of trade with Beijing. Poland also hoped that the development of strategic partnership between the EU and China would help Poland in the deepening of trade relations with Beijing. In August 2004, Polish foreign minister Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz visited the Republic of Korea, which is the largest investor in Poland among Asian countries. In late August, minister Cimoszewicz also paid a visit to Mongolia, the first such visit in 54 years.

In 2005, Poland continued its very active (compared to previous years) policy towards Asia. In January, prime minister Belka paid a visit to Japan, Singapore, Vietnam (one of the main recipients of Polish development aid), Sri Lanka and the Philippines. The talks were primarily devoted to economic issues. One noteworthy agreement signed during this trip was the agreement on readmission with Vietnam, the first agreement of this kind between Poland and a South-East Asian state. In addition, Poland has developed political dialogue with Australia and New Zealand (in 2005, prime minister Helen Clark of New Zealand visited Poland).

With respect to bilateral relations, Poland regarded the nations of North-East Asia, primarily China, Japan and the Republic of Korea, as priority partners. In South Asia, India remained the most important partner. In 2005, Poland officially declared that it supported permanent membership for India in a reformed UN Security Council. At the level of foreign ministries, political consultations were held, during which bilateral and regional issues were discussed. Economic relations between the Polish and India concentrated on areas such as mining, energy and defence. In 2005 India’s deputy minister of industry and commerce visited Poland. In 2009, the president of India visited Poland, while the next year and in 2011, prime minister Tusk and foreign minister Sikorski paid visits to India. During these visits, apart from discussing economic issues, both parties stressed the importance of common values shared by the EU, Poland and India. Thus the Polish position is similar to the EU strategy, and in the process of deepening political relations, India and the European Union have drawn on common values, as reflected in the Lisbon Declaration of 2000. Both parties have also emphasized the need to confront new challenges and threats, such as terrorism. Furthermore, confirmation of the importance the EU has attached to India can also be found in the ‘European Security Strategy’, adopted by the European Council on 12 December 2003. It states that ‘the EU should develop a strategic partnership with India’.
In the Commission Communication ‘EU-India Strategic Partnership’ of June 2004, it is indicated that the relations between the EU and India, based on shared values should be developed in four areas: international cooperation through multilateralism, including promoting peace, combating terrorism, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and human rights; enhanced commercial and economic interaction, in particular through sectoral dialogue and dialogue on regulatory and industrial policy; cooperation on sustainable development, protecting the environment, mitigating climate change and combating poverty; continuous improvement of mutual understanding and contacts between the EU’s and India’s civil society. In response to the Communication, the Indian government drafted an official paper, outlining the country’s strategy towards the EU. It stated that ‘strategic partnership should be based on shared values and mutual benefit’, and should take into account the situation in South Asia and Afghanistan. It was stressed that terrorism and WMD are common threats to the EU and India. These and other issues were the subject of talks during the meeting between minister Radosław Sikorski and representatives of the scientific and research community in July 2011 in New Delhi (organised by the Indian Council of World Affairs, New Delhi).

Among multilateral organisations, Poland has attached special importance to developing relations with ASEAN. It has participated in EU-ASEAN dialogue, the ASEAN Regional Forum and ASEM (as well as in Asia-Europe Foundation in the ASEM framework). Cooperation within ASEM is of particular importance. The ASEM dialogue addresses political, economic, and cultural issues in the spirit of mutual respect and equal partnership. EU-Asia dialogue in the ASEM format has become the new Polish foreign policy tool used to expand our contacts with Asian partners. By participating in ASEM, Poland has gained a useful instrument for the presentation of our culture and science in the region, as well as for the effective promotion of the image of Poland as a member of the EU and a modern partner, open to the possibility of establishing beneficial cooperation.

Economic issues continue to be of primary importance in developing relations with the countries of the Asia-Pacific region. During the years 1994–2010 Polish trade with Asia and the Pacific increased over 13-fold, Polish exports more than 6-fold, but imports rose more than 16-fold. A characteristic feature of Polish trade relations with Asian countries is trade imbalance. Despite the steady growth of trade volume (which in 2010 amounted to over $25 billion), Poland’s foreign trade deficit with the countries of the Asia-Pacific has been growing (in 2010 it amounted to more than $23 billion, which represented approximately 90 per cent of the Polish trade deficit), and 42 per cent of which constituted the deficit in trade with China. Poland’s trade imbalance is caused by factors such as the increased share of Asian countries in global
exports, the lack of organised and long-term Polish promotional activities in the Asia-Pacific region, and insufficient knowledge of Asian markets by Polish firms.

Poland’s main partners in the region included China, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Taiwan, India, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia. China remains Poland’s largest economic partner with the most comprehensive dynamics of cooperation. In the period from 2000 to 2010 the volume of trade between Poland and China grew more than 20-fold (from 960 million to over $20 billion), including Polish exports more than 14-fold (from 99 million to U.S. $1500.00 million), while imports from China increased more than 20-fold (from 860 million to nearly $18 billion). China achieved the position of Poland’s third largest import market in the scale of the whole world, while China’s exports are greater than to the remaining Asian partners.

Following Poland’s accession to the EU, Polish trade with India has been rising steadily, from the level of $568.2 million in 2005 to $1281.77 million in 2008, with a constant increase in the Polish deficit. In 2009, the volume of trade fell to the level of $1141.05 million, but by 2010 and first half of 2011 trade had surged to over $1300.00 million. Polish exports to India include power plants, railway and mining equipment, chemicals, metals, machinery, while the leading imported goods include tea, coffee, tobacco, pepper, fibres, and cotton products. Poland’s trade relations with India will be affected by the probable signing of an agreement on establishing a free trade zone between the EU and India (negotiations have been taking place since 2007).

The largest foreign investors in Poland include the Republic of Korea, Japan and Australia. In recent years Indian investors have been increasingly active in Poland, primarily in the steel, electronics and pharmaceutical industries. However, the inflow of Foreign Direct Investment from the Republic of Korea and Japan continue to dominate in Poland. The cumulative value of Japanese FDI in Poland in 2010 amounted to over 1 billion euros. The inflow of investment capital from Japan is used for the manufacture of goods in Japanese factories in Poland. Most of this production, mainly in the electronics and automotive industry is then re-exported, primarily to markets in other EU countries. This way, Japanese FDI in Poland has contributed to the creation of new streams of Polish exports and the modernisation of its structure.

In this context one may recommend that Poland make active use of the instruments of EU external policy. EU trade links with Asia are one of the methods of strengthening the EU’s position in the world. The EU also uses development policy measures and assistance to the countries of the continent. Poland should recognise, however, that EU development policy is only complementary to the undertaken by member states in this regard. At the same time, it should be pointed out that there are differences with respect to the liberalisation of trade among the EU and certain Asian countries. One example is the
course of the ministerial meeting of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Cancun in 2003. Among the Southern states which formed the G20 developing nations group are India and China, as well as Thailand, Pakistan, the Philippines and Indonesia. These countries have called for, among others, the further opening of markets for the export of agricultural products, textiles and clothing, the relaxation of anti-dumping rules, limiting intellectual property protection.

Following Poland’s accession to the EU, cultural dialogue has also been strengthened. Referring to the outcome of the tenth and eleventh EU-Japan summit in 2001 and 2002, on 6 January 2005, foreign minister Adam Daniel Rotfeld inaugurated the activities of the Polish Committee for the 2005 EU-Japan Year of People-to-People Exchange. The development of bilateral cultural relations was also the subject of discussions and meetings with representatives of the governments of China and India. In 2010, the European Centre for Research on Contemporary India was founded at the Institute of International Relations at Warsaw University thanks to a European Commission grant. In 2010–2011, it organised over 80 international conferences, seminars and lectures on issues of economy and politics of contemporary India.

One topic, which has been raised in Poland’s relations with Asian countries is climate change. During a meeting in Beijing in 2008, Prime Minister Tusk stressed that during the Asia-Europe summit (ASEM), most Asian countries adopted the Polish view that the financial crisis must not lead to breaking the negotiations on the climate-energy package. He made it clear, however, that during the climate negotiations the situation of such countries as Poland and China (whose economies are largely based on coal) must be taken into account. The Polish prime minister also spoke with the head of government of the Republic of Korea on cooperation in building nuclear power plants in Poland.

At the beginning of the 21st century, apart from an active foreign policy in the Asia-Pacific region, the Polish government also attempted to conceptualise that policy, which was an expression of how increasing attention was given to developing relations with developing countries. This is evidenced by the document adopted in November 2004 by the Polish government document ‘Strategy of the Republic of Poland in relation to non-European developing countries’. It includes a comprehensive programme for the revitalisation of cooperation with this group of countries. In the case of Asian countries it was noted that the dynamic growth of economic cooperation of the European Union with these countries and their strengthening (e.g. India, Japan and China) will be factors contributing to political dialogue and establishing closer political and economic relations between Poland and Asian countries.
Assessment and prospects of Polish foreign policy towards the Asia-Pacific region

During the 1990s Poland was focused on the realisation of strategic objectives in its policy, namely accession to NATO and the EU, which led to the marginalization of relations with non-European countries, including nations in the Asia-Pacific regions. There was also the lack of a defined strategy towards the region. Since the mid-1990s a slow but gradual change in the perception of the region by political elites in Poland has taken place. Poland’s foreign policy towards countries such as China and South Korea became more active. A genuine deepening of relations with the countries of Asia and the Pacific was visible particularly in the early 21st century, which was largely the result of the prospect of Poland’s accession to the European Union.

Poland’s membership in the European Union, which enabled the use of instruments of EU foreign and trade policy, contributed to the intensification of bilateral relations with the countries of the Asia-Pacific region. It is clear that Poland’s integration with the EU became a driver of the country’s activity in this region. This is evident by the much higher number of visits of Polish prime ministers and foreign ministers in Asian countries compared to previous years, and by the increase in trade with these countries. This was possible thanks to the fact that Poland is perceived by its Asian partners as a country, with which closer political and economic relations should be established. Furthermore, Poland widened its area of activity in the Asia-Pacific. After more than a dozen years, in the early 21st century, Poland established political relations with Laos. However, much greater significance should be attributed to the revival of political dialogue with Australia, as evidenced by the visit foreign minister Cimoszewicz to Australia. The main subjects of the dialogue included global issues and international security, including the war on terrorism.

Polish policy towards the countries of the Asia-Pacific region is characterised by the priority of economic interests. The intensification of trade, expanding exports, and attracting direct investments to a large extent determines the content and scope of Polish foreign policy towards countries in the region.

Poland’s activity in the Asia-Pacific region became more prominent in the beginning of the 21st century. Political dialogue was enhanced and economic relations were given a new focus. Moreover, the Polish government began to promote Poland as an attractive partner for cooperation in all fields. The prospect of EU accession forced Poland to modify the contractual relations with Asian countries. Thus, trade agreements which fell under the scope of EU law were terminated or amended. An indication of the new approach in the policy towards Asian countries was also the conclusion of agreements on eco-
nomic cooperation that exceeded the scope of EU regulations. Since 2001, the issues under discussion and concluded agreements more frequently included organised crime, terrorism, cooperation in criminal matters. In addition to deepening political and economic relations, measures were also taken aimed at the promotion of Poland in Asia. They were intended to overcome existing prejudices and stereotypes. Cooperation was developed in the fields of science, technology, culture, and education. An important element in Polish politics towards the region of Asia in the 21st century was the emphasis on developing cooperation with regional organisations such as ASEAN, and the use of specific forms of dialogue that the European Union has developed with Asian countries (EU-ASEAN summits, ARF, ASEM).

Poland’s heightened activity in the Asia-Pacific region, initiated in the early 21st century, is long-term in nature. It will be continued in three dimensions: political, economic, and cultural. But beyond doubt, economic matters will be the main area of cooperation, which is related to the economisation of Polish relations with Asian countries. At the same time it should be emphasised that the main assumptions of Polish foreign policy towards Asia-Pacific region should be considered in the context of Polish relations with non-European states.

When attempting to assess Polish foreign policy towards the Asia-Pacific region, it should be noted that during the first years of the 21st century, especially since Polish accession to the EU, there has been a resurgence in relations with Asian countries. The level of political dialogue was raised and new areas under discussion appeared, such as the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and terrorism. This was determined by the growth of Poland’s activity in relations with non-European states, and membership in the EU, which has broadened the range of instruments for the realisation of Polish foreign policy towards the countries of Asia-Pacific region. Furthermore, the Polish enterprises and entrepreneurs have become increasingly interested in Asian markets.

However, Polish foreign policy still faces many challenges. Among the factors constraining Polish cooperation with Asian countries, one should mention the growing deficit in trade with the majority of Asian countries (e.g. China), the modest scope of goods offered to Asian countries, fierce international competition and the low activity of Polish exporters and investors in the Asian market, as well as cultural and civilization differences. Poland’s current position in the Asia-Pacific region and the level of mutual cooperation with a number of countries does not reflect the importance of Asia in contemporary international relations. It also fails to demonstrate the potential of Poland as one of the larger EU Member States and the twentieth largest economy in the world. These constraints show that Poland should continue to deepen political, economic and cultural dialogue with Asian countries.
At the same time constraints of Polish foreign policy towards Asia should be viewed in a broader context, namely the relations between the European Union and Asia. Despite numerous declarations (India, China and Japan), Asian countries do not treat the EU as their main political partner. Researchers and politicians from Asia indicate that there are more dividing points compared to common interests shared by Asia and Europe. This includes the mode of combating terrorism, and the different perception of international order. The EU and some Asian countries also differ in their approach to social standards. Brussels has called on these countries to sign the Conventions adopted by the International Labour Organisation concerning child labour. Furthermore, the constraints to relations between the EU and Asia are mainly due to the fact that the EU is not perceived as a single political entity. Perception of the EU for political and business elite linked to de facto with the perception of individual EU member states and not the Union as a political entity. In addition, the European Union is seen as a ‘creation, a power that lacks the tools and instruments to play a major role in world politics’. Attention is drawn to the lack of a truly common foreign policy, and the Union’s institutional problems.

India remains sceptical regarding the EU’s capabilities in the area of security policy. Some Indian scholars have even forecast an economic crisis of the EU. Most societies in Asia are not aware of the mechanisms of functioning of the Union and its activities on a global scale. As R.K. Jain has pointed out, there is a ‘huge deficit of information on the EU in India and Asia.’ This is accompanied by much greater interest on the part of the media and political elites in US strategy. In this context, the US factor and the deepening strategic cooperation between the US and a number of Asian significantly shapes their perception of the EU.

Conclusions

The constraints and difficulties in relations between the EU and Asia do not change the fact that Poland’s membership in the EU has created new opportunities and opened a new stage in the realisation of Polish policy towards the countries of the Asia-Pacific region. Predicting future relations with Asian countries, one may conclude that in the near term Poland will mainly focus on its trade balance with Asian countries. At the same time, Poland will also develop relations in the cultural dimension. On the other hand, because of its membership in the European Union, will be an area of particular interest to Asian investors. It should be noted, however, that this is in large part depends on Poland itself, and its policy towards Asian countries, will depend on its position and role in the Asia-Pacific region.
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Poland in EU Development Policy

The accession of Poland to the European Union has created a new economic, political and social dimension and thus forced, implies or at least provides for the need for changes in many spheres of life. One of the particularly important spheres in which transformations will be taking place is the Polish development assistance.

In February 2009, in an address in the Sejm, the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs Radosław Sikorski called development assistance one of the priorities of foreign policy. He recognized development assistance to be an ‘important tool for minimising differences and resolving conflicts in the world’ and Poland’s ability to provide it to be the confirmation of ‘the rising status of our country’ and a means to shape the image of Poland ‘as a partner involved in strengthening stabilization in the world’. Moreover, in the Report of the Development Cooperation Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs entitled Polish Development Assistance 2008, the Minister noted that assisting in the development of other countries is a relatively new dimension of Poland’s international activity. He expressed the hope that the ‘Polish development assistance will at least partially stimulate (...) the improvement of the standard of living in countries receiving this aid’.

The last decade of the 20th century and the first years of the 21st century have brought significant redefinitions of the aims, means and directions of Polish development policy. Poland’s membership in the EU and the related new mechanisms and forms of cooperation require Warsaw to be continuously involved in the EU development cooperation system. The European Union is the world’s biggest donor and it has been, for years now, spending more than the half of the official development assistance (ODA)\(^1\) on aid for less

\(^1\) The aim of the Official Development Assistance is to assist poorly developed countries in their efforts to quicken the economic growth, ensure economic development and limit the extent of poverty in all its aspects. The ODA covers the inflows of funds allotted for development aims
developed countries. The European Union has the most institutionalised and historically oldest contacts with the countries of the global South, who are the biggest recipients of EU development assistance. As a member of the European Union, Poland will co-decide on the target model of development assistance. Moreover, it has accepted the responsibility to create institutional systems of official state aid and to extend its present involvement in bilateral and multilateral cooperation. Through the accession to European structures Poland is becoming a more and more significant provider of assistance to other countries. From being primarily a beneficiary, it is gradually becoming a donor. Poland – striving to play an increasingly important role in the EU and in the more and more globalised world – cannot afford any further negligence in this field. The issues of growing imbalance in social development and in meeting of social needs constitute an increasingly important dimension of international relations. Such problems as eliminating poverty, famine, diseases, supporting the processes of economic and political stabilisation, etc. are the key challenges to mankind in the 21st century and the cooperation for development is becoming one of the imperatives of modern EU policy and diplomacy. Włodzimierz Anioł noted: ‘If the rich North does not help the poor South, the South will set off for and – one way or another, and sooner or later – reach the North, of which Poland is now an integral element’. This is best illustrated by the events in North Africa (called the ‘African Spring’) of 2011 and the wave of immigrants to Southern European countries which was one of its consequences2. The growing international interrelations, economic and political aspirations, further increased by holding the Presidency in the Council in the second half of 2011, induce Poland to activate its policy in the context of the challenges of global development.

The aim of this article is to present the EU development cooperation system and Poland’s place within it. There will be an assessment of both the effectiveness and efficiency of Polish development assistance, as well as a presentation of the major challenges and problems connected with it.

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2 The unstable political situation in North African countries in 2011 – most importantly in Egypt, Tunisia and Libya – has caused an increased emigration from these countries to, among others, Italy. The migrants head primarily for the Italian island of Lampedusa, which lies less than 150 km off the Tunisian shore. It is estimated that from mid-January to mid-April 2011, approximately 20 thousand migrants came to Italy from North Africa, including 6 thousand to Lampedusa alone, which results in the fact that the refugees outnumber the permanent inhabitants of the island.
The development cooperation system in the EU

Until the Maastricht Treaty came into force, there was no clear legal basis in the treaties for the Community activities in the field of development assistance. Nevertheless, the issues of development assistance were present from the very beginnings of the European Communities and constituted an important element in their relations with developing countries. In the 1950s–80s, Brussels’ political relations with this part of the world was mainly based on the rule ‘aid, not trade’, which translated into engaging in development assistance without focusing on trade relations. Providing development assistance was treated, on the one hand, as striving for the preservation of spheres of influence in non-European areas, and on the other hand, as a certain form of compensation for the period of colonialism. It was also assumed that economic aid would further the economic development of these countries and become a major determinant of its quickening. This assumption resulted from a certain optimism in relation to development, which was widespread in the early post-war period. The theoretical conceptions emerging in this period assumed that the development gap can be limited by means of neutralising the effects of low savings through external financing. Economic growth was supposed to be stimulated through the commencement of the processes of accumulation of capital and through accelerated industrialisation.

The first institutional relations between the European Communities (EC) and the Overseas Countries and Territories were established already in the Treaty of Rome of 1957, which included provisions on association (Articles 131–136). It is then that the development of the first development assistance programmes of the EC and of the Member States started. After most colonial states gained independence, the relations of the EC with the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa were transformed into contractual relations, established by the Yaoundé Conventions of 1963 and of 1969. The next convention, known as Lomé I, was signed in the capital of Togo on 28 February 1975, and came into force on 1 April of the following year. It was in force for 5 years, to be subsequently replaced by successive agreements: Lomé II (1980–1984), Lomé III (1985–1989), and Lomé IV (1990–1999). The Lomé Conventions were signed with the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States. The Lomé Conventions were a step forward as compared with Yaoundé. They introduced a new understanding of assisting development by linking trade preferences and financial and technical assistance. A new element appeared: co-operation for development was agreed upon as a result of negotiations, not unilateral aid policies.

Footnote 3: The group of ACP countries was established on the basis of the Georgetown Agreement in 1975.
of rich countries for the poor, and in this sense it was part of the new international economic order.

From the mid-1990s new actions were undertaken to establish a new model of EU-ACP relations regarding development cooperation. A resulting of this discussion was the signing, on 23 June 2000 in Cotonou (Benin) of the Partnership Agreement between 77 members of the ACP Group and the EC and its member States (after 18 months of negotiations). The Agreement was signed for 20 years, with the possibility of extension for another 5 years. The Agreement came into force on 1 April 2003.4 The Cotonou Agreement focuses on three areas: trade, development and politics, while taking into account the interdependency of trade exchange, sustainable growth and political dialogue. Elimination of poverty is one of the main aims of the Cotonou Agreement. The Agreement stressed that all future cooperation must take into account the multifaceted and complex nature of the problem of poverty (in the past, the predominant approach was the so-called one-dimensional approach – focusing on trade preferences).

The Treaty on European Union was an important element making the development policy more dynamic. It resulted in the fact that development cooperation became an integral part of the EU policy, as stipulated by Title XVII of the Treaty of Maastricht – Development Cooperation (Title XX of the TEC).

Article 130u of the Treaty of Maastricht (177 TEC) enumerates the following aims of development cooperation:

- the sustainable economic and social development of the developing countries, and more particularly the most disadvantaged among them
- the smooth and gradual integration of the developing countries into the world economy
- the campaign against poverty in the developing countries.

It is also emphasized that, as regards the European Union, development refers to the whole complex of issues connected with the state and condition

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4 On 25 June 2005, in Luxembourg, the EU and the ACP states signed the first agreement amending the Cotonou Agreement. Under the amended Agreement, both parties undertook to, among others, jointly combat terrorism and counteract the spreading of weapons of mass destruction. Moreover, as a result of the amendment of the Agreement, the provisions concerning the usage of aid funds for the ACP states in extraordinary circumstances have been made more flexible; non-governmental entities from the ACP states have been provided broader access to funds under the European Development Fund; cooperation has been made easier between the ACP states and other developing countries which are not parties to the Cotonou Agreement. In June 2010, in Ouagadougou, the capital of Burkina Faso, the second revision of the Cotonou Agreement was signed. It addressed such issues as: regional integration in the ACP states; connections between security and development; climate changes; the role of parliaments, local authorities and the civil society in development; effectiveness of development assistance.
of the given country in the economic, social and political spheres. Harmonious
development requires such cooperation in order to cover all these spheres and
the participation in world economy. In this spirit, in April 2005, the Commiss-
ion adopted the so-called MDG Package.

The issues related to EU development policy are also addressed by the
documents of the European Security Strategy, The EU and Africa: Towards
a Strategic Partnership and The European Consensus on Development.

The European Consensus on Development of December 2005 is a pro-
grame of implementation of the development policy as part of the foreign
policy and foreign relations of the EU. It specifies the common EU develop-
ment goals, such as, among others:

- Reducing the level of poverty;
- Observing and protecting human rights;
- Good governance.

The importance of the European Consensus on Development of December
is proven by the fact that this document is the first to define on the Commu-
ity level the values, rules, aims and methods connected with the elimination
of poverty in developing countries. It is message sent to the world confirming
the determination of the EU in striving for the realisation of the Millennium
Development Goals.

The entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty on 1 December 2009 has strength-
ened the development issues on the EU level (the consolidated version of the
Treaty on European Union including the provisions of the Treaty of Lisbon, in
particular Article 42, and Articles 208–214 of the Treaty on the Functioning of
the European Union, TFEU). It has placed development cooperation within the
external actions of the EU. Article 208 TFEU refers directly to the aims of
development cooperation, indicating that one these is the reduction of poverty
and ultimately its elimination. The recommendation to coordinate the actions
under development cooperation is contained in Article 210 TFEU, under which
the EU and the Member States coordinate their policies in the sphere of devel-
opment cooperation and consult together about their assistance programmes. The
establishing of the European External Action Service will
contribute to the strengthening of the role of the European Commission in man-
aging assistance on the local level and in the whole EU assistance system.

5 The Treaty of Lisbon also introduced new provisions on humanitarian aid, which, next to
development assistance, is granted in accordance with the rules and aims of external actions of
the EU. Under the Treaty, the actions of Member States and of the European Union as part
of humanitarian aid also should complement one another and should be conducted under observ-
ance of international law, the principle of impartiality, non-discrimination and neutrality. Fur-
thermore, the Treaty of Lisbon introduced the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps,
which consist of young people conducting activities for the benefit of developing countries.
As far as the scale and extent of EU development policy is concerned, it is characterised by innovativeness and substantial size. The EU and its Member States are the world’s greatest donors of development assistance.

According to OECD data of 2010, the official development assistance (ODA) of the 23 states which are part of the Development Assistance Committee OECD (DAC OECD) amounted in 2009 to USD 119.6 billion calculated in constant prices, of which a total of USD 67.1 billion was provided as assistance by the 15 states of the ‘old’ EU and by the European Commission (who are part of the OECD Development Assistance Committee), including USD 15 billion solely by the European Commission. The new EU member States, which do not participate in DAC OECD, allocated approximately USD 1 billion to this aim. The data on the ‘post-crisis’ year 2009 has shown that, contrary to the expectations and concerns resulting from the problems of donorstates, the amount of ODA had not fallen. In fact (as calculated according to currency rates and prices in 2008), it even grew by 0.7 per cent. According to a simulation presented by the OECD, in 2010 the ODA amount increased – up to USD 126 billion (in the prices of 2009) and thus reached 0.32 per cent of the GDP.

The biggest recipients of EU assistance are African states. In 2009, the bilateral assistance under ODA for the whole Africa amounted to USD 27 billion (including USD 24 billion for Sub-Saharan Africa), while the multilateral assistance of international organisations amounted to approximately USD 16 billion (of which the majority was provided to Sub-Saharan Africa). 65 per cent of all these funds was provided by the European Union. Among the ten biggest donors of ODA to Africa six are EU Member States: France, Germany, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Sweden and Denmark. Furthermore, the European Commission is the biggest provider of development assistance among international institutions, such as, for example, regional banks, UN agendas, etc.

The European Union – supporting the realisation of the Millennium Development Goals – has taken commitments connected with the achievement of the UN goal regarding Official Development Assistance at the level of 0.7 per cent of GDP by 2015 (0.51 per cent of GDP for every old Member State and 0.56 per cent of GDP for the whole EU in 2010). For the new Member States, because of their lower level of economic development, the threshold is appropriately lower and amounts to: 0.33 per cent of GDP by 2015 (0.17 per cent of GDP by 2010).

According to the OECD, in 2009, the 15 states of the ‘old’ EU spent a total of 0.44 percent of GDP on global development assistance (Japan spent 0.18 per cent, the USA – 0.20 per cent). So far, the target level of 0.7 per cent of GDP has been reached by Sweden (1.12 per cent), Luxembourg (1.01 per cent), Denmark (0.88 per cent) and the Netherlands (0.82 per cent). From among the states
of the old ‘15’, Portugal, Italy and Greece spend the least (in terms of GDP) on development assistance – 0.23, 0.16 and 0.19 per cent respectively. On the other hand, among the ‘new’ Member States, in 2009, Malta provided assistance amounting to 0.20 per cent of GDP and Cyprus 0.17 per cent of GDP, thus being the only states in this group which have reached the target provisional goal for 2010 set for the newly accepted EU Members.

The main source of EU development assistance is the EU budget and the European Development Fund (EDF)\(^6\), which provide approximately 75 per cent and 20 per cent of all Community funds. The rest is provided by the European Investment Bank.

The EU budget is the main source of financing for the Community development policy. Under the Financial Perspective 2007–2013, the aid for Africa, which is the biggest recipient of European assistance, has been covered by three horizontal instruments and one geographic instrument:

- Instrument for Stability;
- Instrument for Humanitarian Aid;
- European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights;
- Development Cooperation and Economic Cooperation Instrument.

The main Community body dealing with developing guidelines and goals as well as managing the development policy is the European Commission – and in particular the Directorate-General for External Relations (DG Relex) and the DG Development and Cooperation – EuropeAid (DG DevCo). Until the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon, there functioned the EuropeAid Co-operation Office (established on 1 January 2001). It was an administrative unit of the Commission and as such was subject to its operating procedures. The Office was responsible for all phases of the cycle of aid operations. In consequence of the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon, the Office has been merged with the Directorate-General for Development, forming the new Directorate-General Development and Cooperation – EuropeAid (DG DevCo).

The issues of development cooperation have been incorporated also in the scope of activity of the European External Action Service, established under the Treaty of Lisbon. The EEAS will be involved in, among others, programming and allocation of funds. In turn, in accordance with Treaty of Lisbon, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs will represent the EU externally and coordinate all its actions, including the development policy, as well as chair the sessions of the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC).

\(^6\) The European Development Fund was established in 1958 under the Convention Implementing the EEC Treaty of 1957. It is financed by membership contributions on the basis of mutual agreements. The contributions made by EU States to the EDF reflect their share in the GDP as well as historical connections. The European Development Fund does not constitute a part of the Community budget and is managed by the European Commission.
As far as the Council of the European Union – the main legislative body of the EU – is concerned, issues connected with development cooperation are primarily handled by the Foreign Affairs Council. However, usually these are issues on a macro scale or of a cross-sectional character which concern the EU as a whole and the national programmes of development assistance.

Among other EU bodies shaping the development policy – although not as influential in this regard as the Commission – we should mention the European Parliament, and in particular the Committee on Development. The Committee’s tasks include the promotion and implementation of the EU development policy, as well as control of current expenses of the development policy on the basis of reports provided by the Commission.

At the same time, the Treaty of Lisbon has limited the role of the Presidency regarding external relations, including in the area of development cooperation. This results from the resignation from the rotational Presidency in the field of CFSP, as well as from the strengthening of the position of the European Council in the institutional system and appointment of its permanent representative, and of the establishment of the office of the High Representative and the European External Action Service.7

However, we should also remember that apart from these forms of Community development aid, the Member States of the European Union provide also assistance under bilateral agreements. What is more, these funds, provided directly by individual Member States, constitute a vast majority of the delivered aid. The Member States are highly sceptical of a closer coordination of activities in the field of development policy.

Polish development assistance – factors resulting from membership in the EU

Before 1989, Poland was providing technical and financial assistance to extra-European countries, especially Sub-Saharan Africa. Its beneficiaries were chosen according to a political key (within the sphere of influence of the USSR). In the late 1980s and the early 1990s, due to economic and political problems, Poland systematically withdrew from providing aid. Then, as a result of a reorientation of the Polish foreign policy and focusing of efforts and assets of the Polish diplomacy on integration with the West, i.e. on achieving the membership in the EU and in the NATO, issues related to development coop-

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7 The role of the rotational Presidency has been limited to presiding over other configurations of the Council of the European Union than the Foreign Affairs Council. States holding the rotational Presidency are excluded from managing the external relations of the EU and directing the activities of the European Council.
eration receded into the background. They re-emerged in the second half of the 1990s.

It is especially the membership in the EU that has significantly influenced the shaping of the system of Polish development assistance. Poland’s accession to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 1996 and later the accession to the European Union forced the adoption of certain national regulations and undertaking concrete actions in this regard. Since the entry into force of the Treaty of Maastricht, the European Union has considered development policy to be one of the major common external policies, next to the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Common Commercial Policy. This was further confirmed by the Treaty of Lisbon and approved in the recent years by EU documents, such as the European Consensus on Development, the Strategy for Africa and the European Security Strategy. International development cooperation is of priority importance to the EU, especially on the verge of the 21st century. It serves the strengthening of the EU’s position and role as a global subject of international relations.

Poland undertook to implement the *aquis communautaire* in the field of ‘external relations’ with the moment of its accession to the EU. It did not ask for any transitional periods in this respect. This involves the obligation for Poland to adopt the EU legislation regarding development cooperation and to provide the ODA contributions to the EU.

Poland also undertook to accept all the legal achievements of the EU in the sphere of ‘foreign and security policy’ with the date of its accession to the EU, and did not ask for transitional periods in this respect as well. The general framework of bilateral and multilateral cooperation of Poland, as a member of the EU, with developing countries is specified mainly by: the Barcelona Process, the Cotonou Agreement, the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), the dialogue UE–ASEAN (Association of South-East Asian Nations), the dialogue UE–Latin America and the Caribbean.

Apart from the commitments resulting from the membership in the EU, Poland has also signed other international documents to which the EU is a party and which concern development cooperation. Among these, the most important are: the Partnership Strategy developed by the OECD in 1996 and specifying the rules of development cooperation in the post-Cold-War international order; the United Nations Millennium Declaration of 2000, specifying eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs);8 the Monterrey Consensus of 2002.

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8 The Millennium Summit undertook the realization of eight Millennium Development Goals. These are to: 1) Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, 2) Achieve universal primary education, 3) Promote gender equality and empower women, 4) Reduce child mortality rates, 5) Improve maternal health, 6) Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases, 7) Ensure environmental sustainability, 8) Develop a global partnership for development.
on the manner of financing development cooperation; the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness of 2005, specifying the recommendations for improving the effectiveness and coherence of development assistance. Even though the abovementioned international commitments accepted by Poland are political declarations in nature, it is expected that states will abide by them, not wanting to undermine their international image and credibility.

The membership in the EU requires a broader field of activity of the Polish development assistance to be defined and new directions for it to be specified. It also means that Poland has become a member of the most complex and developed integration structure (despite the crisis of the euro area), functioning and operating in virtually all regions of the world. This state of affairs determines the shape of the Polish system of development assistance. It cannot be limited to the closest neighbours. It has to account for the European and global context, addressing the key development and economic challenges of the modern world. Consequently, the impetus provided to Poland by its membership in the EU requires, on the one hand, a thorough knowledge of the existing mechanisms of EU development assistance and, on the other hand, the adaptation of the Polish institutions and work methods to the dynamically changing international reality.

The membership in the EU also theoretically allows Poland to co-create the EU development policy and to use its mechanisms to realise the priority goals and interests in the recipient countries. For development policy is one of the instruments of foreign policy. By providing humanitarian aid and development assistance, apart from pure kindness, the participants of international affairs intend to achieve certain political and economic goals. Apart from altruistic and moral reasons, the fact of Poland providing development assistance is supposed to contribute to:

- the strengthening of Poland’s position in the European and international arena;
- the strengthening of Poland’s image as a state which underwent a successful political and economic transformation after 1989;
- the development of political and economic relations with the beneficiaries.

The lack of well-planned and coordinated development policy translates into Poland’s position in other areas. The striving to achieve an adequate role in EU structures entails the obligation of conducting a responsible policy towards poorly developed countries, e.g. by not using the argument ‘countries working their way up’.

9 The Declaration was signed by 91 representatives of governments and 26 largest non-governmental organisations.
The Polish Presidency in the EU provides the possibility of exercising more active influence on the European development policy, despite the limitation resulting from the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon. At the same time, this will be a challenge to the government administration, especially in relation to those EU policies which so far have not been considered important for the country as a whole and, consequently, have not been the subject of any deeper interest for Poland. Development cooperation is, undoubtedly, one of such policies. While holding the Presidency, Poland will be addressing such issues as: the financing of international development cooperation in the light of the effects of the global crisis and the budget problems of the EU; the effectiveness of development assistance; the realisation of the Millennium Development Goals after 2015. It is the activity and initiatives in these areas that the evaluation of the Polish Presidency will depend on. It is worth stressing that the discussion on development assistance has been held in Poland for some years now, but only the Presidency and the world financial crisis have made the government treat these issues as an important element of Polish foreign policy. The Polish Presidency certainly increases the dynamism of Poland’s activities regarding development cooperation, which manifests itself, for instance, in the numerous conferences, seminars and studies which took place or were published in Poland in the first half of 2011.

Since the 1990s, the European Union has been attaching more and more weight to such issues as: good governance, observance of human rights and the rule of law, democracy. It is also often stressed that sustainable development will not be fully realized if it is not supported by qualitative changes. In this context, Poland could share its experience in transformation with other states — even those from regions facing challenges and problems which seem completely different than those which Poland had to face once. The transfer of this experience could be considered a kind of Polish specialisation. At the same time, history justifies the conviction of a special position of Poland — this refers to such issues as: the lack of colonial past (essential for positive attitudes towards Poland in the countries of the South), the ethos of the Solidarity and successful usage of the received aid.

Considering the example of EU development assistance, it should be stated that this assistance can prove to be a stimulus for the expansion of exports of not only goods, but also various services from the donor states. These tenden-

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10 The Minister of Regional Development of Tunisia, Abderrazak Zouari, who visited Poland in July 2011, expressed interest in a Polish contribution to the transformation of Tunisia. In his opinion, not long ago, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe faced the same challenges that Tunisia is facing now: evening the differences, fighting unemployment, stimulating economic growth, building local democracy. Poland has allocated PLN 1.5 million (until September 2011) to the aid for Tunisia. However, it intends to increase this amount, especially in relation to consultations regarding political transformation.
cies constitute positive reasons for Poland to intensify the cooperation with other countries, especially the developing countries. Most of them are beginning – as a result of regional integration – to play an important role in politics and international economic relations, showing a high dynamism of modernisation and a significant development potential (increased demand for imports, capital resources). Poland’s active involvement in the EU development assistance can become a step towards the creation of a comprehensive political and economic cooperation with the countries receiving such aid.

**Polish development assistance – structure, scale and extent**

In the 1990s, Poland took actions aimed at formalising the activities related to international development cooperation. The process of institutionalisation taking place in this regard is divided into two stages. It consists in creating organisational and legal frameworks.

The implementation of the first projects for realising tasks connected with the ODA was initiated in Poland only in 1998. These projects fell under the competence of the Department for the United Nations System, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where two specialists were responsible for all the matters related to development aid (until 2001). It is only in September 2005 that a separate Development Cooperation Department was established in the Ministry. On 1 January 2010, as part of the reorganisation of the Ministry, the Department for Implementation of Development Programmes was established. With this, the competences regarding the Ministry’s foreign aid have been divided between the newly established department and the Development Cooperation Department.\(^{11}\)

In October 2003, The Polish Council of Ministers adopted the ‘Strategy for Poland’s Development Cooperation’. This is the first document specifying the goals and rules of the Polish assistance policy. Furthermore, one year later, the Polish Government endorsed the ‘Strategy of the Republic of Poland towards the non-European developing countries’, which includes a comprehensive programme of improving the cooperation with this group of countries. In March 2010, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs presented the draft principles to the Proposal of the Act on development cooperation and the establishment of the Polish Development Cooperation Agency and on the amendment of other acts. From July 2010, the Committee of the Council of Ministers worked on

\(^{11}\) The Department for the Implementation of Development Programmes is responsible for, among others, the realization of the plan of Polish foreign aid of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs using the budget funds allocated to development assistance. In turn, the Development Cooperation Department prepares annual plans of Polish foreign aid and participates in the works of international organisations dealing with development cooperation.
the Proposal. The most significant divergences emerged between the positions of the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding the establishment of the Development Cooperation Agency proposed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Finally, on 15 February 2011, the Council of Ministers adopted the *Principles to the Proposal of the Act on development cooperation*. Due to a rather tight schedule of its activities, the Act was not brought before the Sejm in its 6th term (2007–2011).

In 2009, Polish Official Development Assistance exceeded the value of PLN 1 billion – PLN 1,158 million, i.e. approximately USD 372.6 million. It should be pointed out that since 2006, Polish development assistance has been maintaining a constant level of 0.09 per cent of GDP (except for 2008, when it amounted to 0.08 per cent).

Polish development assistance consists of multilateral aid (contribution to the EU budget and contributions from other international institutions) and bilateral aid (realised directly by Polish institutions, organisations and other entities). In 2009, the former comprised 75.7 per cent of total aid, i.e. PLN 877 million (USD 282 million). A vast majority of funds delivered under multilateral aid (96 per cent) is the Polish contribution to the EU budget – in 2009 it amounted to PLN 841 million (USD 270.5 million), which constituted 2.88 per cent of all Members’ contributions for development assistance. From 2011, Poland will pay contributions to the European Development Fund – in total, under the 10th edition of the EDF, Poland will spend EUR 294 million on this, which will constitute 1.3 per cent of the EDF’s budget.

Bilateral aid, in turn, is coordinated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and in 2009 it amounted to PLN 282 million. It is comprised of the funds at the disposal of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the expenses of several Polish ministries and public offices, including: the Ministry of Finance (it has a significant role in the distribution of funds under bilateral aid), the Ministry of Science and Higher Education (e.g. offers assistance under the scholarship programme for students from the recipient countries), the Ministry of the Interior and Administration (provides social and medical assistance to refugees during their first 12 months of stay in Poland).

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12 In 2009, the value of the Ministry’s funds for foreign aid amounted to PLN 115 million.

13 Under ODA, the Ministry of Finance is responsible for coordination of activities connected with making the payments to international financial institutions dealing with the issues of global development and for paying the Polish share in financing the EU development policy to the EU budget under the members’ contribution. Furthermore, the Ministry of Finance is responsible for the granting by Poland to ODA recipient countries of government credits under tied aid and for the reduction of the debts to Poland of ODA recipient countries.

14 Apart from these, expenses under ODA can also be reported by: the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Infrastructure, the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, the Ministry of National Defence, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Office of the Sejm.
In 2009, Polish bilateral aid included some 95 countries. The most funds – approximately 36 per cent of the total volume of Polish bilateral aid – were provided to the countries of Eastern Asia, mainly under the loan agreement between the governments of Poland and of the People’s Republic of China. In terms of the volume of the Polish bilateral assistance granted, Eastern Asia is followed by Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus. Africa is only on the fourth place. In 2009, Africa received approximately PLN 11 million. Among the ten biggest recipients of Polish bilateral aid in 2009, there is only one African country – Angola (PLN 7.3 million). The biggest beneficiaries of Polish bilateral aid are China (PLN 31.1), Belarus (PLN 15.5 million), Georgia (PLN 11.2 million), Ukraine (PLN 9.1 million). In statistical terms, every adult Pole is providing annually over PLN 37 on development assistance in taxes. Out of this amount, about PLN 9 is aid provided by Poland directly to its partner countries, out of which only PLN 1 goes to Sub-Saharan Africa.

Apart from traditional development assistance, Poland actively participates in the activities of international organisations working for peace and safety in conflict regions and regions threatened by destabilisation, first of all by the participation of Polish soldiers in peacekeeping missions and operations of the UN and the EU. Under the European Security and Defence Policy, Poland participated in two operations: with a contingent of 130 persons (third largest after the German and French ones) in the 2006 operation EUFOR DR Congo and with a contingent of 400 Polish soldiers in the 2008 mission EUFOR Chad/CAR. As a member of the EU, Poland also participates in cyclic summits of the EU with various regions of the world or states. All these actions should be considered in the context of broadly understood external policy of the EU, one of the goals of which is stabilisation and ensuring constant development in international relations.

Challenges and problems faced by Polish development assistance

The activities undertaken by Poland are in line with the current tendencies in international development cooperation. Poland has made appropriate commitments in this regard, including the development of its own strategy and a new system of development assistance. Additionally, these commitments are enhanced by the decisions and programmes adopted by the UN, EU, OECD and other international organisations. Since 2004, we have observed a clear improvement in the shaping of the Polish system of development assistance. Poland has started to spend the highest amounts in its history on development assistance. In the recent years, several hundred of various projects were exe-
Another positive fact is the establishment by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of a volunteer programme and the contribution to the promotion of development education.

However, despite the actions undertaken in the recent years in this respect, the Polish system of development assistance continues to show significant weaknesses. The key issues are still the amount of funds allocated by Poland to development assistance, ensuring the coordination of the activities of various ministries and increasing the coherence of their actions with politicians in other areas. Furthermore, the main negligences and problems include also: the lack of adequate legal regulations and the far-reaching centralization of the aid system.

The problem of financing Polish development assistance should be considered one of the main challenges. This refers not only to the amount of the provided funds, but also to the manner of governing and spending.

It seems rather improbable (or even impossible) that Poland would reach the declared amount of development assistance, i.e. 0.33 per cent of GDP, by 2015. Such a state of affairs could determine possible negative consequences for Poland in the international arena, such as:

- Weakening of Poland’s position in the negotiations within the EU regarding the financing of new Member States under structural programmes (the argument of ‘solidarity’ with the poorer regions of the EU could prove only little effective in the context of our lack of solidarity with the countries of the South);

- Weakening of our arguments for financing EU projects which are essential for Poland, such as the Eastern Partnership (further increasing of Poland’s influence over the directions and priorities of the EU in the area of development will depend on, among others, the increase in the contribution to the financing of these activities);

- Decreasing of Poland’s chances for the membership in the OECD Development Assistance Committee;

- Weakening of Poland’s international image (all the more so because Poland will not be able to name the global crisis as the excuse for its development-related negligence, as in 2009, it was the only EU country to avoid recession).

Government expenses on foreign development projects do not constitute a fixed item in the annual budget. They use the budget reserves. Such an approach does not allow Poland to execute multiannual programmes, which are of priority importance in the case of development assistance. As a result, Polish aid is often only symbolic and is unpredictable in the long run.

It should also be noted that the gradual increase of funds contributed by Poland to the budget of the EU is not accompanied by a dynamic increase of funds allocated to bilateral aid. Such a situation is characteristic of new Mem-
ber States of the EU, which do not have developed structures able to provide aid by bilateral channels. In contrast, the ‘old’ Member States provide mainly bilateral assistance.

An important challenge is the strengthening of the institution responsible for the conducting of the development policy and improvement of the mechanisms of coordination between the various ministries. In accordance with the 2003 Strategy, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the body competent to conduct development policy and coordinate the development cooperation executed by other ministries and institutions. However, this role is largely limited. In practice, each ministry carries out its own independent programme and some of these expenses are included in development assistance post factum. Since 2004, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been publishing a list of priority countries, but it only refers to the aid provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and has no direct influence on the actions undertaken by other Polish units providing development assistance. This is the reason for the discrepancies between the list prepared by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the list of actual biggest beneficiaries of aid. In 2007–2009, the main recipient of Polish aid was China. This results from the fact that most funds under development assistance were provided in the form of preferential credits or remitting debts.

Development assistance should constitute an integral element of the foreign policy of Poland as a member of the European Union. Meanwhile, Polish legal regulations are still not adapted to conducting an effective policy in this respect. The difficulties connected with proper coordination of aid activities and with their inadequate funding show that the Polish system of development assistance is not working properly. In particular, this was due to the lack of sound legal and structural foundations for such assistance. However, the Act on Foreign Aid, which had been developed and modified for nine years, was finally adopted by the Polish Sejm (lower house of Parliament) on 16 September 2011. The Act provides instruments enabling the efficient coordination and realisation of development activities based on three elements, which are also the three most significant areas of Poland’s assistance for developing countries: development assistance, humanitarian aid and supporting democracy. In addition, the Act will enhance Polish efforts in the field of global education. The adoption of a legislative framework for development cooperation during Poland’s presidency in the EU Council can be regarded as effective legitimisation of Poland’s activities in this respect. Adopting a comprehensive legislation regarding development cooperation as well as long- and medium-term strategies will allow Poland to develop proper mechanisms of managing aid

15 In 2009, among the priority countries selected by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were, next to Angola: Palestinian National Authority, Afghanistan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine.
and to regulate the aid system, thus improving its predictability, effectiveness and influence.

By conducting an active development assistance policy, the EU Member States have broader possibilities of economic cooperation with the recipient countries, especially with non-European countries. As a result, conditions favourable for business contacts emerge. The necessary condition for taking advantage of this opportunity is historical, political, economic and cultural presence in the beneficiary countries. In the case of former colonial powers (and now the major donors, such as France, Belgium), recognised economic powers (e.g., Germany, Sweden), the issues is rather simple. However, it is much more difficult for the new members of the EU, who have neither any colonial past, or are even familiar with colonialism, nor a recognised economic position in the world or authentic experience in trade with the countries of the South. The experience of national centres of foreign trade in trade with allied socialist political regimes are useless nowadays. That is why the first task for countries newly admitted to the EU is to establish themselves in the public procurement market of developing countries.

Due to its membership in the EU, Poland has received new instruments for acting in international markets (under the Common Commercial Policy), as well as new credibility – as a part of one of the most important collective actors in international relations. But Poland is not able to benefit from this. Polish authorities have not created any mechanisms supporting the activities of entrepreneurs in this part of the world. It is also visible that there is a lack of diversified Polish exports offer directed at these countries. While evaluating the dynamism of Polish enterprises in the struggle for a share in the ‘cake’ divided as aid for developing countries, we should stress the weak lobbying position of Polish enterprises in Brussels. And if Warsaw is little visible in Brussels, establishing a position in the public procurements market in the countries of the South will be rather difficult. Additionally, the issue of lobbying is still not appreciated by business circles and by the institutions which should support the Polish presence in the world.

An important element of the Polish strategy towards developing countries is the promotion of positive effects of the process of expansion of the European Union by stressing the complementary character of the EU’s cooperation with these countries. For they fear that the accession of Eastern and Central European countries to the European Union will result in a decrease of EU aid for their development. This fear was expressed, among others, by the the Nadi Declaration adopted by some of the ACP countries on 19 July 2002, in which they stated that they see a need for the rich North to increase their expenses on behalf of the poor South. This will probably be a factor inducing the leaders of EU Member States and high officials of the European Commission to resume the pressure on the new members, so that they participate in development assistance to a larger extent.
Conclusions

As a result of the accession of Poland to the European Union, Polish activities in the field of development assistance have become an element of the EU aid system. Consequently, the emerging Polish programme of development cooperation must take into consideration the mechanisms employed in the EU. This also implies the need for Poland to take on a larger responsibility for the issues of global development. The accession to the EU has also resulted in a significant increase in the Polish activity regarding development cooperation, which had been rather limited before. However, the transformation from the role of a beneficiary to the role of a donor and provider of aid is not an easy task and creates many financial, organisational and legal challenges. Polish development policy remains in the process of conceptual and operational formation.

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Krzysztof Wielecki

The Polish society and economy
in the European social order

Poland joined the European Union a few years after the change of the political system which has initiated the ongoing period of economic, social, cultural and political transformation. In sociological terms, a long process of change in the social order has started back then. Poland’s membership in the EU became a very important factor speeding this process, but also modifying it.

At that time, the European Union was also in a crucial point in its history. The process of such a substantial enlargement was connected with changes taking place in the EU itself, was preceded by significant internal transformations and at the same time was a major aspect of these changes.

The civilizational transformations taking place in the world, which, only partially rightly, are being reduced to economic globalization, provided a very important context for these processes. The present-day image of the EU and of Poland in the EU is also greatly influenced by the great economic crisis (mainly financial) lasting since 2008.

This text constitutes an attempt to outline the background of such an image of the Polish society and economy in the European social order. I will also try to provide an initial general summary of the present Poland in the European social order. Due to the limited space and the character of the publication, I will only focus on some aspects of this notion.

The European liberal democratic social order

The long history of Europe has abounded in turbulent and changing processes of forming the ‘social framework’ in which Europeans lead their lives. Sociologists call this framework the social order. The usefulness of this term lies in the fact that it allows us to look at the society from a global and
macrostructural point of view and to perceive the most important dimensions of collective existence with the interrelations between them.

It was created in the Industrial Period and presently should be understood as a dynamic and relatively fluid structure, with a changing and diverse internal balance, on the continuum between anarchy and authoritarianism, where the particular forms of order are much rather certain arbitrary ranges of that continuum than well-defined points. Within it, there is an ever-changing, internally heterogeneous, complex and dynamic state of constant crystallization, reproduction, disintegration and transformation of relatively permanent and relatively constant bases for the organisation of social practice of life within a relatively separate large community.

Social order is comprised of five factors or dimensions: social structure, culture, as well as institutional, economic and demographic order. We can also specify four types of social order: authoritarian, totalitarian, democratic and anarchistic. Perceived in this way, social order determines the framework of common practice of life – more or less crystallized, always, at least to a certain extent, changing and internally complicated.

The dramatic history of Europe in the Industrial Age now belongs to the past. When we limit our interest to post-war (after 1945) events and to the area in which, since then, European integration processes have been taking place (gradually enlarged up to its present extent), we can say that there are three main factors forming the present-day European social order: liberal democracy, pro-social market economy and the European integration.

However, in what sense can we speak of the European social order? Does this notion suggest that there already is one society – not in Europe in general, of course, but perhaps at least in the European Union? It is not easy to answer these questions. There is certainly no such thing as a homogenous community, even of Europe narrowed down to the EU. Yet, if one would look into the particular aspects of the order, one would have to notice that this area is characterised by highly integrated economic systems, closely co-operating institutional systems, a community with a strong culture and a long tradition, a high degree of similarity of the social structure, as well as by a similar demographic situation. However, we should much rather speak of ongoing structure-forming processes which facilitate the development of the foundations of a common social order, than of an already existent homogenous order.

Therefore, when speaking of the European social order, we are referring either to the processes of structuralisation taking place in the conditions accompanying the creation of the European Union, or the various social orders of the individual states, between which we can identify certain similarities. Consequently, this is not about one empirical, integrated social order, but about a certain type of order, as a rather theoretical category, which can be isolated through comparative studies. We can name three fundaments of the European social
order: democracy, pro-social market economy and the mechanisms of European integration. Since the latter have already been discussed in previous texts included in this publication, this one will focus on the former two.

The term ‘democracy’ is derived from two ancient Greek words: *demos* and *kratia*, which basically mean ‘the rule of the people’. However, back then, the term ‘the people’ had a very different meaning than it does today. This category did not include women, slaves, first- and second-generation freedmen, as well as newcomers from other *poleis*. As a result, no more than 10–15 per cent of the inhabitants of a city-state were considered to be ‘the people’. A peculiarity of Ancient Greece was the theoretical full direct democracy. A *polis* was supposed to be ruled by an assembly of all its citizens. Each citizen had to hold a public office (in a certain order, as there were too many citizens for this). In Athens, a thousand of such offices were created, but the queue was still quite long. The Greeks believed that any kind of democracy other than direct democracy is nothing short of barbarism. Consequently, many Greeks felt disgusted with Athens, as they considered it to be too big for true democracy. As a matter of fact, the Romans shared this belief. However, since they created a huge *imperium*, they limited *demos* to those citizens of Rome who resided in close proximity to the capital.

If the Greek cities were too large to practice this kind of democracy, how can it be possible in modern states, which often have many millions of citizens, or – all the more so – in the European Union, with half a billion citizens? The remedy is supposed to be indirect, representative democracy. It avoids the said shortcomings of its Greek predecessor. By definition, all inhabitants of a given state are its citizens and elect (though with a few exceptions, such as minors, legally incapacitated persons, newcomers from foreign states) the most apt ones among them to rule on their behalf, under their supervision and for their benefit. We could say that nowadays ‘the rule of the people’ comes down to ‘the rule of the majority’. All the more so, as the most important decisions are made by a majority of votes anyway – through referendums and elections, and then in the Parliament, where the final word belongs to the majority of votes of the members of parliament, who represent the citizens. Unfortunately, indirect democracy also has many flaws. These result, among others, from the defectiveness of the system of electing and controlling the governing elite and from the citizens’ feeling that their choice in the elections is limited, or even well-nigh meaningless.

The ideas of modern democracy draw extensively on its tradition. Nowadays, democracy implies not only the lack of censorship and a multitude of political parties. Certainly, these conditions are necessary, but they are not sufficient. Democracy does also not mean that everyone can say and do what and where they like.

The essence of democracy is a social compromise, safeguarded by law, which specifies what is part of the social agreement and leaving the other
spheres of life to the citizens. The arrangement, which has remained beyond the reach of everyday discussion from the moment it was agreed to, provides for social stability and balance, which are necessary in order for people to lead peaceful lives and for the state to fulfil its functions. This balance is possible due to the fact that the majority of the society shares the principles which lay at its foundation. These are codified in the constitution – a legislative act which is fundamental to the state and its citizens.

The social agreement on democracy includes the competences of the three branches of power: legislative, executive and judicial. Within the scope determined by the constitution, the governing bodies are not limited within their competences. However, it is not possible for them to exceed these competences. This protects the whole political system and the state from autocracy and infringement on the social agreement. The balance is renewed by means of elections, which result in the transfer of power to the party which receives the support of the majority of voters. This way every citizen can express their will. A very important element of the democratic system is the so-called fourth power, namely mass media, which have a profound influence on the quality of that system.

The basis of democracy is the equality of citizens. All people are equal before law. After meeting the conditions stipulated in the constitution, everyone also has the right to express their political opinions and to participate in political life (actively or passively).

At the core of the democratic compromise there are also some fundamental principles, in particular the respect for individuals. Under the present law, the individual enjoys full freedom, whereas law regulates the extent of the citizens’ freedom only to such a degree that is necessary to maintain the cooperation of the whole society and to protect the laws and freedoms of the people against the designs of other people. This refers also to social minorities.

However, it should be clearly stressed that in democracy every person is priceless. Everyone has the right to freedom, as long as they do not infringe the freedoms of others. People who belong to minorities must be given special protection and support, as in relations with the majority their freedoms are especially prone to infringement. Nevertheless, it is always the individual, not a community, that is the subject of special laws. If a minority has special privileges, these are granted not to the minority as such, but to individuals, in order to protect them, since in accordance with their rights they belong to the minority and if, in consequence of this fact, their freedom is particularly threatened by the majority. For instance, a person of different religion than the dominant one or a person adhering to customs different from those most common, is entitled to special protection as a human being and a citizen.

On the other hand, a law which requires a necessary minimum from the citizens is obeyed resolutely and consequently. The law may be and is subject to
changes, but this is done only on extraordinary occasions and in a special mode. Independent courts ensure that it is being obeyed.

Maintaining the necessary level of integration of the citizens and the functionality of the society require the creation of necessary institutions (first of all, the state), as well as the allocation of persons, competences and resources. This is the problem of power. When there already are persons and groups which hold the power, they usually tend to accumulate the influence, resources and instruments necessary to exercise it. The governing elites strive to extend their authority. Indeed, one of the main tasks of democracy is the protection against these inevitable designs of those who hold power. But the freedom of the individual and of the society can also be threatened by its citizens. Pressure from local communities, neighbours’ groups and other formal and informal associations of citizens, which constitute the so called civil society can be equally dangerous. As we can see, the civil society can be both an instrument of democracy and the source of threat to democracy.

Such a liberal democratic approach is characteristic of the modern Western social order. If in the contemporary times democracy equals the will of the majority, then every authority which has the support of the majority could do as it pleases. The fact that in Nazi Germany the majority did not oppose to genocide does not mean that this was a democratic state. The post-war democratic social order is protected from similar pathologies by the liberal values. Nowadays, these include, first of all, the respect for the freedoms of the individual. Human rights are treated with greatest care in the Member States and in the European Union itself. The EU even provides possibilities to appeal against the decisions of its own institutions, as well as of national institutions, should anyone’s human rights be infringed by them, after the aggrieved party has exhausted all the safeguard measures available in their country.

In the tradition originating with Max Weber, the state is treated as a political association. The basic function of the state is supposed to be sovereign distribution of powers, that is of the access of persons and groups to decisions of strategic importance for the given society. In Weber’s theory this would rather involve the ‘redistribution of legal violence’. However, in the sociological sense, the functions of the state consist in providing a minimum of social integration, chiefly through the co-ordination of the activities of citizens, groups of citizens and institutions on the territory under the jurisdiction of the given state, as well as through mediation between them, which increases the chances for lasting and development. Consequently, we can perceive the democratic state as a form of organisation of a society inhabiting a given territory, shaped by a common cultural tradition, oriented at achieving higher goals (lasting, development) and increasing the citizens’ life opportunities. This self-organization is based on a government whose representatives are elected and controlled by the society and who have the powers and resources delegated by the
society which are necessary for them to perform their functions and to realize
the goals on behalf of local communities.

The lesser the extent to which the state is a form of social self-organisation
– i.e. the more resources and powers the governing elite has above the mini-

mum necessary for the existence and development of the society and the more
of them it has against the will of the citizens – the less democratic and the
more autocratic it is. At the same time, the lesser the extent of resources and
powers below this minimum – i.e. the more the state loses the ability to self-
control as well as determine and achieve the basic aims and strategies – the less
democratic and the more anarchistic it is. Consequently, democracy is a certain

form of balance between autocracy and anarchy.

A democratic state is characterised by the fact that it provides an institu-
tional basis for the existence of the civil society. Therefore, the state is sup-
posed to regulate and stabilize the settled and socially accepted compromise
between the subjective demands of citizens and the demands of social groups.
However, the state should also perform one more function for the democratic
society: it should protect – under democratically established laws – the citizens
and groups from the civil society, should it, unlawfully, limit their subjectivity
over the boundary determined by social interest.

Pro-social market economy

The economic order is one of the five dimensions of social order. Its sub-
ject are the people, not ‘markets’, ‘economic freedoms’ or ‘neo-liberal values’.
The people manage their economy in order to eat, dress, have a place to live
and be able to fulfil various material needs. The success and stability of econ-
omy depend on whether no one is too intensively interfering in it. At the same
time, the economy may not divide the society, destroy the social order, act
against the citizens. In the liberal democratic social order a balance should be
maintained between the tendency of the market to dominate and the tendencies
to limit the chances of economic success. It is a very important role of the mod-
ern state to negotiate and renegotiate the compromise in this respect, that is to
provide arbitration, as well as to ensure that this compromise is respected.

Economic stability depends, for instance, on whether the economy has the
necessary minimum freedom of activity, as well as on the predictability, ration-
ality and profitability of the conditions for production and trade. Therefore, the
state’s obligation is to protect the market in this respect, as well as to create
the conditions for the success and development of the economy. The state must,
therefore, have the resources which will allow it to fulfil both these functions
and those mentioned previously, while the only possible source of such
resources them is economy. Consequently, the state can and should obtain funds
for its budget from the market. It should also make sure that economic activity does not infringe certain general moral and political rules. Entrepreneurs must, therefore, observe the law (including the social rights of employees, consumer rights, etc.).

Thus, the essence of the liberal democratic order is in maintaining a certain balance. The economy should have as many limitations as it is necessary for the society to be able to benefit from the achieved economic effects, for citizens to have a chance to lead a life consistent with the civilisational standard – so that the social compromise could last. However, it also needs enough freedom to develop dynamically. In capitalism, though, there usually is no balance between the beneficiaries of the market. Significant disproportions in this respect are dysfunctional and inevitably lead to very serious disturbances. The European Union order is essentially oriented at keeping these disproportions within civilised limits. Capitalism and its market economy have undergone many crises which cost the nations of the world dearly. The economic collapses of the 1920s and 1930s were among the major causes for the outbreak of World War II; at that time, the economic order in the world (Europe, in particular), especially the previously mentioned disproportions and tensions, led to such aberrations as fascism and communism, as well as to the cataclysms they brought about.

This is why the beginnings of European integration after World War II consisted mainly in joint economic activities. The economy became the subject of utmost care, with market economy as the ‘apple of the eye’.

The key to the economic development of individual states is the ability of the society to increase global production. This depends mainly on such production factors as land, employment, capital, as well as the ability to use them effectively. Economic growth leads to prosperity only when the indexes of national income are visibly rising. It is also of some importance in what manner this income is divided in a society. The distribution of income can also be a factor stimulating growth. Yet another factor is entrepreneurship. In economy, it is defined as the ability to organise the other three factors of growth. It should also be perceived from the angle of the condition of the population, resources, technology and social institutions. Many scholars believe that technological changes, primarily in the fields of instruments, methods and organisation of management, are of fundamental importance to the economy. These allow – with the same level of resources and of the other factors – to significantly increase the total production and, sometimes, achieve a very high economic growth.

Furthermore, cultural factors are also of fundamental and constantly growing significance for the economy. Social institutions, the system of values and cultural models determine the use and successful combination of all factors of growth. It is no accident that ‘cultural capital’ is nowadays considered even
more important than ‘financial capital’. ‘Social capital’ is also of great importance for economic development. It includes such phenomena as, for instance, social structure (i.e. social divisions) and the changes within it (social mobility), the type of state and social order, the political system, the political orientation of the population (e.g. totalitarian, pro-democratic), the education system (modern or not), the state of development of trade unions, the level of political freedoms (their lack often creates barriers to entrepreneurship).

The condition of economic structure also has an important role in the economic development of a state. The structure covers three sectors. The first is business activity which directly uses nature: agriculture, forestry, fishery. The second sector includes the spheres of business activity in which raw materials are processed: the processing industry, construction, etc. The third sector is the services sector, which does not cover production, but the work of artisans, physicians, teachers, salesmen, bankers, etc. We should also mention the four stages in the development of mankind: the pre-agrarian, agrarian, industrial and information. The first era was a pre-production age, the second involved the domination of the first sector, the third – a domination of the second sector, and the last one involves the dominance of the services sector in the GNP. In accordance with the elementary law of economy, there must be a consistency between supply and demand. This means that a product is expensive because its supply is low. High demand attracts producers and increases the supply of a given product, which in turn results in the reduction of its price. In other words, the factors of production move where they are most profitable, i.e. where the prices are the highest. This is one of the reasons why technical inventions and new organisational solutions change the demand, facilitate production and attract capital.

The characteristic features of market economy are as follows: the domination of private property and a well-developed legal, institutional and financial system for the market, as well as the priority to accumulate capital. The present-day trends recommended to the European developed market economy are a reasonable monetary policy and particular care of budgetary balance, which allows to control inflation, i.e. excessive supply of money in the market which is not reflected in the produced commodities. A continuing trend is the opening to international markets, stabilisation of the prices of energy and resources, as well as lowering the share of the costs of labour in the overall production costs. Such an economy is supposed to intensively absorb technological development and to strive for effective use of resources. In this case, the third sector of the economy is dominant, with a minimum significance of the first sector and a constantly declining significance of the second. However, due to high effectiveness, there is usually an overproduction of food and, at the same time, falling employment in this sphere. An increasingly larger share of the GNP comes from the sphere of processing information.
The crisis of the liberal democratic social order

In this mechanism, the state is the guardian of balance in the social order, fulfilling the obligation to represent all its citizens. It is no longer a class state or a nation-state, but a civic state. It fulfils its primary function mainly through the great social compromise between employees and employers. This is the principal meaning of the so called ‘welfare state’, which not necessarily ruins the economy – as its opponents might claim – through its open-handed policies. Its essence lies in a social and political balance achieved through mutual benefits: the employees do not have to worry about a certain socially accepted minimum range of social benefits, while the employers have guaranteed personal inviolability, inviolability of private property, as well as the continuity of capitalist foundations of the political system and the fact that conflicts of interests are settled in accordance with the law.

It is to this liberal democratic social order – in which the state is based on a democratic parliamentary system, with political parties representing the main social forces, and in which the law regulates the obligations of the state, the obligations of citizens and the acceptable mode of political struggle (in accordance with the principles of the previously mentioned social compromise) – that the West owes the unprecedented (although not free from incidents) social peace, economic development, prosperity of individuals and societies, respect for human rights and world peace, which have lasted for several decades now. This is quite an achievement compared to the previous several thousand years of conflicts, revolutions, civil wars, famines, economic crises, etc.

In our times, the order described above is undergoing erosion – mainly due to the unprecedented civilizational breakthrough, with its scientific and technical transformations and the technological revolution. We are entering an era of information societies, in which the major part of the national income comes from processing information. This is also an age of computerisation, automation and miniaturisation, which results in an ever lower need for workforce and, consequently, in the dropping social power of employees, their trade unions, political parties. This way, the principle of the post-war liberal democratic social order, based on a pro-social market economy, has been violated. This is the context of the success of the neo-liberal ideology, dated since approximately the mid-1970s.

One of the consequences of the civilisational transformations is the economic crisis, which has lasted, as it is commonly claimed, since 2008. It has had a tremendous impact on the economy and on the whole social order in the EU. Indeed, there had been many papers published in professional literature on the trends towards crisis in the economy for many years before the actual crisis occurred. Economic data also clearly pointed to such trends, thus revealing the serious, fundamental character of the imminent collapse, obviously going far
beyond a purely financial aspect. As an example, we could mention the following facts: in 2002, the US market of the so-called derivatives amounted to USD 100 trillion, and in 2008, already to USD 600 trillion (ca. 10 times the annual global GDP); in the late 1990s, the so-called hedge funds – which make it possible to make profit on falling prices as well and which played a significant role in the escalation of the financial crisis – managed USD 100 billion, and in 2008, already USD 2–3 trillion. The assets of some financial corporations (banks and financial institutions) exceeded their capital 60 times (so called ‘leverage’).

It is worth pointing out that two clearly distinct orientations emerge in modern economy. The first is ruthless capitalism, aimed only at accumulation of capital, using modern technologies without scruples in order to bypass any and all obligations to mankind, culture, the environment, etc. It is based mainly on anonymous shareholding, impersonal transfers of electronic money, whose owners usually have no idea where, why and on what conditions their financial assets are invested and, consequently, do not intend to identify themselves or sympathise with anyone or anything. This kind of capitalism unceremoniously destroys people, the environment and culture. Using the ideology of neoliberal freedom, its proponents destroy the competition and monopolise the market. The second orientation (probably most advanced in Sweden) is capitalism with a more corporate attitude, which occurs, for instance, in the form of social movements or communities. In this case, profit, although still important, is not the only value; the decision-making process and the redistribution of profit often have social or even environmental aims. It seems, however, that the processes of globalisation favour the former type of capitalism. In the EU, on the other hand, we can rather observe tendencies towards the second model. But will the global crisis leave it unchanged? We cannot know this yet.

Nowadays, capital has received the chance to free the market, or rather to obtain full independence for itself in the market – independence from the state, from all institutions and organisations safeguarding the social compromise on state level (such as, for instance, trade unions). As long as there are no mechanisms established which would enforce the compromise on the global level, there will remain the threat of a huge global conflict of the desperate excluded individuals and some employees with global employers who have a major advantage. The disproportionately weaker, marginalised individuals and the employees will, therefore, resort to terrorist methods of fighting. This will not be easy, as modern technologies have also found their way to the control institutions. However, as we now know, there are no such police forces and no such prisons that could protect a country against terrorist attacks. Moreover, marginalisation gives rise to a whole series of commonly known consequences, such as moral decay, crime, dissolution of social structures, neurotic and mental disorders, family pathology, etc. This type of transformations is accompanied by a certain metamorphosis of culture, including science, and unprece-
dented secularisation, which has robbed all these processes of their metaphysical, moral, traditional foundations – the moral and spiritual pillars.

It also seems that today, in the third millennium, this new crisis is fully visible. As a result of globalisation, the cancerous spreading of mass culture, radical secularisation, development of biotechnology and the technologies of electronic communication, we can observe a collapse in all the spheres of human life. In addition, the statistics on marriage and family are the poor, there is a disquieting decay of morality and simple good manners, mercantilisation of man, virtualization of the world, etc.

Nevertheless, this crisis can also bring about better prospects. Some predict that new jobs will appear, as well as a modern global civil society, a serious partner to global capital. However, it could as well be otherwise. It is clear that the new era presents people with new possibilities for a more comfortable, safer life, much more suiting their individual needs and granting more freedom to the individual. Of course, we might worry that this may result it yet further-reaching development of consumerism and materialism, which already renders life pointless and aimless and deprives us of a sense of bonding, responsibility. It is also clear that a new axis is emerging, which distinctly diversifies societies both internally and in the global arena – namely access to consumption. Freedom of consumption is strictly limited by social and cultural factors and the disproportions in this regard area dramatically increasing. Nowadays, approximately 10 per cent of the richest people in the world control 90 per cent of its wealth.

These are very important contexts for the development of the European social order. European integration is an opportunity to save Europe’s particular interests, values, cultures, small and medium states and institutional models in view of the great crisis of civilisation. An opportunity which is not an easy one.

Poland in the European Union

Poland joined the EU in a very particular point in its development, after a few years of its own political transformation. Today, we can say with utmost certainty that we cannot possibly overrate the benefits for our country brought about by the membership in this European body. For many years, the approval for the Union in Poland has been approximately 75–85 per cent. This is a clear proof of its impact on Poland. All the more so, as before the accession these opinions were rather divided and there were many serious concerns, and even well-nigh hysterical fears.

The main advantage of the membership is the ongoing civilisational process in Poland. It is under the influence of the Union that the legal system is normalising. Trials lasting for many years, involving detention on remand,
from which a suspect was released after many years of waiting to be presented any charges, are now vanishing from everyday life, as are groundless attacks of state institutions – especially tax offices – on citizens. Quite a number of well-prospering and honest enterprises, which more often than not employed many people, have went bankrupt because of deliberate or unintentional legal ignorance of public officials. Today each citizen, after he or she has exhausted all legal measures, can refer to EU institutions and many Poles have won their cases there, thus regaining their freedom or money. The standards of work in local and state administration have significantly improved.

Poles highly value the possibility to travel and work in the EU. In the last years, tourism in Poland increased dramatically, but many Poles emigrate in order to work abroad as well. This improves the state of their domestic budgets, but it also influences the state budget.

The process of social stratification in Poland is currently deepening. The number of people who are poor or even live in poverty is increasing, but the number and wealth of many other people is rising as well. Significant changes are taking place in the arrangement of social classes. It is a great transformation of the social structure. In light of the increasing wealth of many citizens and with the tripling of the percentage of people who study in institutions of higher education (currently they amount to ca. 21 per cent of the population), we can observe the development of the middle class, with its system of values, lifestyles, world view and political preferences.

If we take into consideration the other UE Member States, we can rather clearly see that the more pro-social the economic system is and the more a state tends towards a welfare state, the better usually are the achievements of its economy. This is contrary to what the representatives of the Polish variant of neoliberalism claim. This is probably connected with other mechanisms as well, as a result of which the expenses on the welfare state (social issues) raise the level of social and cultural capital in Europe, which in turn, in combination with higher expenses on new technologies and development, substantially raises labour efficiency and brings about a rise of the Gross Domestic Product.

I will illustrate these assumptions with statistical data. They are presented in Table No 1. The table does not include countries which for some reasons are highly untypical (such as Luxembourg) and would complicate the analysis. It quite clearly supports the assumptions made above. Generally, we have a Europe (EU) of ‘three speeds’ or, in other words, three socio-economic models. There are countries which spend over 20 per cent of their GDP per capita on the welfare state and it is they (except for Portugal and Greece) whose index exceeds 100 per cent of the average for the EU. Their expenses on new technologies put them in the first seventeen places in the EU. This gives them the effect of a high labour efficiency (over 100 per cent of the EU average). This could explain their high GDP per capita.
There is also a group of countries with moderate expenses on the welfare state and on new technologies. These countries usually have labour efficiency per capita of 70–80 per cent of the EU average and a lower GDP (70–80 per cent of the EU average). In this group, the results only generally reflect the mentioned regularity. There is also a third group, situated on the lowest positions in every respect. The position of Poland (fifth position from the bottom in the case of GDP), especially compared with those states which did not employ the ‘shock therapy’, such as the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary (even with a crisis so widely spoken of), Estonia, gives us much to think about in terms of the method of modernisation. All the more so, as it carries serious humanitarian and social consequences, such as an increase in crime, egocentrism, decomposition of social integration, etc.

Table 1. Expenses on welfare state, new technologies and development, labour efficiency per capita and GDP per capita in selected EU Member States

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>GDP per capita, % of EU average (100%)</th>
<th>Expenses on the welfare state, % of national GDP</th>
<th>Labour efficiency per capita (EU-27=100%)</th>
<th>Expenses on new technologies per capita (2008), rank in EU-27</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>28.4</td>
<td>110.0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>123</td>
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<td>112.4</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>29.7</td>
<td>111.3</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>117</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>101.2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>29.5</td>
<td>123.8</td>
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<td>106.9</td>
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<td>30.5</td>
<td>120.3</td>
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<td>Spain</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>110.6</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
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<td>Italy</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>26.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>95</td>
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<td>101.8</td>
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<td>71.7</td>
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<td>83.7</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>Slovakia</td>
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<td>78.8</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>63</td>
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<td>70.1</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>63.7</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>65.1</td>
<td>20/21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>49.9</td>
<td>20/21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>47.0</td>
<td>22/23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>37.2</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own compilation based on the Eurostat data for 2010.
Conclusions

According to sociological studies, there are practically no people in Poland who would like to return to the times before the transformation and the percentage of proponents of withdrawing from the EU is marginal. However, it is also worth mentioning that the situation is by far not all that good and clear. Even now, we have not yet accepted some of the models and standards common in the Union. Probably the most important issue is the economic model, which is mainly pro-social in the EU. In Poland, with the approval of many citizens, even before the accession, the economy saw the application of the so-called ‘shock therapy’ – or, as its opponents call it, ‘a shock with no therapy’. This involved a sharp neo-liberal turn without any significant safeguard systems for the people.

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Magdalena Drouet

Combating social exclusion within the European Union and Poland

The sources of social exclusion

The leading economists, such as Lester Thurow, believe that in the 21st century, human capital is and will be the key source of comparative advantages between winning and losing nations – that’s why so much effort is being put into social coherence, investments in individual development and any initiatives aimed to overcome the barriers connected with social exclusion, which wastes potential human resources. Investments in professional carrier, the right solutions in education as well as the proper choice of profession are crucial in an era when productivity is of far bigger significance then the amount of work.

The development of human capital: education, skill levels, and problem-solving abilities will enable an individual to be a productive worker in the global economy of the twenty-first century.

Threatened by increasing economic competition and by rising global powers such as China, India or Brazil, which could seriously challenge the Western-dominated global governance architecture, Europe must handle many difficulties which could hamper the dynamic development of the Old Continent. Human capital development may constitute the major European strategy to oppose this global power shift. Bearing in mind the future challenges, European policy-makers should particularly focus on human resources and social coherence.

Some of the ills of contemporary Europe are demography, aging population and the pension system, which is not adjusted to the falling population. Taking into account the forecasts, in 2025, 40 per cent of Europeans will exceed the age of 65, at present this is 23 per cent. This means that the value of paid-off pensions will reach 20 per cent of the Gross National Product. It is obvious that the present European pension systems, in the form in which they exist now, won’t be capable of meeting the needs of ageing societies. The situation will entail the exclusion and poverty of a significant part of the society.
What is more, one of the major causes of the “declining” position of Europe is the social model of the labour market, excessive social welfare expenditure, including social benefits and excessive social burdens, which don’t facilitate economic activity. The remedy for the danger of poverty is supposed to be the policy aiming to support economic initiatives of people who are on the brink of social exclusion. A complex and proactive system should be created, counteract people’s passive existence.

Moreover, employment-free economic growth, the rapid changes in economy and unwillingness for mobility, which could enable the absorption of shocks on the market, lead to an increased number of jobless people who are not able to adjust to the new circumstances. This, in turn, could result in their gradual alienation and, in consequence, to permanent social exclusion.

The response of the EU to the threats in the area of social development and coherence, such as poverty and social exclusion, takes the form of joint initiatives to monitor the social situation and work together to analyse income distribution and living conditions, demography trends and health status and care. The EU coordinates and encourages national governments to reform their social welfare systems, tackle the challenges posed by demographic changes and analyse what policies work best to combat poverty and social exclusion.

The concept of social exclusion and maldevelopment, which doesn’t ensure the participation of all individuals, lies at the core of alienation and social exclusion. It is one of the barriers of development and progress also in the economic dimension.

As the experience of the recent years indicates, prevention is less expensive than handling the negative social consequences. In the long run, the active policy of integration and vocational activation brings about positive results and it allows elderly people to get out of the trap of poverty. The concept of social exclusion is a significant aspect in the political and social policy of the EU. It appears alongside the concept of poverty both in the material and relative meaning.

In the policies of the EU, the poverty concept involves not only a dramatically low level of living conditions and material resources, but also breaching social and family bonds and alienation from different areas of society. Poverty clearly limits the ability for an individual to live up to the standards acceptable for a given society. The poor often suffer not only from economic deprivation but also social and cultural exclusion.

However, the social exclusion concept manifests itself in the lack of an individual’s access to a public space as compared to other members of society because of poverty, discrimination or the lack of the basic competences to fully participate in social life.
The birth of the social exclusion concept is usually located in France of the early 1970s, when it was coined by René Lenoir, a policymaker, to refer to the groups that appeared to be at the margins of French society. The concept has then been developed by the European Union policymakers.

In European Union policy, social exclusion is defined as follows:

‘Social exclusion refers to the multiple and changing factors resulting in people being excluded from the normal exchanges, practices and rights of modern society. Poverty is one of the most obvious factors, but social exclusion also refers to inadequate rights in housing, education, health and access to services. It affects individuals and groups, particularly in urban and rural areas, who are in some way subject to discrimination or segregation; and it emphasizes the weaknesses in the social infrastructure and the risk of allowing a two-tier society to become established by default. The Commission believes that a fatalistic acceptance of social exclusion must be rejected, and that all Community citizens have a right to the respect of human dignity’.

It is obvious that the comprehensive European definition of social exclusion stresses the multidimensionality of deprivation and the personal relationship dimension of deprivation.

The causes of the exclusion lie in social, economic and political macro processes. The mechanisms of exclusion of certain social groups and individuals are often initiated by the processes related to globalisation, social and economic transformation, as well as urbanisation. The culprits can be institutional factors, but also the discriminative structure of law, as well as the very process of implementing law, which can lead to unequal access to certain recourses, systems and institutions.

The World Bank described four forms of capital that can be affected by different forms of exclusion:

- **Financial Capital.** An individual has financial capital that gives the power to participate in exchanges and trade.
- **Physical Capital.** An individual owns physical capital if they privately own land or property but also neighbourhood infrastructure and assets that would facilitate access to education and, social activities and education.
- **Human Capital.** An individual is defined as having human capital on the basis of their education and years of schooling and training.
- **Social Capital.** It consists of social networks and relationships that allow the achievement of mutual goals.

Individuals who are deprived of these capabilities could be excluded from participating in the labour force, consumption, wealth accumulation and from social functions.
Social inclusion in the European Union Policy

According to statistics compiled by the European Commission, currently 80 million of EU inhabitants are in danger of poverty, which amounts to 16 per cent of the total population (19 per cent of that estimation are children).

They live on an income amounting to less than 60 per cent of the median household income of their own country. Social welfare benefits reduce the risk of poverty by 38 per cent on average in the EU, but this impact differs from less than 10 per cent to nearly 60 per cent in European countries.

The goals of EU policy are to: fight the intergenerational inheritance of child poverty, implement active employment policies to promote the inclusion in the labour market of vulnerable groups, provide decent housing conditions for everyone, actively deal with financial exclusion and over-indebtedness, as well as tackle all forms of discrimination on the labour market.

The origins of social inclusion policies in the European Union are in 1989. The Community Charter of Fundamental Social Rights for Workers was one of the first high-level EU policy documents.

The Council Recommendation of 24 June 1992 on common criteria concerning sufficient resources and social assistance in social protection systems (92/441/EEC) emphasizes the need for the right to sufficient income to be accompanied by policies for economic and social integration.

In 1992, the European Commission published the Communication Towards a Europe of Solidarity, which focused on intensifying the fight against social exclusion and fostering integration (COM(92) 542).

The agreement reached in Lisbon in 2000 was the crucial point in the development of EU policy on that subject. The key issues covered by this agreement included:

– enhancing participation in employment and access to resources, rights, goods and services;
– preventing the risk of exclusion;
– protecting vulnerable groups;
– joining all relevant bodies in the process.

In 2000, the Lisbon agreement introduced a framework for national strategy development and policy coordination between EU countries regarding social exclusion called the Open Method of Coordination (OMC). The Open Method of Coordination is a voluntary process for political cooperation devoted to discussions of common objectives and common indicators, which show how progress towards these goals can be achieved and measured.

National strategies for social inclusion are gathered and assessed in a joint report evaluated by the Council and the Commission. The joint report reflects what has been done in the individual countries.

Three aspects are usually emphasized in the national reports:
Employment creation: increasing employment levels on the ground of the links between unemployment and social exclusion.

Capability: capability enhancement measures, such as education provisions.

Resources: providing additional resources to those groups who are most likely to be socially excluded such as elderly pensioners, single parents and children.

The Social Agenda set for the period 2005–2009 was consistent with the European social model included in the Lisbon Strategy for Growth and Jobs and the European Strategy for Sustainable Development. The main goals of the Social Agenda were the modernization of social protection systems and the investments in human capital.

In 2008, the Commission proposed the Renewed Social Agenda to empower and help people in the rapidly changing reality of the 21st century.

‘The renewed social agenda seeks to empower and equip Europeans, in particular also young people, to deal with rapidly changing realities – shaped by globalization, technological progress, ageing societies – and developments such as the recent hikes in food and oil prices and turmoil in financial markets. It also aims to help those who have difficulties coping with these changes’.

The aim of the Renewed Social Agenda was mainly to promote the improvement of working conditions, foster employment, enhance an appropriate level of social protection and ensure the efficient measures and resources to combat exclusion. It also emphasized the European key objectives of prosperity and solidarity through fundamental priorities: employment and an effective and complex policy to tackle poverty and promote equal opportunities.

The year 2010 was announced the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion. The guiding principles were: the right of those suffering from social exclusion and poverty to live in dignity, actively shared responsibility for the fight against poverty, promotion of social cohesion, political commitment and concrete actions to eradicate poverty.

In spring 2010, the European Council agreed on the framework of the Europe 2020 strategy for social inclusion. The report of the Social Protection Committee (2011) on the social dimension in future Europe offered the first analysis of the social dimension in the Europe 2020 strategy. Recent data shows that one person in five in the European Union is at risk of poverty or social exclusion and 40 million people are in a condition of serious deprivation.

Material deprivation shows an estimate of the proportion of people whose living conditions are severely affected by a lack of resources. 8 per cent of Europeans live in severe material deprivation. However, in Bulgaria and Romania, more than 30 per cent of people are affected by these serious conditions.
These differences in material deprivation rates envisage the distribution of resources within countries, as well as large differences in GDP per capita between EU countries in 2010.

**Figure 1. Severe material deprivation rate by country of birth**
(population aged 18 plus) – percentage of total population in 2009

Source: Own compilation on the basis of http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu

**Figure 2. Evaluation of the number of people in severe material deprivation, in percentage points in 2007–2009**

Source: Own compilation on the basis of http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu
In the New Strategy for tackling social exclusion and poverty, the monitoring of progress towards the EU headline target will derive from past trends such as: the number of people at risk of poverty or exclusion, for the total population and for the main groups at risk at EU level (example Figure 3 and Table 1).

Figure 3. The at-risk-of-poverty rate by age group in 2009

![Diagram showing the at-risk-of-poverty rate by age group in 2009](image)

Source: Own compilation on the basis of EU-SILC

Table 1. Changes in the percentage of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion in the EU Member States (2005–2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>Average yearly growth rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EU-27</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>–2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>–2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>:</td>
<td>61.3</td>
<td>60.7</td>
<td>44.8</td>
<td>46.2</td>
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<td>15.3</td>
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<td>16.8</td>
<td>16.3 (b)</td>
<td>17.4</td>
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</tr>
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<td>18.4</td>
<td>20.2</td>
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<td>20.1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>25.9</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>–2.5%</td>
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<td>25</td>
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<td>23.7</td>
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<td>Greece</td>
<td>29.4</td>
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<td>28.3</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>–1.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 The indicator is defined as the share of persons with an equivalised disposable income below the risk-of-poverty threshold, which is set at 60 per cent of the national median equivalised disposable income (after social transfers).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>Average yearly growth rate</th>
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<td>23.4</td>
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<td>18.8</td>
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<td>18.6 (b)</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>−0.7%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>25.9</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>25.3</td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td>−0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>25.4</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>−3.2%</td>
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<td>45.8</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>33.8</td>
<td>37.4</td>
<td>−4.9%</td>
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<td>27.6</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td>−7.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
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<td>16.5</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
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<td>28.2</td>
<td>29.9</td>
<td>−1.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Malta</td>
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<td>19.0</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>−0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>−2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>45.3</td>
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<td>30.5</td>
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<td>−11.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>26.1</td>
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<td>25.0</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>−1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>:</td>
<td>:</td>
<td>45.9</td>
<td>44.2</td>
<td>43.1</td>
<td>−3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>18.5 (b)</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>−1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>−11.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>−0.4%</td>
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<td>15.9</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>−3.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=758&newsId=1053&furtherNews=yes

Furthermore, the monitoring of progress towards the national targets will resemble the above graph presenting the evolution of the indicators underlying the national definitions of the targets. The majority of countries have based their target on the EU definition, others have set their target on the basis of national indicators or on single components of the target (the at-risk-of-poverty rate). Finally, it will also include the estimation of possible scenarios on how the EU target can be reached.

The global economic crisis has badly aggravated this status. The report emphasizes the need for active policy interventions at all levels to tackle the risk of losing the human capital potential.

Promoting social inclusion and combating poverty are the major aims of the social dimension of the new strategy. Tackling discrimination of groups at risk, needs to be the core element of social policies. The detailed picture of the part of the population which is at risk of poverty or exclusion is composed of children, elderly, single women, lone parents, the low-skilled, the unemployed, inactive people of working age, among whom people with disabilities, people living in rural areas, migrants and members of ethnnical minorities.
The Member States indicate the main priorities and policy measures of the new strategy as follows:

- **access for everyone to high quality services**
  Effective and complex employment and education policies should be the key measures to reduce poverty and social exclusion. Moreover, the public finances and the reform of social protection systems should both aim at ensuring their sustainability and adequacy. This will also contribute to the preservation of their important role as automatic stabilisers.

- **active inclusion strategies**
  The Member States should enhance active inclusion strategies combining income support, access to the labour market and health and social services. This means facilitating labour market participation of everyone, especially women and the youth, as well as linking social assistance to activation measures and access to enabling services. The Member States should also ensure the sustainable financing of high quality social services and improve the coverage and adequacy of social safety nets.

- **fighting child poverty**
  According to the recent statistics, there are about 25 million children at risk of poverty or exclusion in the EU.
  The Member States should make childhood intervention a priority in areas such as health and education in order to promote the availability of quality child care and promoting services to enhance the labour market participation of parents and to guarantee adequate income support for families with children.

- **fighting poverty in old age**
  The Member States should maintain an efficient health sector especially in the context of austerity measures and ageing. Policies need also to focus on ensuring future pension adequacy and long-term financial sustainability of pensions systems in the whole European Union.

- **supporting the inclusion of groups at risk (migrants, people with disabilities, the Romani)**
  The modernization of social assistance and income support mechanisms for groups at risk should be the priority for Member States, as should be the integration of the labour market and enforcement of anti-discrimination laws.
  The appropriate and efficient implementation of EU funds will take a crucial position in the new strategy. In the context of Europe 2020, the use of the European Social Fund (ESF) should support the policies dedicated to labour market participation, active inclusion and prevention of early school leaving.
  The management of risks connected with social inclusion and integration process of the vulnerable groups can’t be considered separately from further development process. The condition should be effective monitoring and evaluation of the policy devoted to social integration on national, regional and local level.
Social protection and social inclusion in Poland (peer review)

In 2006–2008, Poland noted high economic growth. In 2006, the economic growth amounted to approximately 6 per cent, but it is predicted that in 2011, it will amount to only approximately 4 per cent. On the Polish labour market – despite some positive changes in the economic situation between 2004 and 2006, such as: growing labour demand, higher employment and salaries and economic activity rate – in 2005 the at-risk-of-poverty rate for the whole population amounted to 19 per cent. In the National Strategy Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2006–2010 we can read:

In Poland, as in Western European countries, one of the most important factors that decide about the social status, including the financial situation of an individual and their family, is their place on the labour market. In the group of persons aged 18 and more, the people most exposed to poverty are excluded from the labour market as a result of unemployment; 46 per cent of such people were below the poverty line.

In 2009 the total at-risk-of-poverty rate was calculated to be 17.1 per cent of the Polish average. The amount is worrying even though the Polish rate is not significantly higher than the European one.

Figure 4. The at-risk-of-poverty rate in Poland and in the EU in 2006–2009 (percentage of total population)

Source: Own compilation on the basis of EU-SILC.
Furthermore, the standard of living differs depending on the region and on whether one lives in a city or in the country.

Families in small towns and villages live most frequently in relative poverty in comparison to inhabitants of large urban agglomerations.

The northern regions of Poland experience a difficult situation on the labour market due to the collapse of national agriculture and underdevelopment of non-agricultural sectors. However, the difficult situation is noted in the so-called Polish ‘Eastern Wall’, i.e. in Poland’s eastern border territory, because of a low level of urbanization, industrialization and poor infrastructure.

In 2010, the unemployment rate in Poland was calculated at 9.6 per cent, while the average in European Union was 9.7 per cent.

In spite of considerable growth in the employment rate, there is still a high percentage of long-term unemployed – over the half of all people registered in employment agencies. They have very often difficulties in finding employment not only because of the lack of relevant professional skills, but also due to other reasons, such as low work ethics, lack of motivation to work as well as lack of communication and group-work skills. Another key factor in Poland, but also in rest of the EU, is the demotivating nature of social benefits.

Integration through activation was one of the priorities of the recent National Strategy Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2006–2010, aimed at combating the vicious circle of long-term unemployment and overcoming the dependence on social benefits.

Figure 5. The unemployment rate (people aged 24–72) in Poland and in the EU in 2004–2010

Source: Own compilation on the basis of EU-SILC.
In the Polish market, one of the groups which is particularly afflicted with the lack of employment are young people. According to the EU and also the Polish social policy, it is crucial to implement the number of activation programmes aimed at helping unemployed young people, but, above all, they should be encouraged to combine their chosen education with the current needs on the market. A high unemployment rate among the young is not solely a Polish problem but also a European one.

While in Poland, in 2010, the unemployment rate among the youth amounted to 23.7 per cent, the average in the 27 EU countries was calculated at 21.1 per cent.

Figure 6. The youth unemployment rate (less than 23) between 2004 and 2010 in Poland and in the EU

Source: Own compilation on the basis of EU-SILC

Apart from people with disabilities, immigrants, minorities and the homeless, a group which is particularly at risk of social exclusion are children and the youth.

The aim of the Polish social policy is to undertake initiatives in order to decrease the scale of poverty of children through the improvement of family income: activation of unemployed parents, family tax reliefs, support for children within the welfare benefits system, development of childcare, development of preventive measures providing support for families facing problems with the raising and education of their children, promoting education and early educational opportunities.

Therefore, counteracting poverty and social exclusion of children and the youth was one of the goals set in the National Strategy Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2006–2010.
Figure 7. The number of children at risk of poverty or social exclusion (age less than 16) in the EU and in Poland (percentage of total children)

Source: Own compilation on the basis of EU-SILC.

The National Strategy Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2006–2010 deemed also access to high-quality social service its priority.

Figure 8. The at-risk-of-poverty rate for elderly people in Poland in 2005–2009

Source: Own compilation on the basis of EU-SILC
Among such actions as improvement of the social housing system, prevention of alcohol- and drug-related problems, counteracting family violence, the National Strategy provided for the development of the services for the elderly. Elderly people are one of the considerable and increasing groups in danger of social exclusion and poverty also due to the malfunctioning pension system. In 2006–2007, Poland experienced a positive birth rate, but the negative migration balance entailed the decline of population. In 2008, the population growth rate amounted to 0.9 per cent. The Total Fertility Rate (TFR) in Poland is shown below.

**Figure 9. Total Fertility Rate in Poland in 2000–2009**

![Total Fertility Rate in Poland in 2000–2009](image)

Source: Own compilation on the basis of EU-SILC.

Despite the positive birth rate, the Polish pension system is not designed for the current population scheme and is not prepared to face the rapid ageing of population.

In spite of the introduction of the new pension system, there is still a lot to accomplish in order to entirely adopt the system to the current situation.

Undoubtedly, the crucial challenges of the national social protection policy are to undertake continuous activities necessary for further proper functioning of the new pension systems, including long-term activities aimed at the creation of conditions for stable development of the pension system in future.
The second issue in the Polish social protection system which is worth mentioning is disability insurance. The Polish social insurance system suffers from low financial stability and significant subsidies to the Social Insurance Fund (FUS) as well as to the Agricultural Social Insurance Fund (KRUS). Undoubtedly, this may pose an important challenge for the current policy, in particular in the context of the growing public debt and the deficit of public finance sector system.

In 2007, the level of disability pension insurance contribution was reduced. Since 1999, the contributions for this insurance have constituted 13 per cent of the gross salary. The contributions were paid in equal parts by the employee and the employer. In 2007, the contribution was decreased to 10 per cent of the salary (from which the employer paid 6.5 percentage points and the employee 3.5 pp). Since 2008, the contribution rate has constituted 6 per cent from which the employer pays 4.5 percentage points and the employee 1.5 pp of the gross remuneration.

Now, the contributions to disability and survivors’ pension insurance (6 per cent) are financed by the insured persons from their own resources (1.5 per cent of the basis for the assessment) and by contribution payers (4.5 per cent of the basis for assessment). The lower level of contributions inflow from the disability pension insurance resulted in growth of the deficit of the Social Insurance Fund.
Poland, just as all the other Member States, is required to prepare National Strategy Reports on Social Protection and Social Inclusion. The latest published Polish Report 2008–2010 examines the key assumptions of social policy. The latest National Strategy Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion in Poland 2008–2010 is consistent with the European objectives such as attaining better social cohesion, higher economic growth and a higher number of better-quality jobs, as well as deeper social inclusion.

Preventing poverty and social exclusion is the basic aim of the social policy implemented by the government in cooperation with local self-government units and non-governmental organizations. As mentioned above, the crucial priorities of the National Strategy 2008–2010 were: counteracting poverty and social exclusion of children and the youth, integration through activation and access to high-quality social services.

The hopes lie also in European Funds and, in this regard, especially in the Human Capital Operational Programme (financed from the European Social Fund and by the Polish Government).

**Conclusions**

Undoubtedly the complex and efficient growth and employment policy provides the framework for increasing prosperity, which in consequence leads to the improvement of the social inclusion policy. The priority for the European social policy should be an active society, which involves initiatives such as the development of an effective education system, creating access to essential competences, modernization of social protection schemes by limiting easy access to benefits which lead to early inactivity, development of active policies on the labour market and strengthening labour market institutions, development of adaptation skills of workers with consideration of the flexicurity principle, promoting the development of social economy and improving the effectiveness of the health protection system.

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The demographic situation in Europe and Poland

The demographic situation in Europe is an important problem faced by EU politicians and societies. Recent years, or even decades, have shown its systematic deterioration. European societies are ageing. Walter Laqueur, in his very interesting book *The Last Days of Europe: Epitaph for an Old Continent*, predicts that in 50–100 years some European countries might completely disappear. This means that we should seriously consider reforming the European social security schemes, so as to ensure that they are able to support the ever rising number of non-working retired people.

Figure 1. Birth rate (in whole numbers)

The ageing of societies is affected by a number of factors, including: the fertility rate, the reduction in mortality in older age groups, migration of young people, wars. Indirect factors may also include: the level of wealth of the society, the family model, professional activity of women, health protection, the state’s social policy, education.

The graphs illustrate the change in the total fertility rate and the average life expectancy of men and women.

**Figure 2. Average life expectancy of men 2010–2060**

![Average life expectancy of men 2010–2060](source)


**Figure 3. Average life expectancy of women 2010–2060**

![Average life expectancy of women 2010–2060](source)

The figures 2. and 3. show that demographic changes are not very obvious throughout several years, but they become evident throughout one hundred years. Indeed, the average life expectancy in 1900 was 47 years, in 2000 – 77 years, and the prognoses for 2050 are 81 years for men and 86 for women. In 1900, the average period of retirement was around 1 year, in 1980 – 13 years, in 1990 – 19 years, and today (e.g. 2030–2050) it is 20–30 years.

According to the UN Population Division, there will be 100 million Europeans less in 2050 than today. In 1950, the population of Europe accounted for 21.7 per cent of the world population, in 2005 – 11 per cent, within the next 50 years it will fall to 7.2 per cent, and at the end of this century it will be less than 4 per cent. At the end of this century, the population of Germany will fall from 82 to 32 million, the population of Italy – from 57 to 12 million, Spain – from 40 to 11.9 million. The fall in the Eastern Europe will be dramatic as well. By 2050, the population of Ukraine will decrease by 43 per cent, of Bulgaria by 34 per cent, and of the Baltic states by 25 per cent.

According to the opinions of experts, in the following years we should expect a further fall in the total fertility rate from the average of 1.22 child per woman at the beginning of this century to 1.1 in 2011 (in 2011–2020 we can expect a slight rise in the fertility rate to around 1.2) and the fluctuation of this ratio around 1.6 in the future (provided that the European countries engage in family policy).

The ageing of societies negatively affects the demographic structure and the labour markets, but also has serious economic and social implications. Growing public spending under the present retirement and pension schemes and social insurance schemes can lead to severe tensions between different social groups. When the majority of the society is getting older, the group of people in the economically productive age who are able to work is shrinking, which leads to problems with finding workforce. Societies experiencing such demographic problems are at risk of growing intensification of intergenerational transfers and of increasing expenses in the medical and health service sector. All these factors may contribute to a substantial decrease in economic effectiveness and to a fall in income per person.

**Migrations as an attempt to improve the demographic situation and its effects**

One of the possible solutions for the present demographic situation is to open our markets to immigrants. The experience of the Western European countries which followed this direction during the economic boom at the turn of the 1950s and 1960s shows that, as put aptly by Max Frisch: ‘...we called for a workforce, but we got people.’ They arrived from countries which were
culturally and mentally different. It was expected that they would come, fill the gap in the supply of workforce and then return to their countries of origin when they are no longer needed.

The migration policy of the ‘old’ EU countries is a consequence of the influx of cheap labour force, which allowed for high economic growth in the 1960s and 1970s. These immigrants were not homogeneous in terms of origin, culture or religion but they fulfilled the economic expectations of that period. In the United Kingdom, they were newcomers from the former colonies (India, Pakistan); in France, they came from Northern Africa, mainly Algeria; in Italy – from Morocco; in Germany, they were Gastarbeiter from Turkey, Morocco and former Yugoslavia. New immigrants were arriving to these countries at a pace too fast for the authorities to consider finding a proper place for them in the new societies. Only some short-term measures were applied, which solved the existing problems ad hoc, while the tensions and conflicts grew and accumulated, and finally burst out in an uncontrollable way, like the fires started in the houses of Turkish and Moroccan workers.

Today, the ‘old’ EU-15 countries draw the workforce they need from the culturally close countries of the ‘new’ EU-10. However, the primary goal of the European Union is to equalise economic potentials and level regional differences by means of regional policy and Structural Funds. Thus, when the goal comes closer or is reached, and the potentials of the Member States are equal, the time will come to seek workforce outside the European Union.

Let us analyse the causes and effects of migration presented in the tables below. It will help us define the nature of the present-day migrations.

Table 1. Causes of migrations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivation for migrations</th>
<th>Factors encouraging emigration</th>
<th>Factors encouraging immigration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economic and demographic</td>
<td>Poverty</td>
<td>Prospects for a better wage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unemployment</td>
<td>Improvement of living conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low wages</td>
<td>Personal or professional development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High birth rate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of medical care</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low level of education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social and cultural</td>
<td>Ethnic or religious discrimination</td>
<td>Family reunification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Migration to the country of ancestors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No discrimination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Social security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political</td>
<td>Conflicts</td>
<td>Sense of security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Security</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Violence</td>
<td>Political freedom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Corruption</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Violation of human rights</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
While making this classification of causes of migration, we should examine it more closely, as it is based on the assumption that there are types of migration essentially different than labour migration. This is true if we focus on the first impulse for migration, but not if we look at long-term effects. Because each migration, regardless of the cause, ends with searching for employment in order to earn for one’s living.

**Table 2. Effects of migrations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefits</th>
<th>Costs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increase in household income</td>
<td>Disturbing the demographic structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement of the situation on the labour market</td>
<td>Threat of insolvency of the pension system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase of internal mobility</td>
<td>Pressure on the increase of wages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase of internal mobility</td>
<td>Pressure on the increase of wages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased revenues from foreign transfers, which raises the gross national product and stimulates the consumption demand.</td>
<td>Loss of well-educated mobile workforce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New skills and qualifications of emigrants</td>
<td>Actual expenses on the education of emigrants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investing the earned money in the home country and creating new jobs</td>
<td>Difficulties in finding specialists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New models of professional careers</td>
<td>Transfers – increased threat of passivity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is how we can present in brief the multifaceted and overlapping effects of migration. We will elaborate on them further in the text – here we will only show the amounts of financial transfers made by migrants to their families.

The data presented by the World Bank in its report on migration indicates that the officially recorded payments of money earned abroad in Europe (taking into account the former Soviet republics) exceeded USD 19 billion in 2004, which accounted for 8 per cent of the global amount of transfers from migrants (USD 232.3 billion).

Another conclusion from the study conducted by the World Bank is that 85 per cent of the financial assistance received by families from their relatives working abroad is used to meet everyday needs (food, clothes, house or apartment costs), around 5 per cent for education and savings, and only 5 per cent for investments in agriculture or industry.

The graph 4. showing money transfers to Poland in the years 1994–2008.
During the first five years from the accession to the EU, Poles living abroad transferred as much as PLN 70 billion to their home country. While the ‘old migration’ in the USA no longer helps their relatives as much as they used to, Poles working in Germany, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Norway send a substantial part of their earnings back home. The crisis of 2008 brought about a fall in the amounts of those transfers. In 2007, the transfers from Poles residing abroad for more than one year reached EUR 4.5 billion, a year later only EUR 3.9 billion, and in the next year the fall was even deeper – the families of emigrants in Poland received only around EUR 3 billion.

**Migration policy of the European Union**

Perceiving migration policy as a Community problem is a relatively new concept for the integrating European Union. For many years, it remained in the sphere of intergovernmental decisions left to sovereign states and to what we call their national interest. Common EU laws first regulated the problems of refugees and asylum, then began to extend the EU competence to include migration, and finally, the extremely important issues of integration of foreigners.

The Dublin Convention of 1990 was the first attempt of the Community to tackle the problem of state competence in the processing of asylum applications. It imposed an obligation on the state of first arrival to process the application, which was supposed to eliminate the problem of submitting the application to several countries in a row.
The next step was the Maastricht Treaty (1992). It pointed to the sphere of justice and internal affairs and, therefore, also to the asylum and migration policy as areas in which cooperation between the Member States is necessary. A real turning point was the Amsterdam Treaty (1999), which moved the issue of migration from the third pillar (intergovernmental decisions) to the first pillar (Community decisions), thereby recognising the importance and need for Community solutions in this area. It stipulated that the decisions taken at the Community level would concern the entry and stay of persons from third countries, the standards for visas and residence permits. These provisions could be applied 5 years after the entry into force of the Treaty. The Treaty also added the provisions of the Schengen Agreement of 1985\(^1\) to the EU *acquis communautaire*.

A further consequence of these decisions were the conclusions of the Tampere summit (1999), which regulated the competence of the country responsible for processing the asylum application under the Dublin Convention and defined common standards for the refugee status and for receiving refugees in EU countries. It was also mentioned at the summit that there is the need for fair treatment of legally residing foreigners and for developing an effective integration policy. An important element of the discussions at the Tampere summit was the possibility of predicting and controlling the incoming waves of immigrants, as well as comprehensive preparation for the elimination of criminal smuggling of foreigners into the European Union. And this may be feasible only by ensuring clearly defined legal possibilities of entering the EU by foreigners.

Following the conclusions of the Tampere summit the European Commission prepared a series of directives, of which particularly interesting are those relating to:

- the rules for admission of students and migrant workers.

The Dutch Presidency (July–December 2004) referred to the decisions of the Tampere summit, since the period of 5 years intended for their implementation...
tation had passed. *We do not want to build Fortress Europe*, said the Prime Min-
ister of the Netherlands, but he pointed out that it is necessary to control the
borders of the European Union and to reduce the wave of illegal immigration.
*We cannot afford, in the open-bordered European Union, to have no common
policy regarding immigration, repatriation and asylum*. And creating opportu-
nities for integration with the host society, providing comparable rights to the
status of a country’s own citizens is unfortunately very expensive, while the
results are uncertain. In European societies, there is a general belief that inte-
gration of immigrants is necessary, but the problem is who is to pay the asso-
ciated costs. Integration cannot be random and *ad hoc*.

In the context of the increasing importance of migration issues it is impor-
tant to answer the question: what direction of the influx of immigrants is the
most beneficial for Europe and can Europe determine this direction by itself?
There is already a certain existing situation – nearly 20 million Muslims live
in Europe today. They are eager to bring their families to their countries of res-
idence, if they are permitted to. The experience related to the attacks of 11 Sep-
tember 2001 in New York and Washington, of 11 March 2004 in Madrid and
of 7 July 2005 in London has caused hostility against Muslims in European
societies. It is a difficult task for the EU information policy to convince the
public that not all Muslims are fanatical terrorists.

In autumn 2004, the EU adopted the Hague Programme. An important ele-
ment of the Programme is to highlight the importance of the external dimension
of migration, that is the cooperation with the countries of origin of immigrants
and supporting them financially from Community funds. It was also considered
necessary to send back to the country of origin those immigrants who have lost
their right of residence in the EU, including the development of minimum stan-
dards for their return and the establishment, by 2007, of the European Return
Fund. The Programme also included a calming assurance to the Member States
that determining the number of admitted immigrants would remain within their
competence. It is also worth noting that the Programme highlighted the impor-
tance of effective integration of newcomers into the host society.

The next step in building a common immigration policy was the European
Pact on Immigration and Asylum – one of the main priorities of the French Presi-
dency of the EU and the flagship idea of Nicolas Sarkozy – the French Presi-
dent and former Minister of Interior. This is the first document in the EU which
attempts to create a global EU immigration strategy. On the one hand, it encom-

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2 It comprised 15 pages and was divided into five thematic areas: legal immigration, illegal
immigration, border controls, asylum policy and the relations between the EU and the countries
of origin. In practice, for some immigrants it means better opportunities for working in Europe,
for others – more fear of deportation. It is still too early to assess the effectiveness of introduc-
ing the provisions of the Pact, and the events of the ‘Arab Spring’ have also changed the per-
spective on immigrants of this region.
passes legal immigration, on the other, it proposes an even more active fight against illegal immigrants by sending them back to their countries of origin.

Much controversy and protests from immigrants and organisations defending their rights was aroused by the Return Directive, which was adopted in July 2008 and entered into force in August 2010. It lays down the rules on expulsion and deportation of illegal immigrants, and immigrants commented that it (...) is an attack on the ideals of freedom and on the common life proclaimed by the Fathers of Europe. The Directive is not binding for the United Kingdom and Denmark.

Another important step towards the communitarisation of migration policy is the Directive No 2009/50/EC, the so-called Blue Card modelled on the American Green Card. Franco Frattini, the former EU Commissioner for Justice and Home Affairs, the architect and promoter of this proposal, repeatedly pointed out that 55 per cent of the immigrants settling in the USA are highly skilled, while this group constitutes only 5 per cent of the immigrants coming to the EU. In order to improve these proportions in the EU and to attract more skilled immigrants, Frattini decided to use the well-tried American models. The Directive lays down the conditions for the admission of highly skilled workers to work in EU countries: qualifications attested by three years of education at a university or five years of work experience in the profession; having a graduation diploma recognised in the EU; concluding an employment contract by a potential employee for a minimum of one year; a pay not lower than the value of at least 1.5 average wage in the country of employment. The Directive is only now being implemented in national legal systems and we still have to wait to see its effects. Although the very fact that the Green Card is granted on a permanent basis, and the Blue Card is only granted for the duration of the contract of employment may limit its effectiveness.

On 5 April 2010, the EU Visa Code came into force, bringing together all existing legal provisions on visas. Moreover, the Code lays down common rules and conditions for issuing visas. It includes general rules and principles for determining which Member State is responsible for processing visa applications. The Code harmonises the provisions concerning the processing of applications and issuing of decisions. To ensure equal treatment of visa applicants, the Commission adopted (on 19 March 2010) the ‘Guidelines for the processing of visa applications’, which were made available to Member States’ consular services.

Polish migration policy – the process of institutionalisation

The state migration policy comprises several important elements. The first element, determining its shape and nature, is the doctrine of migration and the two policies following from it:
– The emigration policy – against those who left their home country and whom the state would like to convince to come back and against those whom the state wants to prevent from leaving;
– The immigration policy – the approach to the entry and stay of foreigners in the given country.

The other elements are: legal regulations, institutions and practice.

Poland is still facing the problem of developing a strategy for dealing with foreigners and verbalising the rules of this strategy in accordance with the *aquis communautaire* on the one hand, and taking into account the experience of other Member states and its own specific political, social and cultural context on the other. There are several essential causes of the difficulties with formulating a comprehensive migration policy in Poland.

One of these difficulties is the lack of a migration doctrine. Formulating such a doctrine would require articulating what already is common knowledge or what has been enshrined in a state document of the highest importance, e.g. in the Constitution. The doctrine would show the attitude of Poland and its citizens to foreigners – whether they accept them and are ready to open their borders to them or prefer to isolate themselves and close the borders. It should also be the starting point for adopting legislation, issuing declarations and formulating programmes. In Poland, there is no clearly and explicitly defined doctrine of this kind. What follows from that is a variety of interpretations of documents, a lack of coordination of decisions and of a body which would settle disputes in this field.

Another cause is the lack of a centre which could gather personages from the political, administrative and social field – each of them having their priorities and arguments – around creating the objectives of Poland’s migration policy.

Thus, there is no institution which could initiate a social and government debate on migration policy, formulate conclusions and monitor their implementation. What is interesting, political parties are extremely passive in this matter; so is the Senate (except for the issues concerning the Polish diaspora), the Sejm, and the Presidents. A good step in this direction was the creation of the Interministerial Team for Migration in 2007, which published the results of its work in April 2011 in the form of the report ‘Polish migration policy – the current state and requested action’, which will be discussed later in the text.

The demographic situation in Poland follows the European trends, which means that it is unfavourable. There are historical reasons for the fact that emigration dominates over immigration. For decades, the Poles have left their country to earn money abroad. All around the world (USA, Australia, Argentina, the FRG, etc.) Poles formed diasporas by bringing their families, friends, etc. The post-war social and political changes pushed them to continue these traditions. According to the Polish Community, there are around 20 million Poles and people of Polish origin living abroad. But if we consider the
other direction – immigration – there has always been insufficient motivation for it. There are no historical centres of immigrants attracting others; the percentage of immigrants in Poland is one of the lowest in Europe – 0.1 per cent, as compared to Germany – 8.9 per cent, and France – 6.6 per cent.

The next step is to specify the methods and means necessary for the achievement of the set goals, depending on the doctrine, the objectives of the migration policy and the coordinating centre, e.g.:

1. Adopt clear and friendly criteria for employing foreigners (if the goal is to enable them to stay in Poland);
2. Formulate the criteria of excluding unwanted groups (if the goal is to cause the influx of specific groups);
3. Create a programme of absorbing foreign graduates of Polish universities (if the goal is to use this potential).

The report ‘Polish migration policy – the present status and the suggested actions’ presented on 6 April 2011 by Jerzy Miller, the Minister of the Interior and Administration, comprises guidelines concerning the directions, bodies, institutions and organs which should be included in the debate on the Polish migration policy. It is a comprehensive material, submitted for public consultation. The question is, whether any groups will be interested in participating in this consultation.

Formulating the migration doctrine and policy is only one step towards the ultimate goal, and not even the hardest one. It must be followed by legislation, by executive programmes, by monitoring the implementation and by constant cooperation with the society to obtain its approval and support.

The situation of foreigners in Poland

The transformations of the 1990s, apart from affecting the economic, political and social situation, changed also the approach to migration in Poland. On one hand, it was determined by a great need to cooperate with Western partners, to meet the ‘free world’, to join the societies which are open to ‘the others’, and on the other hand, there were already some EU restrictions and requirements for asylum and migration policy, which Poland has committed to accept and respect.

People coming to Poland can be divided into two basic groups: labour migrants and refugees. The representatives of each of the groups require different treatment, and their stay in Poland is regulated by different laws.

Due to the rarity of immigration, legislation in this field has been vague. The Constitution of 1952 did not contain any provisions on the problem of foreigners. Its Article 88 concerned only asylum, which the ‘People’s Republic of Poland shall grant to citizens of foreign countries, persecuted for defending the
interests of the working masses, national liberation struggle or scientific activities’. Asylum seekers in Poland have been rare, with the exception of Greeks and Macedonians persecuted in their homeland in the 1950s and Chileans in the 1970s. The Foreigners Act of 1963 answered the needs of the times in which it was created. It was vague and purposely left many questions without precise regulations.

It was not until the political transformation of the 1990s that Poland became a signatory to the Geneva Convention of 1951 and the New York Protocol of 1967 (in 1991). In 1992, the UN opened the Liaison Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Warsaw, since the accession to these international agreements required cooperation between the signatories with the office of High Commissioner.

Poland’s accession to the Convention and the Protocol, and then signing agreements with the countries of the Schengen Group, resulted in the need to revise the Polish legislation on foreigners, including refugees.

In October 1997, the new Constitution entered into force. Its Article 56 stipulates that ‘Foreigners may enjoy the right of asylum in the Republic of Poland on terms specified by statute, and Foreigners who, in the Republic of Poland, seek protection from persecution, may be granted the status of a refugee in accordance with international agreements to which the Republic of Poland is a party.’

In June 1997, the amended Foreigners Act was adopted. To a large extent, it was the result of the need to adapt the Polish legislation to EU law. Its aim was to ensure the freedom of movement, as provided for in the acquis communautaire, but also to determine the measures necessary to protect the state against the influx of undesirable people. The Act has introduced four types of visas: residence visa, residence visa with the right to work, transit visa and repatriation visa. It has specified a number of situations in which a foreigner may be refused a visa, for example: a threat to Polish interests, suspicion of drug trafficking, arms trafficking, enabling others to illegally cross the border. It has introduced a residence permit for a specified period and a permit to settle. The former is a new institution in the Polish legislation, but it is common in EU Member States, the latter has replaced the permanent residence card functioning under the previous Act. The new law also cleared a quite rigorous matter of invitations to foreign nationals, mostly to those from beyond the Eastern border, which enable them to enter Poland and stay here. Since the Act introduced a thorough inspection and registration of such invitations, as well as put the costs of the stay, medical treatment or potential deportation on the inviting party, it has caused decline in the number of invitations issued, and consequently a decline in passenger border traffic.

A further consequence was the deterioration of Poland’s relations with its Eastern neighbours, who have seen the tightening of restrictions as the sign of
turning away from Eastern Europe. This problem returned in an even more severe form after the Polish accession to the European Union (visas for citizens of the Russian Federation, Belarus and Ukraine).

The Act of 1997 introduced some concepts new to Polish legislation, which had long been known in Western Europe, such as ‘safe country of origin’ and ‘safe third country’. These were extremely important concepts in the context of granting refugee status because they excluded the receiving and processing of applications of people from the ‘safe countries’.

Persons applying for the refugee status normally reside in refugee camps. In Poland there are 14 such centres, mainly clustered around Warsaw and in Eastern Poland, which is the result of the direction from which most refugees come. The largest centre is in Dębak – Podkowa Leśna. All refugees go there first to receive their individual allocations. The allocation takes into account the nationality, age and family situation. This helps prevent conflicts and facilitates the work on the integration of the refugees.

Since 1 May 2004, the EU asylum provisions are applicable in Poland. They include the requirement of fingerprinting all persons applying for refugee status to prevent the submission of an application by one person in several EU countries. This raises protests from refugee organizations, who claim that these provisions treat refugees as criminals. Many explanatory procedures on the applications for refugee status have shown that the underlying causes for the applications are economical.

The two Acts of 13 June 2003: on foreigners and on granting protection to foreigners within the territory of Poland were another important step towards adapting Polish legislation to the Community laws in the field of migration and asylum policy. They have regulated the rules of granting visas, the visa requirement for neighbours from the East, have introduced a new form of permit for a foreigner to stay in Poland – a tolerated residence permit. This concept is known in other European countries and often represents the last hope of salvation for the ‘unwanted’ immigrants.

The tolerated residence permit may be granted to a foreigner if he or she could be deported ‘only to the country where their right to life, freedom or personal security would be threatened, where they could be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, or be forced to work or be deprived of their right to a fair trial, or be punished without a legal basis within the meaning of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights.’ After obtaining the permit, the foreigner receives a residence card valid for 12 months and enjoys the same rights as a person granted permission for temporary residence. They can therefore work in Poland without a separate permit, they are entitled to social benefits, family benefits, attendance allowances and child benefits, they have the right to education in primary, secondary and post-secondary schools.
In accordance with Article 70 of the Act on granting protection to foreigners within the territory of Poland, as well as Article 91 of the Act on social security, a foreigner who has obtained the refugee status in Poland has the right to the so-called integration assistance. It includes cash benefits, depending on the individual circumstances of the foreigner, paying health insurance premiums, which gives them the possibility to use public medical services and broadly understood social counselling (consultation on employment, search for a house, child welfare).

On 29 May 2008, the Act amending the Act on granting protection to foreigners within the territory of Poland entered into force. The most important change is the introduction of a new form of international protection granted to foreigners in Poland, namely subsidiary protection. It may be granted to persons who have been refused refugee status but who, when returning to their country of origin, would be at real risk of serious harm.

According to Article 8 of the Act in question, a foreigner can be granted Polish citizenship at his or her request, provided that he or she has been residing in Poland for at least 5 years on the basis of: a settlement permit, a European Communities long-term residency permit or a residence permit.

The decision to migrate is usually based on economic factors. Labour migration in Poland is not socially homogeneous. After the turning point in 1989, when the Polish labour market ceased to be hermetic and national, foreigners seeking legal and illegal employment started to appear on it. The former were subject to the control of regional Labour Offices, which under Article 50 of the Act of 1994 on employment and preventing unemployment are authorized to issue permits to employers allowing them to employ foreigners for a limited time and a specific position, taking into account the situation on the labour market. In practice, this means that a permit is issued only if no Polish citizen is, for various reasons, interested in taking the job. The provisions of the Act preclude independent job search by foreigners after their arrival to Poland.

On 1 February 2009, the revised provisions on employing foreigners in Poland entered into force. They simplified the procedure and reduced the number of required documents to be analysed by the authorities during the procedure.

The fact that there is no need to obtain a permit does not mean, of course, that there is no need to obtain a visa with the right to work. A foreigner applying for a visa encloses a written statement of his or her employer on the intention to provide a job in Poland. The permit is issued at the request of the employer by a Voivode (competent for the registered office/place of residence of the employer) for a fixed period, up to 3 years (or 5 years for a foreigner who serves as a board member in a company employing over 25 people, and for delegations under the export service – for the time of the delegation, with
the possibility of extension). The remuneration payable to a foreigner cannot be lower than a Polish worker’s wage at a similar position.

The increased interest of foreigners to stay in Poland can be observed only since 2008. And so, as of 31 December 2009, a considerable number of 97,604 foreigners had valid residence cards, of which the most, i.e. 29 per cent, were issued to citizens of Ukraine. In 2009, 29,430 foreign nationals received work permits in Poland, which was over 10,000 more than in 2008. The number of registered employers’ statements of intention to employ nationals of the countries covered by the simplified scheme was 191,524 (the ordinance of December 2010 on this procedure allows the employment of Ukrainians, Belarusians, Russians, Moldovans and Georgians without a work permit for six months), while the number of short-term visas with work permit of up to 6 months was around 127,894.

Poland’s accession to the European Union, and hence the adoption of the acquis communautaire, imposes a duty on the country to protect the external borders and thus prevent the influx of illegal migrants. As it has already been mentioned, the people illegally crossing the Polish border include those who want to stay here and those for whom Poland is only a transit country. In 1990–93 the people detained for crossing the border without permission were mainly citizens of Romania, Bulgaria, Ukraine and Russia. In the mid-1990s, the number of people coming from Ukraine and Armenia, as well as Afghanistan, India, Algeria, Moldova and Iraq significantly increased. The influx of foreigners from distant regions of Asia and Africa is a new, though probably not rare, phenomenon. Poland lies at the crossroads of Europe’s migration routes and cannot fail to take this into account in its assessment of the migration situation.

Discussing the problem of Polish migration policy, we cannot help but stress to the need for preferential legal solutions for selected groups of foreigners for residing and working in Poland. These groups certainly include people of Polish descent. It is for them that the Act on the Pole’s Card was adopted on 7 September 2007. The Card is a document confirming the membership in the Polish nation, which guarantees certain rights to its bearer, including: the right to a long-term residence visa entitling to multiple crossings of the Polish border; the right to perform legal work in Poland without a work permit; the right to conduct business in Poland on the same terms as Polish citizens; the right to benefit from a free education system and health care in emergencies.

Obtaining the Pole’s Card does not imply receiving Polish citizenship, the right to settle in Poland or the right to cross the borders of Poland without a visa.

Third country nationals can stay in Poland on the basis of a visa (Schengen or National Visa), a temporary residence permit for a fixed period, a settlement permit or an EU long-term residency permit. Or, as discussed earlier,
they can use the protection granted to them, such as the refugee status, subsidiary protection, tolerated residence permit, asylum).

Every few years, Poland, like many other countries (notably Greece, Spain, Portugal) carries out amnesty actions, as a result of which certain groups of foreigners staying illegally in our country can obtain the right of lawful residence. As a result of such actions, in 2003 and 2008, around 4500 people legalised their stay. On 26 August 2011, President Bronislaw Komorowski signed another law on amnesty; the amnesty will come into force on 1 January 2012. It will cover foreigners residing in Poland continuously since 20 December 2007. The provisions of this law are more liberal than those of previous years. Earlier, the foreigners had to demonstrate that they had been residing in Poland for at least 10 years, submit a document entitling them to reside in a house or apartment and have a work permit. Under the new law, the foreigners are not required, for instance, to have sufficient means of subsistence. The temporary residence under the amnesty will be granted for two years, and not, as in previous amnesty actions, for a year. Persons who left Poland during their stay will not have the right to benefit from the provisions of the new law. The Ministry of Interior and Administration estimates that the new amnesty will cover several thousand foreigners. However, the decision of a foreigner to disclose his or her identity to the authorities in order to accept the amnesty depends on many objective and subjective factors, including psychological ones. Therefore, it will be possible to assess the actual effect of the amnesty only after its completion.

Foreigners in Poland – practice

The foundations of the Polish migration policy are being created in a situation where tens of thousands of foreigners are already working and living in Poland. We should examine their composition to evaluate past experience in this field and try to identify desirable future directions of the influx of foreigners needed to meet the needs of the Polish economy.

The first and largest group are Ukrainian immigrants. According to the National Census of 2002, among 29,748 non-Polish and non-Polish-born citizens residing permanently in Poland, Ukrainian citizens were the most numerous (22.6 per cent), and they constituted an even greater share (28.7 per cent) of foreigners living in Poland temporarily (2–12 months). It can be assumed with high probability that Ukrainians have also been the largest group of immigrants living illegally in Poland since the beginning of the 1990s. These are people who have been residing in Poland under a tourist visa (sometimes longer than the visa is valid), while engaging in various activities to earn money. The citizens of Ukraine are also the most numerous group of foreign students and
holders of work permits in Poland. The high share of women among the registered immigrants from Ukraine (60–70 per cent) results mainly from the fact that the easiest way to obtain a residence permit is to marry a Polish citizen, and this seems to be more accessible to women than men from countries beyond the Eastern border. There is no data on the share of women among Ukrainians working in Poland illegally; sample studies have shown that this group includes both women and men, in occupational groups typical of each sex (women – babysitters and carers for the elderly, domestic help; men – builders, farmhands).

The most common jobs performed by immigrants from Ukraine on the Polish market include work on construction sites, physical work in agriculture, domestic help (cleaning, babysitting, cooking), erotic services (illegal work in escort agencies, massage parlours, night bars, or ‘self-employment’), other services include various unregistered professions, which are easy to hide from the registration and control authorities: massage therapist, tutor, musician, cook, baker, bioenergy therapist, fortune tellers, etc. In this case, we should include occasional unusual one-time commissions, e.g. through employment at ‘labour exchanges’ (loading an urgent transport, etc.).

Among the Ukrainians who have settled in Poland, most are economically active people – 80 per cent of immigrants are aged 20–49 years, with a very small percentage of the very young and the elderly (6 and 5 per cent respectively). More importantly, approximately 86 per cent of immigrants have at least secondary education and only 6 per cent had elementary or lower education.

Ukrainian immigrants usually live in urban areas, like: Warsaw, Krakow, Wroclaw, Lublin and Szczecin or nearby, which is typical of all immigrant groups. Apart from these regions, the highest concentrations of Ukrainian immigrants are near the border with Ukraine (Lubelskie, Podlaskie, Podkarpackie Voivodeships) and in southern regions of the so-called Western Lands given to Poland after World War II (where the Ukrainians and the Lemkos from Podkarpacie were resettled).

Immigrants from Ukraine are often regarded as those who are easiest to integrate into the Polish society, due to the fact that Ukraine is a neighbour of Poland and due to the shared history, kinship ties across national borders, as well as geographic, linguistic and cultural proximity. It is, however, increasingly often said that Poland is becoming less attractive for the citizens of Ukraine in comparison with the countries of Western Europe.

For Poland, labour migration from Ukraine seems to be very beneficial, especially when it is complementary. The cultural proximity decreases the fear of strangers, which is so characteristic of the Polish society. The high level of education and ease of communication are arguments in favour of opening up Poland to the streams of migration from this region. We should remember, how-
ever, that for this to happen, the authorities and the Polish society should think how to facilitate the operation of Ukrainian migrants on the Polish labour market. The possible changes include simplifying the procedures in public offices, reducing the period of waiting for a settlement permit, facilitating the establishment of small one-person businesses, securing social benefits, etc. It seems all the more understandable, as there is a wide consent in the Polish society to the presence of Ukrainian citizens on the Polish labour market (legal, but also illegal).

Another very large immigrant community on the Polish labour market are the Vietnamese. The Vietnamese people began to arrive in Poland after World War II. The first immigrants from that country were students who wanted to study at Polish universities. The first recorded data on them concern the academic year 1957/1958. Until the mid-1960s, about 40 Vietnamese resided in Poland yearly. In the record years 1971/1972 and 1972/1973, over 800 Vietnamese studied in Poland – it was the result of the ongoing Vietnam War, when the countries of the Soviet Bloc joined the aid efforts. The settlement of the Vietnamese grew after 1989, when the borders of the German Democratic Republic were opened and a wave of Vietnamese immigrants from the West, who had worked there as workers contracted by the communist regime, came to Poland. Today Poland is the third largest centre of Vietnamese immigration in Europe – after France (500 thousand) and Germany (100 thousand). While most of these immigrants treat Poland as a transit country, many of them stay in Poland.

The Polish Vietnamese tend to isolate themselves from the Polish community. They assimilate slowly. The newcomers from Asia, however, are well organized; they have their own political organisations, associations, newspapers; they established schools and kindergartens; they intend to build a pagoda, though many of them converted to Catholicism. The educated Vietnamese – graduates and students of Polish schools, who form the cultural and social elite, and sometimes the economic elite, in their circles – are more easily assimilated. They have been living in Poland for the longest time, they know the Polish language and the Polish reality, they have Polish citizenship or permanent residence cards, and are generally well integrated into the Polish society. Quite often, their wives are Polish. The number of temporary residence permits or settlement permits does not reflect the actual state of affairs. The number of Vietnamese with a permanent residence card is estimated at about 20,000. Teresa Halik, a Vietnamosologist, Doctor at the Department of Non-European Countries, Polish Academy of Sciences, estimates their number at 40,000, and the SVD priest of Vietnamese Catholics, Rev. Edward Osiecki, estimates their number at 60,000. The Vietnamese settle mostly in Warsaw, but also in Szczecin, Lodz, Poznan, Krakow and Katowice.
The Vietnamese population living in Poland is definitely masculinised – two thirds of them are men. Like the Ukrainian immigrant community, they are relatively young, 73 per cent of them being aged 20–49 years, 12 per cent being aged 20 years and only per cent more than 60 years.

The common characteristic of the Vietnamese and Ukrainian immigrants is a high share of highly educated people – 82 per cent have at least secondary education and only 7 per cent elementary or lower education. Like the Ukrainians, they live in large cities. Approximately 48 per cent of the entire Vietnamese community lives in Warsaw and the suburban poviats around Warsaw. The others live near Wroclaw, Lodz, Krakow or Gdansk.

However, unlike the Ukrainians, the Vietnamese concentrate their occupational activity in particular places. For many years, one of them was the Warsaw Tenth Anniversary Stadium (closed in 2008) and the suburban shopping centres in Wólka Kosowska and Wolica near Nadarzyn. The relations between the Vietnamese investors/entrepreneurs and the local authorities involve a great deal of understanding and symbiosis, and both groups benefit from it. The fact that many Vietnamese people stay in Poland permanently is shown by the houses built here and investments in the purchase of apartments, but also by effective building of their own world in Poland, which is so culturally different.

The Vietnamese community is characterised by great solidarity. Their migration networks and assistance to new arrivals operate very efficiently. The tightness of this group is undoubtedly fostered by cultural differences, but also by the desire to reconstruct their homeland left far behind, which they cannot simply visit on weekends or holidays. But we can clearly see the integration strategy of this community – it is trying, as far as possible, to retain its own identity, but at the same time maintains economic relations with the host society. Especially the Vietnamese with a high socio-economic status remain in close social relations with the Poles.

Migrations of Poles after EU accession

According to official statistical figures of the Central Statistical Office, an emigrant is a person who leaves the country with the intention of settling abroad and fulfils the requirement of registration by deregistering from the place of permanent residence in Poland.

The data compiled in this way annually by the CSO are not very accurate and reliable, as the measured flows are completely irrelevant, i.e. they only concern permanent migrations reported to the registration authorities, while long-time temporary migrations, which are currently most common, are not taken into account. The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy has data on the num-
ber of work permits obtained under formal recruitment procedures between Poland and other countries with which we have bilateral agreements. However, as a result of opening all labour markets for Poles, the bilateral agreements and work permits are no longer valid. Another methodological problem is the lack of data on people returning from abroad, which makes the estimating of benefits and losses associated with migration even harder. Another difficult issue is how to determine the scale of illegal employment in host countries.

Before proceeding to the evaluation of the benefits and costs of migration of Poles to the European countries opening their markets to us, it is worth examining the labour market in Poland in 2002, when the unemployment rate was 20 per cent, while in 2007 it was less than 10 per cent. The number of unemployed in 2004 (2nd quarter) – 3.1 million; in 2007 (2nd quarter) – 1.5 million. We cannot simply talk about the export of Polish unemployment, as the data confirm that around 50 per cent of Polish emigrants were employed at the time of making the decision to leave.

After the Polish accession to the European Union, the labour migration of Poles became even larger than expected. But this causes more concern for the Polish authorities than it does for the host countries. Even as much as 1.5 to 2 million Poles left their country for a shorter or longer period, seeking work on the British Isles, in Spain, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands or France. Most are seasonal workers, but a few hundred thousand decided to stay permanently. They work in agriculture, industry, construction, restaurants, bars, hotels, cafés and pubs. Many women also are employed as babysitters, carers for elderly people and domestic help. The most common source of information about the country of immigration and about working conditions are old migration networks, but more and more often people interested in going abroad use such tools as EURES (European Employment Services), which indicates an increased sense of connection with the EU and the belief in the effectiveness of such tools.

The average Gross Domestic Product per capita in the Western part of the continent is higher by almost a half than in the East. Consequently, even with the rapid economic growth in the new Member States, there will be no dramatic change in the migration flows within the next several years.

And this is how the post-accession migrations of Poles, broken down by countries of destination, look like.

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3 Almost 60 per cent of Polish emigrants are less than 35 years old. Those leaving the country are increasingly younger and better educated – people with secondary school education constitute up to 60 per cent of present-day emigrants.

4 It is a cooperation network created by public employment services. Trade unions and employers’ organisations also participate in it as partners. The aim of the EURES network is to facilitate free movement of workers within the European Economic Area (27 EU Member States plus Norway, Liechtenstein and Iceland) and Switzerland.
Table 4. Post-accession migrations of Poles (in thousands)

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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>1450</td>
<td>1950</td>
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<tr>
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<td>750</td>
<td>1170</td>
<td>1550</td>
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In the study report of March 2007 the CBOS reports that since Poland joined the European Union, the number of Poles working abroad had reached nearly 2 million.

Apart from many other effects of migration, which were mentioned above, it is useful to examine the social consequences that migration entails for families and local communities. It is possible that filling the vacuum left by the emigrating parents and caregivers will become the responsibility of the state, which will have to develop a network of care and education centres, especially in non-urban areas. And this will impoverish the already limited social budget of the state and will clearly add to the negative effects of migration.

Conclusions

Present-day migrations are characterised by several important factors. First, it is clear that they are becoming global – they concern more and more countries, either in the form of arrivals or departures. Secondly, the share of women in migration flows has increased over recent years, and not merely as companions of migrating men joining them under family reunification, as it used to be, but making their own decisions to leave. This is related to the change in
the structure of the external demand for labour – labour markets have opened for babysitters and carers for elderly people, housekeepers or nurses. Present-day migrations are also rather temporary – they tend to be seasonal, for several years, with a clear prospect of return. And finally, labour migration in search for a job tends to turn into migration in search of a better job – these are migrations of medium and highly skilled personnel.

Spatial mobility of Poles is part of general global trends in this field. It is justified by economic considerations and the eternal human tendency to seek a better, more interesting and safer life. In democratic societies there is and there can be no administrative or legal restrictions on the free movement of people, even if it brings negative effects of the outflow to the sending country. But the experience of countries such as Ireland has shown that the improvement in the domestic labour market, economic growth and the improvement of living standards are a very good restraint for the outflow of workers. Apart from the economic factor, other elements playing an important role are the quality of life, the social infrastructure, the offered opportunities for improving skills and for leisure activities. All this contributes to the decision to stay in the home country or leave it. Governmental and non-governmental programmes and projects for preventing Poles from leaving or encouraging them to come back may only play a supporting role. Creating a full and well-thought-out migration policy, built through extensive social dialogue, may become an important element of national strategy in this area and may contribute to the improvement of the demographic and social situation.

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Part III

The Ukrainian Perception of European Integration
The history of bilateral relations between Ukraine and the EU goes back to 1994, when the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement was signed. It came into force on 1 March 1998. On 11 June of the same year a Programme of Integration of Ukraine into the European Union was adopted by a decree of the President of Ukraine. Over ten years have passed since, and even now we cannot confidently say that there is a clear ‘European’ perspective for Ukraine.

I believe that one of the main reasons for such a state of affairs is an obvious instability of Ukraine’s domestic politics, as well as peculiarities of its internal situation. This article is dedicated to the abovementioned issues and it reveals the outcomes of a close examination of complicated bilateral relations between Ukraine and the EU. It also underlines the special role of Poland in the implementation of the pro-European policy of Ukraine.

Establishing and developing relations between Kyiv and Brussels

From the very beginning of its independent existence, Ukraine has been supporting the idea of expanding the EU to the East as it seemed like a real perspective for the development of Ukraine as an independent country. Unfortunately the pro-European struggles of Ukraine have always encountered great difficulties caused by the uneasy situation in global international relations after the communist system crashed and the Soviet Union dissolved.

In the early 1990s, freedom of political manoeuvre of the independent Ukraine was very limited. While still being associated with the USSR, Russia, or Chernobyl, Ukraine was standing aside the most important political events on the European continent and in the world. Due to the influence of Russian politicians and mass-media Ukraine was considered an unstable country with
a menace of inner conflicts. Furthermore, as it still had the former soviet nuclear weaponry on its territory, Ukraine was supposedly a threat to peace of the whole region. Thereby, while actually being threatened by Russia, Ukraine remained isolated from the western institutions. The above was clearly confirmed on the 30 September 1992 by the statement of the then US Undersecretary of State T. Niles’ that NATO had no intention to guarantee security to Ukraine.

Unfortunately, as Beata Surmacz mentions, after the dissolution of the Soviet Union the government of George H. W. Bush did not choose to support the idea of strengthening Ukraine as an independent country in order to maintain the balance of Russian influence within Central and Eastern Europe, as previously suggested by Zbigniew Brzeziński and Henry Kissinger. Attitude of the European Communities was the same. They proved to have wasted an opportunity to come up with an effective policy towards former Soviet Union countries when the last empire within Europe collapsed. After a long history of relations with Moscow only, Western countries still treated the former Soviet area as being under the influence of Russia and refused to notice the newly independent countries emerging there.

The situation changed only partially in 1994, after a trilateral declaration was signed by the leaders of Ukraine, Russia and USA on 14 January, as it was decided to remove nuclear weaponry from Ukrainian territory and move it to Russia. At the same time, Ukraine joined the NATO’s ‘Partnership for Peace’ programme and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. As a logical consequence of those actions, Ukraine’s image on the international arena changed in a positive way and on 14 June 1994 “Partnership and co-operation agreement between the European communities and their member states, and Ukraine” was signed. The agreement entered into force 4 years later on 1 March 1998 and still remains the legal basis for bilateral relations between Ukraine and the European Union. In 1999, common principles for EU’s policy towards the independent Ukraine were developed and in a document entitled “The European Council Common Strategy on Ukraine” it was stated that the full implementation of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement ‘is a prerequisite for Ukraine’s successful integration into the European economy and will also help Ukraine assert its European identity’. Nevertheless, as Gromadzki has neatly emphasized ‘there is no mention or even a hint that would suggest that the EU at least concedes a possibility of accepting Ukraine as a new member. European Union narrows its vision of cooperation with Ukraine to supporting the democratic transformation processes and common actions aimed at ensuring security and stability in Europe’.

Especially the so-called ‘common strategy’ towards Ukraine soon proved to be quite ostensible. In 2000, the leading countries of the EU – France and Germany – raised the point in discussion around the ‘European perspective’ of
Ukraine. The leaders of those countries, Jaques Chirac and Gerhard Schröder, were full of respect for the newly elected President of Russia Vladimir Putin, and in July 2000 the experts of planning centres of Foreign Ministries of Germany and France declared that even in a long-term prospective it is out of question that Ukraine, Moldova or Belarus could ever join the European Union, as it would inevitably lead to isolation of… Russia (sic). Nevertheless only a year later the prominent European politicians Goran Persson and Romano Prodi underlined that relations with Ukraine are one of the key priorities for peace and stability in Europe.

After the events of 11 September 2011 in New York and Russia’s adherence to antiterrorist coalition, the tone in which Brussels officials spoke about Ukraine has drastically changed. Following the statements of President George Bush, they were biting the Kuczma regime and accused him of raping the democracy, murdering an innocent journalist Georgiy Gongadze and lack of systemic transformation in the country. All those accusations were obviously justified, but quite biased at the same time. As Klaus Bachman wrote back then, there is one question that should be asked: didn’t anyone notice who Kuczma was before the Melnychenko tapes appeared and were revealed and whether he was indeed so much worse than the destroyer of Russian democracy and pacificator of Chechnya Mr Putin, beloved by the US, German, French and Italian leaders.

Over the next few years Brussels has repeatedly demonstrated its désintéressement when it comes to Ukrainian issues. It was believed within the EU’s political milieu that ‘Putin was the only one capable of cleaning up the mess over the Bug River’. In fact, the West regarded Ukraine as an integral part of post-soviet space to remain within the sphere of Russia’s interest. This presumption was further confirmed by a famous Russian political scientist Fedor Lukyanov, the Editor-in-Chief of the *Russia in Global Politics* Magazine. Not long before the Presidential elections in Ukraine in 2004, he noticed that ‘Ukraine lies on the other (Russian) side of the »red line«, which determines the spheres of Russian and European influence’. Therefore it is no wonder that the European Commission reacted in an extremely evasive way when in July 2004 the plank of NATO and EU membership disappeared from the defence agenda of Ukraine. The EC spokesman Reijo Kempinnen stated that Ukraine’s membership in the EU ‘has never been projected (…) nor has it ever been officially discussed as a prospect’.

Such attitude of Brussels towards Ukraine was severely criticized by German media during the ‘Orange Revolution’. In its article entitled *Blame it on the West*, ‘Die Welt’ paper blamed the crisis in Ukraine on, inter alia, the Brussels officials. The author of the article stated that they were the ones who gave up their promises made in times of the Cold War, as well as the idea of transparent borders and freedom of travel across Europe. Moreover, the fact that the
then Head of the European Commission Romano Prodi repeatedly stated that there was no chance for Ukraine to ever become a member of the EU, was another severe blow for all the democratic countries that were fighting against the Kuchma regime, as well as a betrayal of Ukrainian democracy.

The situation has not quite changed even after the pro-Western candidate Viktor Yushchenko won the Presidential elections in 2004–2005. The discussion between the European Commission and the European Parliament held in January–February 2005 once again reaffirmed that the EU officials still rejected the ‘European perspective’ of Ukraine. The discussion namely arose after the EP carried a resolution to give Ukraine a clear vision of membership in the EU with 467 voices in favour. What is even worse, already in two weeks the Polish observers in Brussels expressed their fear that if the other new member states do not push on the EC hard enough, the ‘five minutes’ of Ukraine would soon be over. Unfortunately, those fears have come true.

In 2005–2009, what European Commission still offered to Ukraine was the extended cooperation – the so-called European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). According to experts, this kind of cooperation was supposed to prove extremely advantageous for Ukraine, as it would provide free access to the EU market, closer collaboration in energy and transport spheres, common decisions when it comes to border control, as well as other special preferences in exchange for democratization of Ukraine and striving to meet political and economic standards of the EU. At the same time, just like the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, the ENP does not offer any membership prospects.

Such views shared by governments of most Old EU countries are in the meantime being denounced by politicians from the Central and Eastern European Countries, including the former President of Poland Lech Wałęsa. From his point of view, it is exactly due to the selfishness of the West that any hopes for Belarus as a democracy have been lost. It seems quite realistic that if Western democracies continue with such a policy, Ukraine will become closer to Russia and the Soviet ties will be renewed, which in turn could have negative consequences for peace and stability in the Eastern European region. The former President of Ukraine Viktor Yushchenko shared the fears of Lech Wałęsa. In the interview Yushchenko gave to the ‘Financial Times’ back in October 2006, he mentioned that especially at that moment, when the times were quite hard for Ukraine and doubts concerning the pro-European course of the country had reappeared within the society, it was especially important that Brussels gave a clear sign showing that Ukraine can count on full membership in the European Union. However, in the times of Yushchenko presidency Ukraine was not given such a sign.

The only thing Ukrainians ever heard from the leaders of the European Union during the 13th EU-Ukraine Summit on 4 December 2009 was a reassurance that Brussels was satisfied with how the negotiations had advanced.
during the last year of Viktor Yushchenko’s presidency. Among other things, it was the establishment of the EU-Ukraine Association Agenda. The parties also confirmed that the foreign and security policies had drawn closer, based upon common values and obligations. Moreover, the leaders of both Ukraine and the EU agreed that it was important to strengthen the bilateral contacts. They also approved the obvious progress in implementation of visa and readmission agreements that lead to interpersonal contacts and help the parties fight illegal migration. The progress in accepting a chain of common global and regional challenges for Ukraine and the EU was also mentioned, but not a word was said about the ‘European perspectives’ of Ukraine.

Poland as a strategic partner and attorney for Ukraine in its relations with the European Union

As we can see, even though the time goes by, the policy of the most influential members of the European Union, as well as of the whole EU towards Ukraine remains unclear and inconsistent. To date, just like before, Poland has remained the only stable partner of Ukraine on the international arena, especially when it comes to supporting its pro-European aspirations. Poland has also remained the main ambassador for Kyiv, and not only in Brussels. It is clear that Poland has its own interest in an independent, powerful and rich Ukraine, just like Germany used to have its interest in Poland’s accession to the European Union. It clearly aims to have a sphere of well-being and stability close to its borders. Nevertheless, when analysing the evolution of the pro-Ukrainian course of Polish foreign policy, it is necessary to point out certain contradictions.

In the early 1990s, the potential membership status of Ukraine depended first and foremost on the position of the West. Unfortunately, the Western leaders did not live up to Ukraine’s expectations. When fighting for preservation of its independent national existence and fighting back the designs that Russia had for Ukraine, isolated and disregarded by the Western countries, Ukrainian elites laid their hopes upon governments of the former Soviet satellite states. Poland had a special place among them. Apart from the fact that Ukraine and Poland have had their long history of relations within ‘Rzeczpospolita’ and a tradition of cooperation within the framework of the Petlura-Pilsudski union in 1920, a circle of advisers of the first President of the independent Ukraine Leonid Krawczuk was still well-connected with the most influential figures from Lech Wałęsa’s entourage from the times of legendary Solidarity (Solidarność). There were the Horyn brothers, Teodosiy Starak, Dmytro Pawlychko, Ihor Yuchnowskyy and others.
Even for Poles it is still an open question whether Poland has lived up to the hopes of Ukraine or not. Certain Polish publicists are trying to mould an opinion that elites of the reborn *Rzeczpospolita* rose to the task of supporting Ukraine from the very beginning, i.e. from 1 December 1991. This view is shared, namely, by Bogumiła Berdychowska and Jerzy Marek Nowakowski. However, the vast majority of Polish scientists, such as Zdzisław Najder, Jerzy Kozakiewicz and Anatol Kamiński, believe that such conclusion is to a large extent an exaggeration. It is true that the government of Jan Krzysztof Bielecki was the first one in the whole world to recognize the independence of Ukraine, but shortly after that the Polish foreign policy towards its neighbour proved to be quite inconsistent. Only in five days, the President of Poland Lech Wałęsa assured the TV audience in the post-Soviet space of his ‘support to Gorbachev’s concept of a new Soviet state based upon different principles’. According to Kamiński and Kozakiewicz, this statement has caused an utter dismay within Ukrainian governmental circles.

The following years have unfortunately proved the lack of constructivism in the Polish Eastern policy. Nevertheless, this does not question the fact that in many regards it was a period of a lively cooperation between the two countries. At the same time, when it came to the priority issues for the newborn state in order for it to join its fellow European countries, the governing right-wing party carried out its policy in a very cautious way. In the opinion of the former Polish diplomat and ambassador Jerzy Kozakiewicz, the sincerity of Polish declarations on priority status of relations with Ukraine had been undermined by a one and a half year delay in appointing an ambassador to Kyiv. Furthermore, a year after an international Agreement for Commercial and Economic Cooperation was signed, the Polish commercial attaché in Kyiv was still a part of the Commercial Counsellor’s Office in Moscow.

In 1992–1993 the actions of the Polish side were as follows: First of all, it did not support the idea of the President of Ukraine Leonid Kravchuk to extend the Vyshegrad Group by including Ukraine, as well as decidedly rejected a possibility of any collaboration on the implementation of the so-called ‘Kravchuk’s Plan’, aimed at the creation of a collective security system in Central and Eastern Europe. Poland further ignored the idea of the Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine Borys Tarasiuk to build a Polish-Ukrainian axis in order to ensure stability and security in the region. Finally, in 1993 Poland and Russia signed an agreement to construct a pipeline from Russia to the Western Europe, bypassing Ukraine. What is even worse, no attempts to work out a long-term plan on cooperation with Ukraine in order to support its independence were made.

One of the excuses for such policy was probably the unstable position of Poland itself on the international arena. According to certain analysts, even the mere recognition of the independence of Ukraine has caused a dissatisfaction of
the West, which was strongly against the dissolution of the Soviet Union. That is probably why Poland, aiming to join the European structures as soon as possible, had to carry out such an evasive policy towards Ukraine. Another driving force in the Polish foreign policy could be the presence of Soviet military groups in the territory of Poland up until 1993 and the threats of Russia to block Poland’s accession to the Euro-Atlantic structures. Moreover, it is important to consider the old tendency of Polish right-wing forces to favour Russia.

The abovementioned situation led to a relatively well-known case of Major Lysenko, supposedly a Ukrainian intelligence agent who was arrested in Poland and accused of acquiring information for Ukraine. In spite of the strong denial of the Ukrainian side and doubtfulness of his fault, Lysenko had to face military justice. The trial, which began in October 1993, ended with a verdict of guilty. The way the Polish side acted in the Lysenko case gave rise to doubts as to the sincerity of the previously declared aspirations for a strategic partnership with Ukraine. Another reason for anxiety in Kyiv was the secret interest of Russia, which was blackmailing Poland into giving up the support to Ukrainian independence in exchange for NATO membership.

Consequently, the relations between Ukraine and Poland cooled off to a great extent and remained frozen for about 14 months. According to both Polish and Ukrainian politicians, this was a consequence of efforts of those Russian and Polish politicians who were afraid of a real Ukrainian-Polish alliance. In the end, this situation had negative consequences for both countries. Poland lost its geopolitical importance and was no longer the link between Eastern and Western Europe. Ukraine, in turn, lost its historical chance to use the moment of Russia’s political weakness and enter the process of Euro-Atlantic integration.

The first promising trends in relations between Poland and Ukraine reappeared no earlier than after the presidential elections in Poland in 1995. At the time, a candidate from a left-wing post-communist party, Aleksander Kwaśniewski, became a newly elected President of Poland. One of the main reasons for such changes was the fact that Poland had finally strengthened its position on the international arena. It received security guarantees from the Western superpowers and joined the circle of the Eastern and Middle European countries aspiring to join the European Union and the NATO. It is also important to mention that ever since the times of Józef Piłsudski, the left-wing forces, unlike the right-wing ones, have been supporting the idea of an independent Ukraine and its alliance with Poland. At the same time, just like in the early years of the Second Polish Republic there was an obvious lack of unambiguity in the policy of Poland towards its closest eastern neighbour. The Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs turned most of its attention and efforts to implementing the course on Euro-Atlantic integration and the only occasion for the Minister of Foreign Affairs to mention relations with Ukraine as a priority of Polish foreign policy was his annual exposé to the Sejm. In fact, the Ukrainian
line belonged to the sphere of competence of the Office of the President of Poland and the National Security Office led by the Minister Marek Siwiec.

The first step towards rapprochement was made by Poland in 1996. When hosting the Central European Initiative Summit in Łańcut, the President of Poland Aleksander Kwaśniewski invited the President of Ukraine Leonid Kuczm to participate. This was a beginning of a new era in relations between Poland and Ukraine. The most spectacular manifestation of positive changes in bilateral relations between the two countries was the statement of ‘Understanding and Unification’ signed in May 1997, aiming to minimise the influence of complicated common history on the current relations. In four years Poland confirmed its status of a strategic partner of Ukraine. In June 2001, the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs was the first among the EU-candidate countries to prepare a document called ‘Eastern Policy of the European Union in the Context of its Enlargement by admittance of the Eastern European Countries – Polish prospective’. The document underlined, inter alia, that a political dialogue between Ukraine and the European Union ‘should become one of the key priorities of the EU’s foreign policy’.

In 2002, the Foreign Ministry of Poland proposed another document, a ‘Non-paper with Polish proposals concerning the future framework of an extended policy of the EU towards it Eastern neighbours’. The authors of this document presented the principles of the ‘Eastern Dimension’ of the EU’s foreign policy. According to those principles, the ‘Easter Dimension’ was supposed to be an integral strategy covering coordination of aid activities of the EU itself, as well as those of other institutions in Eastern European region. The European Union was also supposed to set up different relations with different countries, depending on how interested they were in contacts with the EU, inner reforms, and adaptation to the EU standards. The ‘Eastern Dimension’ was designed to complement the ‘Northern Dimension’ of the EU, and not to compete with it.

In the following years, some of the Polish ideas were reflected in the EU’s documents but Polish politicians did not manage to convince their colleagues from the EU to develop the ‘Eastern Dimension’ of its foreign policy as an integral strategy. A fortiori they did not succeed to prove that Ukraine could actually be the only possible membership candidate to the EU within the Post-Soviet space.

The actual European policy of Ukraine and its prospects

To conclude, the truth is that the policy of providing comprehensive support to Ukraine within the European and Euro-Atlantic Structures carried out by President Kwaśniewski in 1996–2004 came too late. The then newly elected President of Ukraine Leonid Kuchma and his men chose the so-called multi-
vectoral policy, which obviously always leads to a zero result. They led Ukraine to the neglect of economic reforms, restriction of the democratic institutions and violation of the freedom of speech. Pro-Polish and pro-European rhetoric in public speeches of Ukrainian leaders were rather an attempt to put on a good face.

It is undeniable, but still seems quite strange that such state of affairs did not bother the West. The truth is, however, that this status quo of Ukraine did not complicate the relations between Ukraine and Russia. Unfortunately when recalling certain recent events, there is no reason to remain optimistic. The policy of favouring Russia carried out by Berlin, Paris, Rome and other Western European countries still remains a priority for the EU. It has been openly stated on many occasions that there is a need for the European Union to build a good relationship with its main gas supplier (around 40 per cent of overall gas consumption within the EU).

As it was previously mentioned, the ‘five minutes’ of Ukraine in Europe came to an end very soon after the Orange Revolution. Nevertheless, Viktor Yushchenko and his men have not given up all hope that Ukraine would finally get a clear signal from Brussels indicating a membership perspective, at least for the distant future. In September 2007, at a meeting of European leaders, of the i.e. the President of the European Commission José Manuel Barroso and the Vice-President of the European Parliament Marek Siwiec, with Ukrainian Youth Organizations in Kyiv, the President of Ukraine Viktor Yushchenko once again stated that membership in the European Union remained the most important strategic goal of Ukraine, as in his opinion, one of the biggest European countries cannot remain outside the borders of the EU.

Unfortunately, during all five years of Viktor Yushchenko’s presidency the European Commission did not share his optimism. The situation was only getting worse due to a political crisis in Ukraine, as well as inability of its leaders to implement socio-economic reforms in a fast and efficient way. Another factor was the negative attitude towards European integration of the leader of the opposition Viktor Yanukovych and his numerous supporters in the East and South of Ukraine. As a Ukrainian specialist in political studies Vadim Karasyov stated, Ukraine was still balancing between two visions of its relationship with the European Union and both Brussels and Moscow seemed to profit from it.

Another disturbing fact was that already in 2007 some of the Polish media seemed to be very sceptical as to the European future of Ukraine. Here is what ‘Dziennik’ wrote back then: ‘It seems that today no one either in Kyiv or Brussels believes in Ukraine as a member of the European Union. In spite of the efforts of the Polish government, the Negotiation Mandate passed by 27 member states of the EU within the new agreement between Ukraine and the European Union does not foresee the possible accession of Kyiv’. What is even worse, three years later a heated discussion about the appropriateness of the
Eastern policy of Poland based upon the views of Jerzy Giedroyc and Juliusz Mieroszewski was stirred up. The critics of the foreign policy which had been implemented in Poland so far underlined that the defeat of the leaders of the former ‘Orange Camp’ Viktor Yushchenko and Yuliya Tymoshenko in the presidential elections indicates that the majority of Ukraine’s citizens shared pro-Russian views, and therefore there was no longer any need to support Ukraine on the EU level, worsening the relations with Russia. The supporters of this idea also believed that the establishment of tighter political and economic relations with the latter should become the main objective of the new pragmatic Eastern policy of Poland.

Most likely Kyiv and Brussels will have to find a compromise. Not only has Ukraine to define integration to the EU as its key policy, but it also has to work hard in order to meet the Copenhagen Criteria. Ukrainian elites should stop dreaming about Europe and start pursuing real policy. Every step that has been made and is yet to be made on this way will matter. Membership in the WTO, abidance of the visa and readmission agreements between Ukraine and the Schengen states, cooperation in the sphere of power engineering and effective use of the EU’s financial resources in the framework of European Neighbourhood Policy are all very important for Ukraine. The major test for both Ukraine and Poland will probably be the hosting of the EURO-2012 championship. Many experts believe that, if organized properly, this event could be a significant argument for both Kyiv and Warsaw to persuade the Brussels officials to open up the door to united Europe for Ukraine. These important steps would be the signing of the Free Trade Agreement and the Association Agreement.

These agreements are of great significance for both Ukraine and Poland. In spite of the changes in Ukrainian leadership and the partial reduction of the democratic processes within the country after Viktor Yanukovych won the presidential elections, Warsaw is still trying to put into practice the Eastern Partnership Programme (adopted on 7 May 2009 in Prague). In order to do so Poland makes use of any possible opportunities. Since becoming the head of the European Council on the 1 July 2011, Poland has also become more influential within the European Union. A set of events is planned for this year within the framework of the Eastern Partnership, for instance a high-level meeting in Warsaw on 29 September 2011.

The Polish side offers optimistic promises that Ukrainians will truly feel the effects of its presidency of the Council of the European Union. The priority course of Polish Presidency is the ‘Open Europe’, which particularly concerns Ukraine. While holding the presidency, Poland will try to make the issues related to the European perspective of Kyiv the priority for the Council. First and foremost the Association Agreement and a roadmap in terms of visa regime liberalization for Ukraine are going to be discussed.
According to Paweł Zalewski, MEP, Kyiv should expect the first real outcomes of the Polish Presidency by the end of this year. ‘Our real goal is to validate the Free Trade Agreement with Ukraine by initialling’, says Mr Zalewski, ‘It is an important agreement, as it not only provides for the removal of customs tariffs; thanks to this agreement Ukraine will continue implementing standards and procedures of the EU’. Paweł Zalewski has also pointed out that the Free Trade Agreement between Ukraine and the European Union is of a strategic meaning, as after it has been concluded, Kyiv will have to make further decisions that would bring Ukraine closer to the EU.

Conclusions

From the European point of view, right now ‘the ball is on the Ukrainian half’ and it only depends on Ukraine whether the Free Trade and Association Agreements will be signed this year. At the same time, in our opinion, one of the key issues at this stage of the negotiations is whether the Brussels officials understand that Ukraine just cannot fight Russia’s designs for it, build up a competitive economy and a civil society at the same time. In order to build democratic institutions it needs a significant contribution from the EU, but the latter does not seem to provide much help as for now. Ukrainian experts believe that the situation will change as soon as the European leaders grasp the meaning of what the spokesman of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs Marcin Bosacki said a few years ago: ‘When fenced off from the West by a wall of indifference and visas, Ukraine will even unwillingly find itself within the sphere of Russia’s influence unless the West finally understands that it would be much better if it didn’t’.

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Ukraine’s Europeanness is one of the most discussed topics in this country but it is also an extremely sensitive and delicate issue for the Ukrainian society. It remains a subject to numerous interpretations and a victim of stereotypes and political manipulations. The complexity and the lack of clarity of perception and interpretation of ‘Europeanness’ is due to both internal and external factors. The absence, or rather impossibility, of reaching a consensus regarding the single vision of Europe, the blurring of its geographical boundaries, the ambiguity of the relationship of Europe versus the European Union is clearly witnessed in the expansion of European studies in this country, which developed in different ways in different universities and research institutions, trying to independently build their understanding of Europe. It should be stressed that European studies are not clearly defined and can have different meanings due to the lack of their generally accepted and uniform understating. EU-related studies are its central, but not sole element. In addition, Ukraine is torn between being inside of Europe and outside of the European Union. Thus, the pluralistic approach was adopted that encompasses diverse models of European studies and allows examining and comparing European studies in different context.

**Historical background**

The growing interest in European topics emerged at the time of Ukraine’s proclamation of independence in 1991. The low level of development or absence of a significant number of social sciences and humanities in the former Soviet Union, including Ukraine as one of its republics, caused the engagement of econ-

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1 This publication is based on the results of the research project supported by the CRF grant from the Central European University (Budapest, Hungary).
omists in studying the problems of integration processes in Europe. Later, the first EU-related researches begun to appear within the field of International Relations.

During the first half of the 1990s, European studies were not considered a stand-alone field because it was hard to talk about a holistic understanding of Europe. From the geographical, historical, and political perspective, Europe was seen in Ukraine as being made at least of two parts: Western and Eastern, and these two parts were trying to solve different problems.

It was considered an achievement for Ukraine to be considered a part of Eastern Europe and not be seen as a former republic of the Soviet Union. Because of loose national priorities, a low intensity of relations with the European Union and the lack of public inquiry, the state itself did not require a large number of specialists. That is why the studies were mainly concerned with particular regions or sub-regions of Europe and not the region as a whole. Integration processes and development of the EU were seen as parts of something that was typical of Western Europe. Eastern European studies, alternatively, dealt with other subjects: the transformation, democratisation, the transition to a market economy and so on.

On the other hand, there were objective limitations that made the development of European studies impossible: lack of a resource base and a limited number of experts who could provide appropriate expertise. Unlike Central and Eastern European countries, Ukraine was a part of the Soviet academic space, which at that time was to a certain degree peripheral and isolated from the rest of the world. Therefore, the first half of the 1990s was characterised by involvement with Western academic circles, and marked the beginning of attempts to understand what was happening in the academic circles beyond its borders. The understanding of the meaning of European studies was often confusing. Therefore, the development of European studies in Ukraine occurred through a process of trial and error rather than in a somewhat thoughtful manner.

During the 1990s, European studies were mainly seen as part of area studies. The fact that Europe was not seen as a whole, the long process of building an academic dimension in the independent state, and the lack of demand in addition to institutional constraints have certainly hindered the development of European studies.

In the second half of the 1990s, the questions of European integration were gradually incorporated in the academic agenda due to active horizontal relations with European universities. However, the dominance of the focus on the European Union was not grounded in Ukraine. By the end of the 1990s, a relatively large group of scholars was formed that worked on various specific aspects of EU/Europe-related issues. During this period, the active development of European studies became an initiative of universities.

The departments of international relations at all the Universities became the institutional home for the majority of scholars studying EU/Europe-related topics. The first scholars from different academic backgrounds were reoriented.
toward European studies in the 1990s. The proficiency in foreign languages was both an obligatory requirement and a valuable asset. The first scholars were exceptionally committed and enthusiastic; they eagerly embraced the opportunity to improve their qualifications abroad, were more receptive to international experience, socialised in the Western academia. Young scholars with significant training abroad later joined the departments of international relations of the same universities they had graduated from. The consolidation of new generations definitely strengthened the scientific expertise that may cover diverse aspects and ensured the sustainability in European studies.

Nowadays, there is usually a pool of scholars with focus on EU/European studies that is firmly established within the University and does not depend on competence imported from abroad. Moreover, some of them often hold high executive positions at the University. Under such circumstances, the staff has at its disposal sufficient means to resist excessive external interference in research activities and may impose its proper vision of how Europe should be studied. Thus, the main area of weakness might be an epistemic violence in carrying out scientific researches. Pro-European convictions of Ukrainian scholars should also be mentioned as a probable constraint. Besides, the professional immobility and seclusion tend to damage the exchange of ideas within Ukraine because of a relatively weak communication and cooperation between scholars. There are some scientific associations in European studies in Ukraine, but they could not bring together all relevant scholars from different disciplines. They are still in an embryonic state, dependable on external financial support and are not ready to contribute to the consolidation of European studies.

The end of the 20th century became the crucial point to further advancement of European studies in Ukraine. Thus, the second stage of the development of European studies started, which continues to this day on. It should be pointed out that, at that time, due to a number of factors, propitious conditions for a growth in European studies were created.

Domestic factors included objectives related to the growing promotion of Europe as a part of national identity and the definitive recognition, formalisation and legitimisation of the European choice as one of the key objectives of Ukrainian state-building at the beginning of President Kuchma’s second term. European studies were perceived as an important part in the probable accession process. The knowledge should stimulate more active relationships with the rest of Europe, enable Ukraine to meet the requirements for the membership in the EU, and raise the awareness of the society by promoting its Europeanness.

External factors reflected the geopolitical changes: the gradual geographical expansion of the EU throughout Europe and its increasing extraterritorial influence, the activation of bilateral EU-Ukraine relations and the increasing activity of most EU institutions within Ukraine, the official invitation of neigh-
bouring countries from Eastern Europe to join the EU and the proximity of the EU borders to Ukraine.

Academic factors foremost related to a commitment of universities and other research institutions to knowledge for its own sake, a dedication to carry out accurate academic researches on a variety of subjects and a social accountability to the state and the society. This was facilitated by significant progress in academic circles and the willingness of leading universities to provide a decent level of research and teaching of European studies.

The need, the willingness and the capacity of different forces pushed the European studies to another stage of development. However, it is still characterised by the lack of consensus on the definition of the European studies, disciplinary uncertainty, institutional fragmentation, undefined role of the European Union within European studies, etc. One can predict that the next phase of development of European studies will depend on Ukraine’s relations with the European Union that would modify their content and boost their growth.

The Ukrainian academia

The arbitrary use of European studies as a catch-all term is widely spread in Europe and around the world, and their development exhibits a problematic relationship to the major disciplines and to disciplinary based advances. The disciplinary identity of European studies is not clearly defined due to the multiplicity and multiperspectivity of perceptions of Europe in geographical, economic, institutional, cultural sense. Indeed, Europe has never existed anywhere except in discourse.

Though, there is a growing tendency to identify Europe exclusively with the European Union: Member States cover a major part of the continent, the success of integration process is recognised and the EU’s economic power is unquestionable, the institutional arrangement of the European Union is definitely dominant on the continent, and the Europeanness tends to be promoted as ‘EU-ness’. The ‘Europe of Brussels’ has gradually become a core and more visible element in European studies around the world, but has not entirely monopolised the field of research activities. In fact, there is no consensus on how Europe should be studied that exerts a significant influence on the development of European studies in Ukraine. At least three main approaches towards European studies as a knowledge field can be differentiated.

The first of these is European Union studies or European Union integration studies. Their expansion is directly related to the successful development of the European Union and the European Commission is actively committed to their support and promotion. They are still habitually labelled as European studies and are mainly focused on examining the EU construction and everything linked to this
process. Their disciplinary affiliation is not clearly defined yet. However, EU studies have apparently gone from strength to strength, effectively identifying themselves as a subfield in political science. Their predominance over other approaches towards studying Europe is obvious. However, it should be stressed that EU studies rather impose a restrictive understanding by promoting the European Union as an integrated region at the expense of a broader vision of Europe.

European studies as area studies emerged in the Northern America with aims of studying Europe as one consistent geographical area. Particular attention is often paid to its different subregions (Balkans, Central Europe, etc). Preference is given to the multi or interdisciplinary approach. Currently, area studies promote the idea that is more important to examine Europe in a broad sense than in the narrow meaning of integration. Many critics point out that the framework of area studies is not satisfactory for research activities on Europe because it includes a bit of everything and not much depth.

The last approach is Europe as a narrow specialisation. It is assumed that Europe or the European Union should not be considered as an issue on its own right, but as a horizontal subject that can be effectively studied within one discipline. For example, it is stressed that the study of EU politics would be the domain of political scientists, economists would focus on the EU economy while lawyers would concentrate on European law, etc. This framework allows preserving traditional disciplinary boundaries. Sometimes, the lack of a complete picture of Europe is considered as its main weakness.

Therefore, the ambiguity of the object of study, the vagueness of disciplinary identity, the lack of a well-established suitable international pattern or a very restrictive and limiting understanding of Europe gave the priority to the Ukrainian academia in defining its priorities in researching and teaching European studies. However, it should be underscored that the central role of the academia in shaping European studies is often undermined by external forces like the state, foreign actors or the market. We will discuss further their influence.

Both the number and the quality of research works on European studies should reflect their current state in Ukraine. Unfortunately, it is still impossible to identify all publications and provide a comprehensive and statistically precise analysis of scientific articles on EU/Europe-related issues due to the fact that the Ukrainian analogue of the WorldCat is under construction. In addition, in spite of several attempts, there is no specialised scientific journal on European studies so far. However, there is a constantly growing body of publications in specialised studies. EU/Europe-related topics are popular among Ukrainian scholars from diverse academic backgrounds and all main academic journals willingly publish their research findings. Meanwhile, the number of books on this subject has been steadily growing as well. The catalogue of the Vernadsky National Library contains the records of more than 800 books published in Ukraine on the European Union during the last ten years. The Ministry of Education and Science prepared
its own list of books published by Ukrainian scholars in 2006–2009 that includes more than 500 titles on EU/Europe-related topics. Thus, it should be pointed out that the informational void in European studies was filled over last decade.

The analysis of PhD dissertations could help to form a more complete picture of the general trends in European studies in Ukraine. The unified catalogue displays 52 dissertations in political science with a focus on EU/Europe-related topics defended from 2000 to 2009 in Ukraine. It should be said that there is a noticeable supremacy of international relations topics. More than a half of the defended dissertations studied the European Union as an international actor. The second most popular topic is the relationship of Ukraine with the European Union in different areas. Other dissertations examine the EU’s enlargement; focus on the EU internal process; study trans-border cooperation; are devoted to security issues and so on.

Undoubtedly, Kyiv is the main centre of European studies in Ukraine where two third of the dissertations where defended. Numerous academic institutions, available resources, favourable location, governmental support and foreign aid contributed to securing its key position. The most prominent centres of European studies are: the Kyiv Institute of International Affairs, the Institute of World Economy and International Relations and the Koretsky Institute of State and Law of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine. There are also important non-governmental think tanks like the Razumkov Center. In Kyiv, the preference is given to the broader and inclusive vision of Europe – Europe in the period of the European Union. The European Union has an important, but not dominant place and is mainly studied as an international actor with particular focus on ‘high politics’.

Lviv is the second academic centre of European studies with a dominant role of the Ivan Franko National University. Unlike in Kyiv, here the European Union does constitute the main focus of PhD dissertations and is studied not only as an international actor, but also as a multilevel polity and a transformative power. The peculiar feature of the Lviv University and its Faculty of International Relations is the scrupulous attention to language training. It helped overcome the English language hegemony and provided direct insight into experience of the EU members and candidate countries. Thus, many dissertations focused on the EU’s relationship and interaction with the Western Balkans, Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, the Baltic States, Italy, Spain, Norway, Sweden, Germany, Austria, etc.

Among other important centres outside Kyiv we should mention Odesa, Chernivtsi, Uzhgorod, Ostroh. It should be noted that Western Ukraine shows a rather high density of the presence of European studies in the university research agendas. However, this is due not to the regional differences of geopolitical preferences within Ukraine, but to the closeness to the EU border and more active interaction with the rest of EU countries.

In the field of EU law, there are only three specialised academic centres in
Ukraine: the Department of European and Comparative Law of the Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, the Department of European Law of the Ivan Franko National University of Lviv and the Department of European Union and Comparative Law of the National University of Odesa Law Academy. The main emphasis in their research activities is put on practical legal issues dealing with the relationship between Ukraine and the European Union. Special attention is paid to the harmonisation of the Ukrainian legislation with the *acquis communautaire*.

The situation is definitely different in the field of EU economy and reflects the domination of economic issues in the EU-Ukraine relationship. Thus, European economic studies are evenly expended in all Ukrainian regions and can be praised by their well-developed academic network. In fact, Ukrainian economists were the first to study the integration process in Europe and have achieved remarkable academic excellence. In addition, it should be said that more than 150 PhD dissertations were defended in the field of EU economy. They usually cover topics related to the Ukrainian economic agenda.

Interdisciplinary European Union studies failed to secure their presence in Ukraine due to a number of factors: the restrictiveness of this approach, the lack of an appropriate institutional framework, the opposition of the Ukrainian academia and its willingness to preserve the disciplinary purity, the conviction that European studies should not be limited to conventional EU issues, the exclusion of Ukraine from their research agenda, and even the current state of the relationship between Ukraine and the European Union and so on.

To sum up, it should be pointed out that Europe and the European Union rather tend to be studied and researched disjointedly within the framework of one specific academic discipline. European studies as a knowledge field is mainly developed within the traditional disciplinary boundaries and is seen as a narrow specialisation. European Union studies are very slow to emerge as a subfield of political science so far. Moreover the interdisciplinary interaction in studying Europe and the European Union is still insufficient and uncoordinated in Ukraine. However, it would be misleading to assume that Ukraine does not pay enough attention to studying Europe. On the contrary, European and EU-related research activities burgeoned and the accumulated knowledge reached a critical mass when European studies became omnipresent in Ukraine. But this knowledge on Europe and the European Union is highly specialised, although often narrowly oriented, embedded within different disciplinary contexts.

**External forces**

It should be stressed again that the development of European studies is increasingly predetermined by an array of external forces. In this case, three
most dominant forces might be identified: the state, foreign actors and the market. Their influence on European studies in Ukraine is often disproportional, contending and contradictory.

The State

Europe is regarded as an object of aspirations for Ukraine, and the European Union is formally considered a strategic objective of the modernisation of the Ukrainian state. The widely defined (re-) integration in Europe has been seen as a non-returning point to the Soviet legacy. All Ukrainian presidents and governments considered the EU membership a key priority of their activities. Among the vast majority of political forces, the European choice stands as a dominant consensus. At the same time, the membership in the European Union did not cause any serious controversy in Ukrainian society.

Undoubtedly, the priority for European studies is an eloquent manifestation of the way which this state is seeking to follow. Back in 1998, the first strategy of Ukraine’s integration into the European Union was adopted, which emphasized the need to enhance research activities and create new programs in education. The need to integrate Ukraine into the European academic and educational space was particularly stressed, but without specifying whether this integration was mainly to the EU, NATO or something else. It should be noted that the joining of Ukraine to the Bologna process was seen as an integral part of European integration too, although these processes are not mutually related. This approach is typical in Ukraine, where the European choice is loosely defined including just everything that might facilitate Ukraine’s return to Europe. Consequently, all European institutions were seen as equally important for Ukraine as a part of the European choice. Therefore, this broadly defined understanding of European integration at the state level made it quite complicated to precisely identify the object of European studies in Ukraine.

The state policy towards research and teaching of European studies became more systematic and consistent in the early 21st century, when the awareness of a more holistic approach to their development matured. At the state level, it was declared that an essential condition to create prerequisites for Ukraine’s membership in the European Union was to ensure the fulfilment of the needs of state bodies and local authorities with high level expertise.

Indeed, the Ukrainian state needed highly qualified experts and expertise in this field in a relatively short term, which in practice could ensure the fulfilment of the declared objectives. So, each year the Department of Civil Service determines the level and staffing needs of state and local government specialists on European issues. Based on the positive pre-accession experience of Central and Eastern Europe, it was believed that at least 30 per cent of Ukrainian civil servants should get an appropriate training in order to successfully per-
form state policy tasks in the sphere of European integration. By 2011 their number should have reached over 112 thousand people.

Another feature in Ukraine is that the National Academy of Public Administration, directly subordinate to the President of Ukraine, was identified as a leading academic and educational institution for the public service in European and Euro-Atlantic integration. The NAPA opened its regional campuses in Dnipropetrovsk, Lviv, Odesa and Kharkiv. Other higher education ministerial institutions were also involved in this process, including the Defence Academy, the Academy of Customs, the Academy of Foreign Trade, etc. Thus, narrow specialisations were introduced in a whole range of disciplines that covers variegated practical subjects as EU Agrarian policy, World and European Integration, EU Governance, Business in Europe, Information policy in Europe, etc. Thus, the disciplinary segmentation was retained or even reinforced, primarily making interdisciplinary researches impossible.

At the same time, the understanding emerged that such a superficial approach is inadequate and there is an urgent need for excellent academic research in European studies in Ukraine. This task was entrusted to the Ministry of Education and the institutions which are directly subordinate to him – Ukrainian universities, which became key actors in carrying out research activities in the field of European studies.

An important obstacle to the development of European studies is the insufficient financial support from the state. Funds are still very scarce and sparse, and their use was often ineffective.

To sum up, it should be pointed out that the state is playing an ambivalent contradictory role in influencing European studies. On the one hand, it acts as a stimulus. The state has always been favourable and welcomed research and teaching of anything that is connected with Europe or the European Union in order to reinforce the legitimisation of the European choice. This official commitment or even a privileged treatment compared with other fields would formally support European studies, encourage its further advancement, give more visibility, and attract better staff and more resources. On the other hand, the state acts as a constraint. A confused understanding of what the European studies should be, the reinforcement of the disciplinary segmentation in European studies, scarce financial support and bureaucracy inertia significantly limited the state itself to an opportunity for the development of European studies in Ukraine.

Foreign actors

Along with the state, a myriad of foreign actors has been another important external force actively engaged in the development of European studies in Ukraine. They have primarily acted as a resource.

It should be noted that Ukrainian authorities welcomed and even encouraged the foreign actors’ involvement in the development of European studies.
This is stated in all official documents, which emphasizes the advantages resulting from the international cooperation by studying foreign experience, socialising with the Western academia, and procuring additional resources. Thus, the State, which was unable to provide qualitative development of European studies and afford adequate funding by itself, voluntarily handed these matters on the implementation of foreign actors.

The state and foreign actors exert their influence in a different way and to a different degree. On the one hand, the government has at its disposal some ‘hard’ tools of influence on the form and content of European studies, including pressure or even coercion. Foreign actors significantly vary with their impact and they make use of only ‘soft mechanisms’ like socialisation or emulation that could stimulate and lead to some changes in European studies in Ukraine. On the other hand, if the state is very slow, unsystematic and inert, foreign actors stand out as dynamic and flexible in their engagement.

Unlike the position of the Ukrainian state, the distinctive feature of foreign actors has been that in most cases they rather promote a common vision of how European studies should be understood. The European Union, integration processes on the continent and other related issues have been at the core of their activities in Ukraine. Thus, although the name ‘European studies’ was usually kept, their curriculum largely included the topics dealing with the European Union studies or European Union integration studies.

The precise definition of the object of studies has been a sensitive and ambivalent issue for Ukrainian partners. Though foreign actors have not offered a uniform model of European studies, they have principally converged on focusing on European integration processes from which Ukraine was noticeably excluded and represented as a neighbour or outsider. The Ukrainian side has always insisted on studying the European Union as an organisation for a fully-fledged membership in which this country aspires in a long-term perspective. In addition, many Ukrainian scholars reject the monopoly of the EU over interpreting European studies that would contribute to the formation of a biased and deficient understanding, and stressed the importance of a more balanced approach towards European studies in Ukraine and pointed out that the promotion of EU studies as a version of European studies in Ukraine would only reinforce the perception of Ukraine as non-Europe within Europe. Despite the fact that both parties stick to their positions, this issue has never caused any serious controversies and has not constituted any obstacle to the cooperation between Ukrainian and foreign partners. Both of them have rather tended to overlook this discrepancy of views.

It should be noted that at the initial stage, Ukraine was rather a proactive recipient of European studies developed abroad and open to embrace international knowledge. Foreign support was especially noticeable in the late 20th century and early 21st century. The expertise and financial support from abroad
facilitated the introduction to European studies, contributed to the professional development of research staff and partially ensured appropriate resource base by supporting internal efforts. Therefore, it should be stressed that foreign actors had a significant impact on the timing of the emergence of European studies in Ukraine and the speeding-up of their further consolidation within the Ukrainian academia.

Nowadays, foreign involvement has significantly decreased and reoriented in other directions. After all, Ukraine has already formed a relatively self-sufficient basis of European studies. There remains an important challenge of the further advancement of European studies, timely transfer of updated and upgraded knowledge on Europe-related issues in view of how dynamic the situation evolves, securing resource and financial support for their sustainability.

The foreign actors in European studies can be divided into several groups: the European Union, the EU Member States, the EU’s universities and non-governmental organisations.

The European Union is a primary benefactor, which financed a big share of projects in Ukraine. The European Commission has a clear-cut and pragmatic vision of the form and goals in European studies that should be implemented in Ukraine. The emphasis has been put entirely on advancing European integration studies, that is the study of the formation of the European Community and the institutional, legal, political, economic and social developments related to this process. Moreover, the EU’s version of European studies promoted in Ukraine has been regarded rather as a set of variegated aspects related to the European Union as an integrated region. The key long-term goal has been to provide a number of narrowly-oriented researches dealing with practical policy and prepare a sufficient number of experts who were able to ensure the stable and friendly relationships between the EU and Ukraine as neighbours in a variety of fields. Undoubtedly, the EU activities have also been aimed at promoting a positive perception of the European Union in Ukrainian society. EU-funded programs are directed at the professionalization of European studies, a steady and even proliferation of European studies in various Ukrainian regions, sustainability of university curricula, consolidation of the resource basis, the creation of an independent academic community that is focused on European issues. In many cases, the EU’s efforts are still unsuccessful.

EU Member States have actively aligned to promote European studies in Ukraine as well. Poland, Germany, Great Britain and Sweden have been among the most active players. However, they have not only focused on the knowledge about the European Union. They have put a particular emphasis on the compulsory inclusion of aspects associated with the respective country, particularly on its participation in the European Union. It should be noted that some differences have been observed between the old and new EU Member States in this respect. Unlike in the Western European countries, the development of
European studies was an important element in the preparation for joining these countries the European Union. Poland can be cited as a good example. This country has been particularly actively involved in the dissemination of European studies in Ukraine through a huge number of programs. Given the special privileged bilateral relations, linguistic and cultural affinities, in the case of the Polish partners, interaction with universities from different regions of Ukraine has been much easier and efficient. It should also be pointed out that the Polish experience in introducing the European studies in universities has been particularly valuable for Ukraine because its development has started there recently in similar conditions of a post-communist transformation and often encountered similar problems. Very often it is the pattern of European studies from Polish universities that has served as the model for Ukrainian partners. In particular, it was thought that the steady growing accumulation of knowledge about the EU will have an overspill effect on the Ukrainian society and will bring it closer to the EU. Moreover, special attention was paid to the growing extraterritorial influence and transformative power of the European Union in the enlargement process with focus on the Polish experience.

EU’s universities became key players and major contributors in the academic excellence of European studies. EU universities provide transfer of knowledge, expertise in European studies. They contributed to the improvement of the quality of European studies in Ukraine, the professionalisation of academic staff and the integration of Ukrainian universities into the EU academic space. Cooperation between Ukrainian and EU universities was carried out in various formats: inter-university consortia, bilateral partnership, inter-departmental cooperation or through individual contacts. The biggest limitation was vulnerability and dependence on external funding and the need to adopt and adapt to the requirements put forward by sponsors. On the other hand, universities were more resistant to external influences and not subjected to political conjuncture.

Not being burdened by any official commitments, many non-governmental organisations that operate through foreign aid aligned to promoting European studies. Their support was rather complimentary, but also more flexible. They often paid attention to those aspects that were considered minor or overlooked by other contributors. One example is the International Renaissance Foundation, which operates a separate European program. In the field of European studies the emphasis is put on translation and publication of relevant literature on European issues, formation of a unified academic community in European studies, development of a network of European information centres, promotion of extracurricular activities and so on.

Nevertheless, foreign actors in European studies are usually facing the same range of challenges as in other fields. Discrepancies of proposed projects to the specific needs of Ukraine, rent-seeking approach, discontinuity of many
projects due to the lack of financial support, inadequate monitoring, inherent lack of coordinating the activities of foreign actors, which lead to duplication, waste of money and dispersion of priorities are among them. Other significant limitations include the growth of chronic dependence on foreign assistance in the area of funding that allows the state and university authorities avoiding the allocation of their own appropriate funds. This makes the development of European studies in Ukraine especially exposed to risk.

**Market**

Nowadays, particular emphasis is increasingly put on the necessity to align the research activities with market needs. However, the result is the exact opposite of what someone would expect. The marketability of European studies is rather low and has an unclear impact on the research preferences. Indeed, the market acts rather as a limitation by not providing basic financial support. This is mainly due to the current short demand of analytical works on Europe-related issues. Only Kyiv – as the capital – provides truly good perspectives. European studies in many Ukrainian regions are in an embryonic state or still non-existent and it is useless to expect a smooth emergence of European studies in the areas where there are no clear perspectives.

The influence of the market on European studies shows some peculiarities that result from the differentiated and distorted demand. It should be stressed that currently the state is the key customer. However, preference is often given to expertise from the civil sector at the expense of academic circles. Moreover, foreign institutions (mainly the EU) adopted a protectionist discriminatory approach by giving precedence to overpaid and less qualified EU experts over their Ukrainian colleagues.

It should be stressed that the market has a twofold impact on European studies in Ukraine. On the one hand, a relatively low demand for analytical works on specific Europe-related issues makes the market a minor player which serves as a constraint for the expansion of the research agenda in European studies throughout Ukraine. On the other hand, its limited influence narrows the opportunity for excessive interference in research activities.

**Conclusions**

The development of European studies in Ukraine has been undergoing continuous improvement despite a number of constraints and limitations. This is mainly due to the fact that the Ukrainian academic circles kept being the central force in determining, transmitting and advancing the development of European studies in Ukraine. Obviously, they have been influenced by other forces. First of all, the state is the most powerful and challenging player because uni-
iversities and other research centres are still state institutions directly subordinated to the government. The state’s role has been especially ambiguous and inconsistent. On the one hand, the state acts as a stimulus for the growth of European studies by formally supporting all activities related to promoting the European choice. On the other, the state definitely constrains their expansion by institutionally limiting the development of European studies. The foreign actors as a resource played a substantial role in advancing studies, but they were incapable of efficiently exerting influence on them. The position of the market is essentially secondary due to a low demand.

The fuzziness of the object of study, the vagueness of disciplinary boundaries, the manifold patterns developed around the world weakened the position of European studies and prevented them from imposing their dominance over the institutional dimension. In this context, the academic circles prevailed over other forces in shaping European studies in Ukraine and opted for studying within traditional disciplinary boundaries.

We can conclude that European studies in Ukraine demonstrated a remarkable capacity of the Ukrainian academia to productively cope with serious challenges, adapt to the complicated national context and present its own solutions by devising an appropriate approach.

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No one has any longer objections to the fact that Ukraine is a European country and therefore it inherently follows such a direction of scientific development and education as the European studies. In the European countries, knowing Europe is the main element in the curricula, and this knowledge plays an outstanding role in the European integration process, which, in its turn, affects the political, economic and social aspects of life. In Ukraine the European studies have developed in several directions.

European Studies in Ukrainian secondary education

Since the early 2000s the European studies have started to be introduced in the secondary education system. The essence of the European studies is to provide the younger generation with knowledge about the common European heritage and with practical skills to adapt to living and studying in different European countries, to be mobile, socially capable, and able to communicate and protect their rights. The system of secondary education, the leading part of which is the comprehensive school, possesses significant opportunities for this. In April 2002 the project of the International ‘Renaissance’ Foundation – a training course ‘The European Studies at Schools of Ukraine’ – was launched to implement the European dimension in education. During this time there were developed, published and discussed with the public the conceptual fundamentals of the integrated course structure and content. There were developed the course materials, including methodological guidelines for teachers and a textbook for students, which are recommended for implementation by the Ministry of Education, Science, Youth and Sport of Ukraine. The course materials publication was made possible by the partnership and financial support of the Polish-American-Ukrainian Cooperation Initiative Foundation (PAUCI). A modular course design allowed various options for its use (as a special, optional or
elective course) and it was a significant complement to existing school curriculum subjects (geography, economics, history, social science, etc.).

But the course ‘The European Studies’ does not only update the content of education, but also provides such a new form of extracurricular activity as the European clubs. In the European Union member-states and candidate countries, these play a role of one of the main sources of information about the continent and promote common European values among school and university students. The main forms of the European clubs’ activity are joining the International Network of the European clubs, accessing the EU publications, holding meetings, debates and celebrations. Typically, the Euro-clubs are the centers of activity in the European education, freely formed at the request of individual teachers and students.

The training course ‘The European Studies’ for secondary schools was aimed at developing the conceptual foundations of the educational content for the European dimension of Ukraine, as a resource for its teaching. The basis and the ultimate purpose of the project is the creation of an integrated modular-based course ‘The European Studies’ and its implementation in the educational process at secondary schools. The content of this course comprises a complex of knowledge, ideas, and skills that will promote active participation of citizens in political, legal, economic and cultural domains of the modern European community.

In the framework of the project there was developed and discussed with the public a conception of educational content for the European dimension of Ukraine, the authors of which are the candidates of pedagogical sciences S.Kobernik, I.Taranenko, A.Ovcharuk L.Parashchenko, the candidates of philosophy N.Kuzmina and F.Stepanov. Their conceptual ideas underlie the course content, namely, the complex of knowledge, skills and competencies that will promote the Ukrainians’ active participation in political, legal, economic and cultural life of the modern society and the education of students as conscious citizens of Ukraine and Europe. The structure of the course consists of seven ‘studies’-units. An integrated module-based course ‘The European Studies’ enables each school to find the most relevant form of education organization according to their needs and opportunities. In particular, it can be taught as a separate optional course (34 hours per year) for students of 8th–11th forms. Modules can also be used while teaching such subjects and courses as ‘History’, ‘Geography’, ‘Social Sciences’, ‘Civic Education’, ‘A Man and the World’, ‘Foreign Language’, ‘Basic Economics’, as an additional educational material. The Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine approved the materials developed by the project ‘The European Studies’.

Europe has rich historical experience in developing and forming a democratic society. In most European countries there were developed special training courses and created a variety of textbooks and manuals, there were
launched active scientific and methodological centers, there was established adequate training for teachers to facilitate the introduction and promotion of regional European integration.

The modern school has to promote the democratic culture development, to form competences, political, legal and socio-economic knowledge necessary to live in the European Community. The priorities of common European education consist in providing the young generation with knowledge about the common European heritage and practical skills to adapt to living and studying in different European countries, to be mobile, socially capable, and able to communicate and protect their rights. The dualistic nature of any national education is, on the one hand, in maintaining strong roots of the national culture, and on the other, in adequate update, aimed at preparing individuals to living in the dynamic, interdependent world. For the modern secondary school of Ukraine, which is undergoing thorough reforms, it can be reflected in the renewed standards of the national and European educational content components, taking into account the current trends in European and global development.

Knowledge about Europe are based on the general pedagogical and didactic principles, the main including: humanism that involves creating conditions for harmonious development of a creative individual as a subject of democratic European community; correlation of educational requirements with the possibilities and abilities of pupils; democracy that means mutual respect and cooperation among subjects to ensure implementation of the concept; the variety of choice, content, methods and forms of learning; dialogical nature of education, an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust; the ability to interact constructively with the European community and its leading institutions; scientific character that requires the development of basic documents and training materials considering the present level of science for developing students’ scientific world outlook and perception of the whole picture of the world; practicality, that is orientation of the teaching materials content on theoretical knowledge and skills being used practically by students for life and work in the real society; forming the ability to analyze various situations that arise in the European environment independently, make decisions and act in the legal domain; continuity that accounts the requirements of the national education policy and current legislation; existing curricula and syllabi; step-by-step enhancement of the knowledge about Europe, matching age characteristics, and covering all levels (junior, primary, senior) of secondary school; multiculturalism, that is filling the course about Europe with the idea of universality of human rights and ethno-cultural diversity of Europe, the legal equality of national cultures; education on the basis of personal inter-ethnic tolerance and respect to other cultures, respect to one’s own national identity in the European and world culture; integrative (interdisciplinary) character that suggests that while working on the content and structure of this course there was taken into account the existing
cross-curricular approach with the basic school subjects, first of all – history, law, geography, economics, and the world culture.

Any content of education should be culture-forming. The culture-forming feature of the Europe-related content involves updating the content of school education on the basis of its humanization, purposeful use of achievements of the national, European and world culture. Since the priority of the current Ukrainian policy is to strengthen integration processes in the European Community, the revised standards of Ukrainian education should combine national and common European components, consider the facts of European development, including the necessary knowledge about Europe, European heritage, values and orientations. Changes in content of Ukrainian school education in general should be a key instrument of its reform and compliance with the European context, the needs of today. The content, structure, and methodology of the course ‘The European Studies’ reflect the main purpose and tasks of the general education for democracy, intercultural awareness, preparation for lifelong learning and training in the European context, mastering new information and new communication technologies, transnational cooperation in the European educational domain. With the European issues integrated to the general content of the Ukrainian school education the students can develop personal and social skills and competencies for life in the modern European community, which now actively cultivates a sense of European culture, convergence and a common European home.

The content of the training course ‘The European Studies’ is a set of integrated knowledge which is to form certain ideas, skills, and abilities for functioning in political, legal, economic and cultural field of the modern European community. It covers: knowledge of human and national values; the concept of human rights as the highest value; knowledge of the European ideas about freedom, right, that is philosophical knowledge to help create the ability to determine the value orientations, citizenship awareness; knowledge about contemporary Europe, its history, geographical features of the European region, the national and world culture, the religious and linguistic characteristics, education, science in the European countries – they will raise awareness of multiculturalism in Europe, interdependence of the European cultures, a common European identity and place of the Ukrainian culture in the European context, political legal knowledge, i.e. understanding concepts such as democracy, totalitarianism, knowledge about different political structures in the European countries, knowledge of European society, its institutions, the role of law in it, the concept of international European organizations, knowledge of international laws and knowledge of the European Court that enables the development of abilities to act in a certain society, participate in activities of international organizations and associations focus on ideological and political actions of the European organizations, to communicate with the legal authorities, to resolve
conflicts in accordance with the rules of democratic procedure, to be able to behave in different situations according to law; socio-economic knowledge about the organization of economic life in the European society, the market relations, their features in Europe and the compliance of the market relations in Ukraine to those in Europe, knowledge of the financial systems of the European countries and integration processes of the European market that will help operate in free market, understand the features of cooperation in international organizations and groups. Given the learning-by-doing approach to the formation of educational content, the course ‘The European Studies’ aims to get students to master basic skills: orient oneself within the political spectrum in Europe and the European international organizations’ activities to use legal rules to protect their rights; recognize patterns and interdependence of modern economic and social development in the European countries; understand the market mechanisms of the European economy operation; perceive other cultures, understand their similarities and differences, recognize the Ukraine’s place in the world and European history; prioritize economic and social development of Ukraine in the European context.

Forms and methods of disseminating knowledge about Europe at the present stage are of particular importance. It is today when the progress of society leads to a new approach towards the methods, means and forms of education. Now the leading role is played by information and communication technologies, new interactive forms of learning. The balanced combination of existing approaches to using all didactic set of the advanced pedagogical ideas can ensure maximum success in implementing the integrated course ‘The European Studies’. As a separate academic subject the course ‘The European Studies’ can be used under the conditions of administering elective courses, more often – at high school: it does not only meet the interests of teenagers, but also facilitates the formation of competencies, important for them, consciously, deliberately and by their choice. This approach is often linked with existing knowledge and skills acquired by students in the study of other disciplines, whose content is linked to the European context. Designed as an optional course, the course ‘The European Studies’ was aimed to establish inter-disciplinary ties, finding interconnected aspects of studying a particular fact or phenomenon, understanding the whole picture of the European social, scientific, economic and information space.

Due to the urgency of the issue about the need to update the forms and methods of school education in accordance with the modern requirements, and new educational standards, and given the increasingly stringent demands of the labor market, there appears an urgent problem to form an active life self-awareness of modern young people, their ability to build their own life trajectory. To implement this task it is necessary: to form the concept of the European dimension by broadcasting the basic ideas and values of the European society as
a necessary element of the European integration; to equip teachers with technology to create conditions for developing in an individual values and skills necessary for life in the modern European community; to implement widely new interactive forms of education, information and communication technologies. Setting up an active social life position of the youth, combined with understanding of a common European belonging is one of the most important tasks for the European dimension of education in Ukraine. However, it should be noted that the introduction of the modular-based course ‘The European Studies’ since September 2004 has affected only 60 pilot schools in Kyiv and 92 schools in other cities and towns of Ukraine. This is despite the fact that the number of all secondary schools operating in Ukraine accounted for 22 000. This project was primarily funded by the International ‘Renaissance’ Foundation and other foreign donors. So without any systematic support from the local authorities, an attempt to introduce the course ‘The European Studies’ in the system of public education had no significant effects.

**Implementation of European Studies in Ukrainian higher education**

An important step to approximate the national educational and scientific community to the EU was the extension of the TEMPUS program to Ukraine. Many national educational institutions had time to take advantage of it. First, they were Kyiv, Lviv, Odesa and Kharkiv National Universities, Ternopil National Economy Academy and other famous universities in Ukraine. Since the collapse of the USSR and the general decline of funding of NAS Ukraine research institutes, it is the universities and other institutions of higher education having the appropriate personnel base that have been forced to take over the care of developing some fundamental and mainly applied sciences, not to mention the humanities. Just in the framework of the TEMPUS projects execution individual universities could establish productive scientific and educational contacts with colleagues from the universities in Western and Central Europe to learn modern management of research and education projects, to adopt a much-needed experience of managing education and science. In recent years, Ukraine has gained access to the ERASMUS MUNDUS (although, as a representative of ‘third countries’ for the EU), which is an additional important channel for its integration into the European educational space, since it opens some opportunities for incorporating into the European educational environment not only for teachers, but also for students at the expense of the EU funds.

Obviously, the fact that more and more Ukrainian universities are becoming the members of bilateral cooperation with the ‘old’ and ‘new’ EU member-states is of considerable importance. One of the most stable forms of such coop-
eration is a partnership on a long-term basis. Such Ukrainian universities as National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, Institute of European Integration of Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, Lviv Polytechnic National University, Yuri Fedkovych National University of Chernivtsi and other metropolitan and regional scientific and educational centers have already had their counterparts in the EU. However, cooperation of the Ukrainian colleagues with their partners in this format was asymmetric in terms of resources.

In 1997 for the first time in the history of Ukraine the Institute of International Relations of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv became the higher school to coordinate the project TEMPUS/TACIS ‘Training Specialists in European Studies’. During the project initiated by the administration of the Institute and with the assistance of International ‘Renaissance’ Foundation in late of 1998 for the first time in Ukraine there was established the Center for European Studies (CES), which became a specialized training unit of the Institute. The Center brings together some faculty and certain sections of the Institute of European Studies departments. The Center opened a Master Program, which provides a unique opportunity to get modern education majoring in international relations at the leading university with a focus on the European expertise. In 1998–2009 the Institute participated in 7 TEMPUS/TACIS projects on the European studies. The Center for the European Studies at the Institute of International Relations runs a 1.5-year full-time Master’s course in the field of: International Relations, International Law, International Economic Relations, International Business, and International Information. Master training includes the study of two European languages of English, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Dutch, Swedish, Hungarian, Polish, Czech, Greek, Turkish and others. Graduates of the CES Master Program can continue their studies at the post-graduate course of the Institute.

National University of ‘Kyiv-Mohyla Academy’ (NaUKMA) became the first Ukrainian higher education institution which received a Jean Monnet grant for establishing the department of the EU law. According to the results of the annual competition for the European Commission Program attended by 555 universities around the world, NaUKMA became the best in the ratings of Ukrainian and European universities, as well as in the quality of syllabi on the European studies. Now, the Academy students and civil servants will be able to listen to the training courses on the EU law in English and Ukrainian. The associate professor of the NaUKMA department of legal sciences, Ph.D. (law), candidate of legal sciences R. Petrov was appointed to be the head of the Jean Monnet Department of the European Union Law.

By the way, Jean Monnet program has been existing in Ukraine for over 10 years. There were developed nine modules so far, one of the last being at the Donetsk State University of Management – ‘The European Social Policy and Social Partnership Models’ (2009). The purpose of learning a subject ‘The
European social policy and social partnership models’ is to form a system of knowledge about the key trends and issues in the European social policy, features of the European social integration, social partnership models, to master skills of comparative analysis and use the knowledge in practice.

Sponsored by the Ukrainian Association of European Studies and National University of ‘Kyiv-Mohyla Academy’ the first seminar was held on current issues of the EU law under the Jean Monnet EU program in spring 2011. The subject of the seminar was ‘The Influence of the Lisbon Treaty on the relations between the EU and Ukraine’. The seminar was attended by scholars and experts in the European studies, lawyers, teachers and students of social sciences, scientists, journalists, civil servants and employees of local governments. The leading Ukrainian and foreign scientists and experts in the EU law, state officials discussed the impact of the Lisbon Treaty on current and future relations in various spheres of cooperation between the EU and Ukraine. The plenary presentation on the topic ‘The Lisbon Treaty Novels and their Impact on the Legal Framework of the EU and EU-Member States’ was given by Jean Monnet professor of the EU law from the Leeds University (UK) D. Shiyek. Both the Ukrainian Deputy Minister of the Economy V. Pyatnytskiy, and the EU Delegation Representative in Ukraine H.Laura and representatives of government agencies briefed the participants on the current state of relations between the EU and Ukraine and negotiations on an association agreement. The representative of the European Court of Human Rights, Mr. P.Pushkar discussed the EU’s accession to the European Convention of Human Rights and urged the fruitful discussion on this issue. The seminar was held according to ‘Oxford format’ methodology, i.e. all reports were accompanied by the critical commentary. During the seminar the informative presentations were made by: the Head of the department of the EU Law and Comparative Law of ‘Odessa Law Academy’ National University prof. O.Vishnyakov, the head of the Jean Monnet department of the EU law of National University of ‘Kyiv-Mohyla Academy’ R.Petrov, the head of the EU Law of Ivan Franko National University of Lviv prof. M.Mykiyevych, and the associate professor of the department of the European Law of Ivan Franko National University of Lviv O. Golovko. The commentaries on the reports were made by experts and lecturers of the EU law G.Druzenko, K. Smirnova, G. Dobrynksa, and T. Byk.

A special place occupied by NaUKMA in developing the European studies in Ukraine explained the provision of exactly this educational institution in 2010 with the opportunity to carry out a national survey of the situation with teaching the European studies in Ukraine (supported by the International ‘Renaissance’ Foundation and the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine). The purpose of the study was to define the problems on the way to introducing the programs and courses on the European studies and to develop recommendations for mentioned Ministry on legal and organizational support.
for teaching the European studies at the universities in Ukraine. The organizers of the research declared their interest in information about curricula (majors) and courses on European studies. However, due to a number of objective and subjective factors the NaUKMA research team failed to implement the results of this study.

Another well-known Ukrainian institution in the realm of the European studies is the Institute of the European Integration of Ivan Franko National University of Lviv established in 2000 especially to promote and extend the European studies within the Ukrainian educational system. Institute’s researchers have been studying the role and place of Ukraine in the European integration; the enlargement process of the EU and its challenges for Ukraine; foundations of the European integration idea and creating the European communities; institutions and decision making processes in the EU; political and economic transformation experiences of the EU member – states; progress of the multilateral cooperation among the European countries etc.

The most fruitful activity in the realm of the European studies was made by institute’s researches in the years of 2004–2010 when they carried out scientific exploration on ‘The Implementation of the Bologna Process into the Ukrainian education’. Institute’s researches published a quite deal of articles, materials, and documents on the questions of the reapprochement of the Ukrainian education with the European education system, held and participated in lots of international conferences, prepared recommendations to the University authorities on implementation of credits and tests in the study programs.

Institute of the European Integration also established the research contacts with the Ukrainian and foreign institutions doing with the same subjects namely chair of European studies of Jagiellonian University in Krakow (Poland), Jean Monnet chair of the European Studies in Szczecin University (Poland), Institute of International Relations, International and European Law of Franz-Leopold University of Innsbruck (Austria), Moldova-Institute of Leipzig University (Germany) etc. It held a number of conferences and seminars on issues of integration processes, globalization, and their impact to political and social life in Ukraine. Among those International Scientific and Practical Conference on ‘Neutral state in the process of the European integration: Austria and Ukraine’, international scientific panel on ‘Between East and West: Quo Vadis Ukraine?’, international conference on ‘Globalization and Integration processes in the Modern World: Challenges and Perspectives for Ukraine’, international teachers and researchers’ conference on ‘European Law today: science, education, and practice’, international students’ seminar and panel on ‘Program of the Eastern Partnership to be new dimension for Ukrainian and European relationships’. Institute’s researches also consult students of the faculties of international relations, journalistic, law, and political sciences when they make their essays and diplomas on the issues of the European studies.
In 2009 there was announced an intention to create the Black Sea European College in Sevastopol supported by the EU. There are only two campuses of the College in Poland and Belgium so far. Creating the college was initiated by the Sevastopol City State Administration. It could have been a higher educational institution awarding degrees recognized both in Europe and worldwide. The College was supposed to contribute to the convergence of all Black Sea countries and strengthening mutual understanding, awareness of the common goals and objectives, collaboration in the name of the common future. Unfortunately, these expectations were not allowed to become true. In September 2010, the Ukrainian Ministry of Education and Science decided not to create such a college in Sevastopol.

The European Bologna reform can be called a neo-liberal project. With an analogy to four freedoms of the EU (the movement of capital, workers, goods and services), it insists on the need in the ‘fifth’ freedom: ‘the movement of knowledge’. The introduction of a common European three-degree education (Bachelor – Master – PhD) with the automatic recognition of diplomas among the countries-participants, a common mechanism of recognizing the periods of studies and the courses taken in different universities (the so-called European credit transfer system – ECTS) was designed to stimulate the movement of knowledge across borders. However, the meaning of the Bologna reform is not only in the expanded opportunities for academic and educational tourism. Implementing the neoliberal orientation to the ‘fifth freedom’ had a clear pragmatic purpose: to build ‘the most competitive and the most dynamic knowledge-based economy’ in Europe. If no specialisation of the European Studies is in the Ukrainian higher schools, it is virtually impossible to recognise this academic degree.

One should keep in mind that sociological polls confirm that 30 per cent of Ukrainian students are planning to leave Ukraine forever. They are mostly attracted by the United Kingdom, Germany and the USA. Unfortunately, the Ukrainian higher education does not attract the Europeans because the academic year for foreigners in Ukraine, among other things, costs $ 1.500 in a year, postgraduate training or internship – $ 2.500, whereas at state universities in most European countries training for foreigners is tuition-free or accounts for a symbolic amount of € 300 per year.

The effect of Ukrainian NGOs on European Studies

The leading role in the process of introducing the European studies in Ukraine has been played by the NGOs. Since 1996 the Ukrainian Center for Legal Studies launched the European studies: thematic essay contests and annual summer schools on the European law for graduate and post-graduate students of higher educational institutions in this country.
In fact it was a European program of the International Renaissance Foundation which gave an impetus to the European studies in Ukraine. Due to its initiative in May 2005 was held the competition ‘The European Studies in Higher Education’. It included organizing the national and international conferences on the European studies for teachers, students’ scientific conferences on the European integration. The purpose of the competition was to develop the European studies (teaching and learning) in the higher schools of Ukraine. It must be reached by making the national and international conferences on the European studies for teachers and students.

Indirectly, the establishment of the European Information Centres based at the Regional Universal Scientific Libraries contributed to the development of the European studies. These centers began operating in virtually all regions of the country. The aim of the European Information Centers were to provide a wide access to information resources on the European integration and to disseminate knowledge of: principles of the European Union (EU) operation, the activities of the EU governing institutions, the relations between Ukraine and the EU, the European integration policy of Ukraine, the European values. The Centers helped spread objective information about the EU, the European integration policy of Ukraine and relations between Ukraine and the EU; promoted active public debate on various aspects of the European integration of Ukraine, the establishment of various forms of cooperation between NGOs and public authorities in formulating, implementing and monitoring the Ukraine’s European integration and bilateral relations between Ukraine and the EU, the development of the European studies in Ukraine, the establishment of long-term partnerships among the public and educational institutions of Ukraine and the EU.

The idea to create the national association of researchers of the European integration and teachers of the European studies discussed often during the methodological workshops for teachers of the European studies and the international scientific conference on the European studies, held in Donetsk in May 2005 and April 2006 funded by the European and the ‘East-East’ programs of the International ‘Renaissance’ Foundation. At 2-nd International Scientific Conference ‘The Development of the European Studies in Ukraine: Problems and Prospects’ at the Donetsk National University in April 2006, the participants supported the initiative to establish a national all-Ukrainian non-governmental organization ‘The Ukrainian Association of the European Studies’ and agreed an action plan for its establishment and registration. On October 7, 2006 at the National Academy of Public Administration of the President of Ukraine there was held the meeting of the Association, elected the Board, approved the Action Plan for the Association, and appointed the people responsible for the state registration of a newly established NGO. The Association has a fixed individual membership. Both researchers and teachers of the European studies, as
well as practitioners dealing with European integration, can become its partici-
pants. The first wave of the NGO branches appeared in the cities of Vinnitsya,
Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhya, Ivano-Frankivsk, Kyiv, Kirovograd,
Luhansk, Lviv, Odesa, Poltava, Rivne, Ternopil, Kharkiv, Kherson, Chernivtsi,
Chernihiv, Simferopol and Sevastopil. The branches should be set in Volyn,
Zhytomir, Transcarpathian, Mykolaiv, Sumy and Cherkassy regions yet. Broad
representation of all regions allowed to elect the effective Association Board,
which consist of M. Smolinskyy (Rivne), M. Mikiyevych (Lviv), I. Golov-
waschenko (Vinnitsya), T. Antsupova (Odesa), O. Lemara (Simferopol), M. Ne-
dopokina (Luhansk), I. Todorov (Donetsk), R. Khorol’s’kyi (Kharkiv). R. Petrov
and S. Zagorodniuk (Kyiv) were elected to be the President and Vice-President
of the Association. The President of the World Association prof. Mark Porto
invited for the first time the Ukrainian specialists on the European integration
to join the international directory ‘Who’s who in the European integration’. The
mission of the Association is to develop a national institution of the civil soci-
ety in Ukraine, promoting European integration through developing the Euro-
pean studies. The Association promotes the involvement of all stakeholders in
developing scientific pro-European movement through the principles of trans-
parency, democratic decision-making and extensive circulation of the informa-
tion. The Association is open to new members, as well as to an ongoing dia-
logue with other non-governmental organizations, academic institutions,
governments, media and businesses in order to consolidate efforts of all those
interested and working in the field of the European integration. When Action
Plan of the Association being approved, it was agreed to establish a working
group to develop a strategy for the European studies promotion in Ukraine, to
recruit working sections and committees of the Association, to create a web site
and journal of the Association. The European program of the International
‘Renaissance’ Foundation congratulated Ukraine with a transparent and public
process of establishing the Ukrainian Association of the European Studies. Since
2009 the UAES launched its own scientific journal ‘The European Studies and
Law’. Its key issues cover: current trends, perspectives and current issues in the
European Union and its relations with Ukraine, analysis of the latest decisions
on the European continent and the experience of their implementation in the leg-
islation of Ukraine; European integration of the Ukrainian laws, economic,
legal, social, and other issues as to the European and global integration. In April
2011 there was created a Facebook web-page of the European studies in Ukraine
(facebook.com/pages/European-Studies-in-Ukraine).

Another project was carried out with the financial support of the Interna-
tional ‘Renaissance’ Foundation and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation. It was
aimed at extend knowledge about the activities of the European Union and Euro-
pean integration in general throughout Ukraine by making a relevant web-site.
It consisted of two parts, namely: ‘the European studies’ and ‘Role-plays on the
European matters’. In the first part one can find information about what exactly ‘the European studies’ is. The second part of the site is supposed to be used by professionals who are involved in teaching the European studies, particularly in such an interesting and yet unusual for Ukraine form as a ‘role plays’.

However, the hope only for the International ‘Renaissance’ Foundation support in developing the European studies in Ukraine is counterproductive. The IRF and its European Program were expected to push effectively the formation of European studies. Yet, often not getting the expected results, the Soros Foundation began treating this area of work somewhat skeptically. So the strategy of the IRF European program for 2012–13 does not provide separate support for the European studies in Ukraine. And logically if Ukraine sign the EU Association Agreement the European studies must finally receive a full official government support. It is unlikely to happen.

Conclusions

The European studies in Ukraine in the recent years have passed a difficult period of appearance and development. Implemented significant projects in the field of secondary and higher education, and scientific exploration of the European issues enjoy stable popularity. For 20 years of the Ukrainian independence, a number of scholars have been interested in developing the European studies. Some achievements have been reached, giving certain optimism regarding further development of the European studies in Ukraine. The governmental target programs on the public information and training in the European integration didn’t contribute much to developing the European studies. Both the enthusiasm of Ukrainian specialists and assistance of the foreign partners (NGOs, mainly the IRF, and relevant institutions of the European Union) had the positive results as well.

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Due to the enlargement of the EU and the fact that, as a result, its borders approached those of Ukraine, the Ukrainian-Polish transborder co-operation plays an increasingly complementary role in the process of Ukraine’s European integration strategy, generating synergistic effects of transborder cooperation, promoting the development of democracy and pluralism and overcoming national antagonisms. Transborder co-operation favours the development of border area economy and the search of complementary structures of the states’ economies. As a result, transborder co-operation expands the formal and informal links between both sides of the border, which breaks down the barriers created by the border.

The Ukrainian-Polish transborder co-operation should be aimed at:
- deepening European integration through the development of long-term Ukrainian-Polish relations;
- removing institutional barriers to structural changes in the economy of Ukraine through the implementation of European standards of economic transformation;
- ensuring the highest possible mobility of technologies, capital, goods, services, labour force;
- forming transborder markets through the development of small and medium-sized business;
- coordinating strategic programmes of development in border regions, formation of transborder innovation clusters to enhance the border area competitiveness;
- solving common environmental protection problems.

In future, it is important that cooperation on the border should be built on the basis of the integration model, which involves the creation of a transborder co-operation region with free movement of goods, services, capital and people. Such policy defines more transparent borders, that is, not only dissociation –
mutual penetration of borders and establishment of joint units, but also greater cooperation of neighbouring countries.

The present state of Ukrainian-Polish transborder co-operation is hampered by economic, legal, institutional, organisational, informational, infrastructural and social barriers.

The economic barriers include, above all, market transformations of different degree and nature, differences in socio-economic levels of development of economy in Poland and Ukraine.

According to the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the level of Ukraine’s market transformation is estimated at 3.1 points, while Poland’s is 3.8 points. According to the the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Polish GDP in 2010 equalled USD 439 billion, the Ukrainian – USD 137 billion, including the GDP per capita of USD 11,521 in Poland and of USD 3,002 in Ukraine.

Ukraine has suffered much more than Poland from the global financial crisis. The GDP growth in Poland in 2009 was 1.7 per cent, while Ukraine experienced a reduction to 85 per cent compared with the GDP level in 2008. The countries have overcome the crisis in different ways. In 2010, the GDP growth rate in both countries was roughly equal – 3.4 per cent in Poland and 3.7 per cent in Ukraine, but the inflation rate in Poland in 2010 amounted to 2.44 per cent and in Ukraine to 8.2 per cent. There is a significant difference in the structure of employment, unemployment rates, wages, gross regional products, labour migration, private sector development. On the level of the Ukrainian-Polish transborder region there are differences in the socio-economic development of Ukrainian and Polish border areas (Table 1).

Table 1. Socio-economic development of the Ukrainian-Polish transborder region 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Lviv Region</th>
<th>Podkarpackie Voivodeship (region)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area, thousand sq km</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population, million people</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment structure:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– agriculture, hunting and forestry, fisheries, per cent</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>23.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– industry and construction, per cent</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>29.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– services per cent</td>
<td>64.5</td>
<td>47.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment rate, per cent</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly average salary, USD</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>813</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross regional product per capita, USD</td>
<td>2,161</td>
<td>6,843</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: calculations based on the statistical data of the Central Office for Statistics in the Lviv region and of the Regional Data Bank of the Central Statistical Office.
The territory and population of the Lviv region and Podkarpackie Voivodeship are almost the same. But they differ in unemployment rate, which is higher in the Polish border region, but at the same time, monthly average salary and gross regional product per capita in the Polish border region are three times higher than those in the Ukrainian border region.

There are significant disproportions in the levels of socio-economic development of regions on both sides of the border. They also differ in their economic structure. The share of agriculture in the structure of value added in the Polish border region is 3.8 per cent, while in the Ukrainian region it is 23.8 per cent; of services – respectively 68.5 per cent and 53.7 per cent.

**Table 2. Structure of value added in the Ukrainian-Polish transborder region**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic activity</th>
<th>2009, per cent</th>
<th>Lviv Region</th>
<th>Podkarpackie Voivodeship (region)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, hunting and forestry, fisheries</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>60.3</td>
<td>63.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The conclusions of the European Commission suggest that the uneven socio-economic development of border regions greatly depends upon the level of development of innovative systems, including their innovation potential.

The comparison of the Podkarpackie Voivodeship and the Lviv region in terms of innovation potential shows that the former has a high innovation potential in relation to other Polish voivodeships, and the Lviv region – the lowest in Ukraine.

Within the structure of Ukrainian and Polish border regions, there is a bipolarity of the planning framework, caused by the formation of agglomerative pairs of centre-cities on both sides of the Ukrainian-Polish border. They are located on the transborder planning axes – transborder corridors (Lviv–Rzeszów, Kovel–Chełm). These cities are important as ‘poles of growth’ and are considered to be the centres of the Lviv and Rzeszów agglomerations.

The common feature of the Polish and Ukrainian border regions is a lower level of their socio-economic development in relation to the average rate in each country. It is estimated at approximately 71 per cent.
The border regions on both sides of the Ukrainian-Polish border have limited own financial resources, including those for the execution of joint projects, small foreign investments, poorly developed banking infrastructure and private entrepreneurship.

Foreign direct investments from Poland to Ukraine play an important role in the development of the Ukrainian-Polish transborder cooperation. The volume of such investments is rather small but they tend to increase every year. The main obstacles to foreign direct investment in Ukraine are as follows: uncertainty of Ukrainian legislation and of the priorities of national economy development; the government’s failure to comply with obligations; poor conditions of the development of transport infrastructure and of the telecommunications network; corruption.

The volume of foreign direct investments from Poland to Ukraine has increased from USD 69.8 million in 2001 to USD 864.9 million in 2010 (2.0 per cent of total foreign direct investments in Ukraine). In Ukraine, there are 1,244 companies with the capital of Polish investors.

During this period, Ukrainian investments in the Polish economy increased from USD 0.3 million in 2001 to USD 49.4 million (0.7 per cent of total Ukrainian foreign investments) (Table 3).

Table 3. Dynamics of the Ukrainian-Polish investment cooperation in the years of 2001–2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Directions</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>from Poland to Ukraine</td>
<td>69.8</td>
<td>98.4</td>
<td>153.3</td>
<td>152.3</td>
<td>194.7</td>
<td>225.5</td>
<td>394.6</td>
<td>672.1</td>
<td>690.1</td>
<td>864.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from Ukraine to Poland</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>30.1</td>
<td>46.9</td>
<td>49.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Poland–Ukraine: Investment cooperation. – Government support of Ukrainian exports.

Traditionally, Polish investments are directed to the manufacturing industry (about 60 per cent), the financial sector (about 20 per cent), wholesale and retail trade (12 per cent). In terms of regions, the largest amount of investments is allocated to the Western regions of Ukraine and to Kyiv.

The most significant Polish investors in the Ukrainian financial sector are the following enterprises: the parquet factory ‘Barlinek’, the construction ceramics factory ‘Cersanit’, the packaging factory ‘Ken-Pak’, ‘Inter-Groklin’, the furniture factory ‘Nowy Styl’, as well as the meat factory ‘PKM Duda’.

The biggest Polish investments into the financial sector of Ukraine are in ‘UniCredit Ukraine’ (by Pekao S.A.), in ‘Kredobank’ (by PKO BP S.A.) and in ‘Plus Bank’ (by Getin Holding).
Important investment projects of Polish investors in Ukraine have started, such as the chain of bookshops ‘Bukva’, the construction of the individual hygiene goods factory ‘Bella’ and the founding of PZU Ukraine Insurance Company.

The biggest Ukrainian investment projects in Poland are the Warsaw Car Factory (Avto ZAZ is the investor), the metallurgical industrial complex ‘Huta Częstochowa’ (the investor is ISD), the shipyard ‘Stocznia Gdańska’ (the investor is ISD), the metal trader ‘Centrostal Bydgoszcz’ (the investor is UHMK), the representative office of the alcohol producing company ‘Nemiroff’.

Polish direct investments make up more than a quarter of all direct investments in the Lviv Region. In particular, Polish companies have introduced projects in 384 regional enterprises.

In 1993–2008, the Ukrainian-Polish trade showed a growth tendency, while preserving a negative balance of the foreign trade in all these years. This tendency changed in 2009, when the volume of both the Ukrainian-Polish exports and imports decreased (Table 4).

### Table 4. Dynamics of the Ukrainian-Polish international trade 1993–2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Export USD million</th>
<th>% to the previous year</th>
<th>Import USD million</th>
<th>% to the previous year</th>
<th>Foreign trade turnover USD million</th>
<th>% to the previous year</th>
<th>Balance, USD million</th>
<th>Export-import cover coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>122.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>76.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>199.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>45.7</td>
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Source: State Statistic Committee of Ukraine 2010.
One can see the considerable dynamics in the movement of goods and services on the Ukrainian-Polish border. In 1991, the turnover between Poland and Ukraine was USD 176 million, in 1994 it was USD 485.3 million, in 1996–1997 it was more than USD 1 billion. In 2009, the turnover grew to USD 6.6 billion. Trading with Poland, Ukraine has had a negative balance of foreign trade turnover with a tendency to grow since 2003. In 2009, the turnover negative balance reached USD 1.9 billion. This can be explained by an insufficient level of use of the export potential in the border regions of Ukraine.

Poland’s accession to the Schengen Area resulted in a considerable decrease of transborder small trade in the form of the so called ‘shuttle (chovnykovyi) business’.

Thus, a primitive form of transborder trade disappeared resulting in a loss of income sources for a great part of the population in the border regions of Ukraine and an increase in unemployment caused by the liquidation of trade personnel servicing the Ukrainian market (wholesale business, shops, markets) in Poland.

The development of the Ukrainian-Polish transborder trade will be facilitated by the creation of a free trade zone between Ukraine and the European Union, aimed at the liberalisation of the trade in goods and services, simplification of customs procedures and an increase in the effectiveness of customs authorities.

The participation of enterprises from the Polish and Ukrainian border regions in international fairs held on the territories of both countries contributes to the establishment of civilised international trade contracts. More than 45 international professional exhibitions are held in Ukraine annually.

The legal obstacles in the development of Ukrainian-Polish transborder cooperation are connected with the peculiarities of Ukrainian national legislation which limits the transborder relations, defining them as international relations. There are no legal instruments in Ukraine (international agreements, treaties, etc.) favouring the development of transborder co-operation. The subjects of transborder co-operation do not have the status of legal entities and do not receive financial aid from the state.

There are also institutional problems Ukrainian-Polish transborder cooperation, caused by the differences between the competences of local self-government bodies in Ukraine and Poland. In Ukraine, transborder co-operation is viewed as belonging to the competences of the central authorities and power in this regard is not delegated to local self-government bodies. In Poland, this power belongs to local self-governments.

The informational obstacle to Ukrainian-Polish transborder co-operation includes insufficient informational coverage of the transborder co-operation policy in both countries. It is necessary to form a mutual informational space in the zones of activity of transborder operational programmes and Euroregions.
on the basis of the use of modern information technology and the creation of specialised Internet resources in order to overcome this obstacle.

Informational coverage of the Ukrainian-Polish transborder co-operation requires state assistance and interstate co-ordination. It must include: providing information on actual projects and programmes in the transborder co-operation sphere; promoting knowledge and practical skills among the representatives of local authorities, enterprises and community in the sphere of transborder co-operation; exchange of information on mutual cultural and natural heritage; informational support of transborder co-operation projects in the sphere of youth and sport; information concerning the search of possible partners for transborder co-operation projects, etc. The transborder informational network should become an intermediary between the innovative product manufacturing and its consuming on both sides of the border.

The development of Ukrainian-Polish tourism is negatively influenced by unsatisfactory accommodation facilities, quality of service and the whole tourist infrastructure. Meanwhile, the use of tourist recreational and educational resources is a very promising way of cooperation on the Ukrainian-Polish border, with such attractive tourist and natural areas like the Łęczna–Włodawa Lake District and the Shatsk Lakes together with national and landscape parks; Roztocze and the Beskids being nature protection areas.

The development of transborder co-operation in the sphere of tourism and recreation involves the formation of mutual competitive tourist products like transborder excursions and tourist routes.

Geographical neighbourhood requires coordinated activity in environment protection including: the monitoring of transborder transmission of air and water pollution; flora and fauna protection; control of transit of industrial wastes via the territory of the regions.

The development of transborder co-operation promotes harmonisation of relations in various spheres of transborder co-operation. There appear transborder structures having interregional development tasks. The intensification of Ukrainian-Polish transborder co-operation often results in dissociation, that is mutual penetration of regions and formation of mutual structures (Euroregions, Eurozones, bilateral or multilateral technology parks, etc.).

The Ukrainian–Polish co-operation takes place only in two (‘Bug’ and ‘Carpathian’) out of seventeen Euroregions existing on the Polish border. There is also the tripartite neighbourhood program Ukraine–Poland–Byelorussia financed by the EU for the period from 2007 to 2012 within the scope of European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument (ENPI). The society ‘Carpathian Euroregion–Poland’ functioning as the national representative of Poland in the Carpathian Euroregion together with the Euroregional Informational Centre deals with the involvement of various institutions in the transborder co-operation.
The collaboration of higher education institutions and enterprises on both sides of the border as a basis for the formation of transborder innovation clusters is an important instrument for social economic development of transborder regions. Their formation requires: the experience of existing clusters in both the Ukrainian and Polish border areas; promoting the implementation of existing cluster initiatives of both sides; conducting mutual researches, trainings, seminars for the participants; forming a common information exchange network.

Taking into consideration the great scientific potential of institutions and enterprises of Ukrainian and Polish border regions, it is recommended that Ukrainian-Polish transborder technopoleis be formed on the basis of academic institutions and branch scientific research institutions on both sides of the border.

The development of transborder co-operation in the social economic sphere aims at: holding Polish festivals in Ukraine and vice versa; scientific collaboration on the basis of scientist and student exchange; formation of common educational and scientific research institutions.

The Polish section of the EU border with Ukraine is 526.5 km long. The insufficient level of development of transport infrastructure is a barrier negatively affecting increase of transborder flows due to an unsatisfactory number of highways and railways crossing the border, as well as an insufficient number of border crossings.

There are 11 hard-surfaced roads between Ukraine and Poland (of which three do not have border crossings) and seven railways. The use of the railway network is hindered by the technical barrier resulting from the difference in track gauges. Moreover, the volume of railway transportation is also affected by the increase in railway ticket prices and by the competition from cheaper and broad bus services.

Furthermore, the number of crossings for cars and pedestrians is insufficient. There are only 6 such crossings.

Transborder communication between Ukraine and the Republic of Poland takes place in the following border crossings:

1) Railway communication:
   1.1. Yahodyn–Dorohusk;
   1.2. Volodymyr-Volynsky–Hrubieszów;
   1.3. Mostyska–Przemyśl;

2) Car communication:
   2.1. Yahodyn–Dorohusk;
   2.2. Rava-Ruska–Hrebenne;
   2.3. Shehyni–Medyka.

In accordance with the data of the Ukrainian Border Service, the effective capacity of the existing crossings is 8 thousand cars per day. But, in fact, more
than 13 thousand cars cross the border per day, causing long queues and promoting corruption at the state border crossings.

The flows of people and transport crossing the Ukrainian-Polish border increase every year. The development of Ukrainian-Polish transborder cooperation is impossible without joining the international transport corridor system and developing border infrastructure which will promote a raise in the volume of international transportation.

The main multifunctional territorial transport (road and railway) junction comprising three border crossings: Mostyska–Przemyśl, Shehyni–Medyka, Krakovets–Korczowa, constitutes an important trans-border corridor on the Ukrainian-Polish border. The corridor with the road and railway junctions Rava-Ruska–Hrebenne and Yahodyn–Dorohusk is of identical multifunctional significance.

Ukrainian-Polish transborder co-operation is mainly determined by such transition and transport corridors as East–West (E40) and North–South (Via Intermare). Transport corridors such as No. 3 (Kyiv–Berlin (1,640 km long) and Baltic states–Black Sea (Odesa–Gdansk) cross the territory of Ukraine and Poland. The territory of each of these corridors is approximately 200 km across the movement direction allowing the use of not less than two modes of transport including USD 11,880 and USD 3,307 per capita.

The conducted research shows that an increase in transborder flows may occur due to the expansion of the sources of intensification of the effectiveness of transboundary cooperation as well as minimization of transaction expenditures. Thus, the countries through which the pan-European transport corridor № 3 passes (Berlin–Dresden–Wrocław–Lviv–Kyiv, with the planned exit to the highway Kyiv–Lviv–Chop) are working actively on increasing the carrying capacity of the route, upgrading its infrastructure and improving freight documentation procedures. This must lead to the simplification of freight registration procedures, customs and border inspections of fright, thus increasing the transportation speed.

The A-4 motorway will also play an important role in the increase of transborder transport flows. The axis of this motorway will constitute a communication route between Western Europe and Ukraine in compliance with the EURO-2012 Preparation Plan. In 2006, the government of Ukraine adopted the Conception of the Complex Programme of equipment and reconstruction of the state border by 2015.

In accordance with the Programme, the volume of annual transportation through the transport border crossings Rava-Ruska, Krakovets, Shehyni may increase to 5,853.5 thousand tons of freight and 42,861.3 passengers by 2015. As reported by the Western Regional Customs Office, the corridor № 3 will increase its volume to 145.2 metric tons, corridor № 5 – up to 84.6 metric tons, and corridor № 9 – 155.5 metric tons.
The transport corridor ‘Baltic states–Black Sea’, though promising, has not been fully equipped. The member states should standardise their pricing policies concerning sea and railway transport tariffs in order to set up direct communication between the ports in Odessa and Gdańsk, thus making the mentioned route more attractive.

Ukraine is making efforts to facilitate the crossing of state borders by introducing modern European technologies of inspection, streamlining their procedures, undertaking an accurate evaluation of minimal time limits of the inspection procedures, as well as providing a sectioned off zone for movement, the so-called ‘Green Corridor’.

An analysis of Ukrainian-Polish transborder co-operation shows that Poland’s entering the Schengen Area intensified the barriers and controlling functions at its frontier according to the new laws and norms. It controversially affects the level of openness and security, in particular of the visa regime and the possibilities of further development of the trans-border co-operation.

Polish membership in the Schengen Area is aimed at achieving the freedom of movement of population, goods, services and capital among EU Member States and their neighbours. Poland faces a dilemma: on the one hand, the country should ensure the guarding function of its border, on the other hand, facilitate the movement of population, goods and services. The fulfilment of the first task led to the intensification of checks at the external borders of the country, being the external border of the EU. The second problem has not been fully resolved. Consequently, the social mobility of the citizens of Ukraine crossing the border has considerably decreased, border transparency has been noticeably weakened, the formation of another ‘iron curtain’ becoming evident as never before since the collapse of the USSR.

Visas, customs duties and customs limitations, as well as the system of certification and standardization of certain groups of products pose obstacles in the Ukrainian-Polish co-operation. The existing visa policy constitutes a formidable challenge to Polish-Ukrainian transborder co-operation. Its present state does not promote the development of economic, public, professional and private contacts, thus impeding transborder co-operation.

The problems of obtaining visas have worsened since Poland entered the Schengen Area. Despite the fact that Poland opened a network of consulates in Ukraine (Kyiv, Kharkiv, Lutsk, Odesa, Sevastopol), the problem of obtaining visas still remains a burning issue.

For instance, the amount of visas granted by the Consulate General in Lviv has increased. Over the last two years, the Consulate has granted 300,000 visas; the number of multiple entry visas has been increasing much slower. It does not correspond to actual needs. Different practices in the submission of documents also impede the process of obtaining visas. Online registration of documents for getting a visa has been introduced and abolished several times since 2007. The
cancellation of the preliminary online registration for submission of the documents resulted in long daily queues at the consulate institutions, drastically reducing the chances of leaving for Poland, despite having all the necessary documents.

On 1 June 2011, online registration was reinstated. But long waiting lists for visas were not eliminated. As the consulate officials state, their moving to the new premises will enable granting 2,200 visas a day. The establishment of special visa centres providing relevant paid services is planned.

The settlement of the issue of the near-border movement (NBM) is also of great importance. It involves visa-free movement for the residents of the border areas on the basis of the Agreement on the rules of near-border movement signed by the Government of the Republic of Poland and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on 16 March. The Agreement came into force on 1 July 2009.

In compliance with the Agreement, the border zone is defined as the territory of the administrative units of Ukraine and Poland, not exceeding the distance of 30 km from the Ukrainian-Polish border. Provided that a part of a given administrative unit is situated at a distance of 30–50 km from the borderline, it is recognized as a part of the border zone. This Agreement covers 1,545 settlements in Ukraine and 1,822 settlements in Poland.

The Statistical Office in Rzeszów and the Department of Statistics in Lublin have been working together since the third quarter of 2008 in carrying out a monitoring campaign aimed to analyze the processes caused by the introduction of NBM (Table 5). In the period from the third quarter of 2008 to the third quarter of 2009, the campaign involved approximately 20 thousand persons quarterly.

Table 5. Indices of the Ukrainian-Polish Border Movement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indices</th>
<th>Period</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ukrainians</td>
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<tr>
<td>Persons crossing the border</td>
<td>826.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Means of transport</td>
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<tr>
<td>– motor transport, %</td>
<td>87.4</td>
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<td>– pedestrians, %</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– railway, %</td>
<td>5.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expenditures abroad, mln. PLN</td>
<td>556.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average per capita expenditure, PLN</td>
<td>608</td>
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Source: Own compilation, based on the data from the Central Statistical Office.
In accordance with the analysis of the above data, Ukrainians spent PLN 864 million in Poland. In the first half of 2009, the expenditures amounted to PLN 596 million, that is, on average PLN 645 per person. The expenditures of Ukrainians in the border regions of Poland amounted to 15 per cent of the cost of the Polish export to Ukraine.

In the first half of 2009, Poles spent PLN 181.6 million in Ukraine; in the third quarter their expenditures amounted to PLN 117.1 million, that is, on average PLN 159 per person. In this period, the cost of Polish purchase expenditures in Ukraine exceeded the value of the Ukrainian export to Poland by 10 per cent.

Generally, the money is brought to sales outlets in border zones, providing jobs and increasing income of the border region residents. Ukrainians mostly purchase construction materials, spare parts for vehicles and agricultural machines, domestic appliances and meat products in Poland. Petrol, alcohol and tobacco products, as well as clothing constitute the most popular items purchased by Poles in Ukraine.

As a result of the analysis, it is possible to state that the border movement – and goods transportation as its part – are of great importance for the economic development of border areas.

The present state of Ukrainian-Polish transborder co-operation indicates the necessity of political, economic, material, technical, organizational and ecological measures to be taken both by Poland and Ukraine in order to minimize the negative effects of the existing barriers. The border regions of both countries must use their geographical position as the competitive advantage of their social and economic development; it should contribute to the use of the transit potential of the border regions. Ukraine has the highest transit potential in Europe. RENDEL Institute states that it is equal to 3.75 per cent. As the eastern border of Poland became the eastern border of the EU, its modernization appears to be the problem of not only Ukraine and Poland but also of the EU in general. It concerns the financial support of the construction of border crossings, their better equipment – corresponding to EU standards – as well as retraining the officers of the border guard of the two countries.

Thanks to EU funds within the framework of PHARE, CBS, TACIS programmes and the European Initiative INTERREG, modernization of infrastructure has been carried out at the Ukrainian-Polish border. It has contributed to the social and economic development of the border regions, promoting environmental protection and the establishment of human relations, thus preventing marginalization of the eastern provinces of Poland and the western regions of Ukraine. In the period 2007–2013, the Polish Podkarpackie Voivodeship is to receive EUR 1,136.3 million from the Regional Development Fund for the implementation of common transborder projects.

Ukrainian-Polish transborder co-operation should be aimed at:
– deepening the EU integration on the basis of development of long-term Ukrainian-Polish relations;
– elimination of the institutional barriers for the introduction of structural reforms in the Ukrainian economy through the implementation of European norms of the economic transformation;
– providing maximum mobility of technology, capital, goods, services and labour force;
– formation of transborder markets on the basis of small and medium-sized business development;
– coordination of strategic programmes for the development of border regions, formation of transborder innovation clusters with the purpose of enhancing the competitiveness of border territories;
– settlement of the environmental protection problems.

In the future, border co-operation should be based on the integration model stipulating for the establishment of the transborder co-operation region allowing the free movement of goods, services, capital and persons within its borders. Such a policy will anticipate greater transparency of borders, not only dissociation, i.e. mutual penetration of borders and the establishment of common formation, but also closer interaction of the neighbouring countries.

In order to implement the tasks, measures should be taken aimed at:
– the eradication of abuse, smuggling, corruption and crimes at the border;
– the creation of a modern information and marketing system. One of its tasks lies in the analysis and prognostication of the structure and direction of the human, goods and services flows across the border;
– the formation of a strategy of investment and innovation development of the Ukrainian-Polish co-operation by establishing a network of information and analytical centres on both sides of the border;
– the concentration of the resources of the border areas on conducting fundamental and applied research;
– the implementation of the programme and target approach to the innovative transborder activity;
– the extension of the participation of small and medium enterprises in the innovation activity on the basis of knowledge and experience exchange as well as the training of managers and employees;
– the formation of an innovation diffuse zone at the EU border on the basis of various organisational forms (technopolis, technological park, etc.). Ukraine and Poland have considerable innovation potential. Its clustering showed that eight provinces (including Podkarpackie Voivodeship) have high innovation potential. Western regions of Ukraine (including Lviv) have the lowest innovation potential in Ukraine;
– the establishment of a logistics centre as the coordination body of all Ukrainian-Polish transport corridors (links).
This logistics centre should include:
- transport networks for road transport with units guaranteeing movement security within the networks;
- border control and customs posts;
- terminals and production areas for handling transit freight (reloading, storing and processing);
- a system of providing information (including logistics).

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Contributors

Artur Adamczyk – Associate Professor at the Centre for Europe, University of Warsaw. Research interests: EU in international relations; EU decision-making process, Mediterranean Policy of the EU. Author of numerous publications on these topics. Visiting Professor at European universities: University of Siena, University of Thessaloniki, Marmara University, Istambul University, Universidad Autonoma de Granada. Artur Adamczyk can be contacted at a.adamczyk@uw.edu.pl

Olga Barburska – Associate Professor at the Centre for Europe, University of Warsaw. Member of the Polish European Community Studies Association (PECSA). Research interests: women’s participation in political power in the European Union, Eastern policy of the EU, history of European integration. Olga Barburska can be contacted at o.barburska@uw.edu.pl

Taras Budzinskyy – Research Fellow at Ivan Franko National University of Lviv. Doctoral dissertation concerned the development of the European Communities in the late 1980s and early 1990s and their transformation to the European Union. Main research interests: European Studies; the EU Member States’ policy towards Ukraine and Eastern European countries; modern migration processes and border issues. Taras Budzinskyy can be contacted at tarasbud@yahoo.com

Andriy Didukh – graduate of Ivan Franko National University of Lviv. Master’s degree. Since 2003 scientific research worker at the Institute of European Integration at Ivan Franko National University of Lviv. Scientific interests: modern international relations, Ukrainian-Polish cross-border cooperation, relations between Ukraine and Canada. Andriy Didukh can be contacted at andridi@yahoo.com

Magdalena Drouet – PhD student at the Warsaw School of Economics in the Collegium of World Economy. Graduate of the Faculty of Economic Sciences, University of Warsaw and the Faculty of Italian Philology, University of Warsaw. She specializes in development economics and integration, European Union trade policy and economic transition in developing countries. Scholarship holder at Catholic University of Louvain and University of Roma ‘La Sapienza’. Experienced employee of the UN System. She also specializes in the preparation and implementation of EU-funded projects on Higher Education. Magdalena Drouet can be contacted at muirne22@hotmail.com
Przemysław Dubel – Assistant Professor at the Centre for Europe, University of Warsaw; Project Manager at the Faculty of Management, University of Warsaw; Adviser to Government Representative on European Information. Specialist in developing active forms of employment and supporting the labour market, expert in management and development of projects co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund and European Social Fund. Przemysław Dubel can be contacted at pdubel@wz.uw.edu.pl


Bohdan Hud – Professor, since 2000 Director of the European Integration Institute of Ivan Franko National University of Lviv. Visiting professor at the Centre for Europe, University of Warsaw and Institute of European Studies, Jagiellonian University. Expert in Ukrainian-Polish relations and conflicts in 19th and 20th century, and Eastern dimension of European integration. Author of numerous publications devoted to these topics, including: ‘The Russian factor in EU–Ukrainian relations’ in: The East as a Partner of the European Union, Dobroczyński M., Lipeć-Zajchowska M. (eds.), Warsaw 2005; ‘Main issues of labor migration in Ukraine’ in: Migration – the value added?, Markowski K. (ed.), Lublin 2008. Bohdan Hud can be contacted at bohdan-hud@yahoo.com

Roman Kalytchak – Associate Professor at the Department of International Relations and Diplomacy, Faculty of International Relations, Ivan Franko National University of Lviv. His research interests include the European Union’s external relations; EU’s influence in the post-Soviet space; European regionalism and Ukrainian regional governance; internalization of higher education. He has published a book and many articles on these topics. Visiting scholar at European and North American universities: Central European University (Hungary), University of Bologna, University of Tartu, University of Toronto, University of Turin, Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars (Washington DC, USA). Roman Kalytchak can be contacted at kalytchak@hotmail.com
Marta Malska – Professor, Head of the Department of Tourism of Ivan Franko National University of Lviv. Her research interests include management and marketing of service industries, fundamentals of tourism, tourist resources of Ukraine, international tourism and cross-border cooperation. Author of numerous publications on these topics, including: Management of tourism (2004), Spatial systems of services (2010), International tourism and services (2008), Hotel business (2012). Marta Malska can be contacted at malskym@ukr.net

Dariusz Milczarek – Professor, Director of the Centre for Europe, University of Warsaw. Editor-in-Chief of quarterly ‘Studia Europejskie’ (European Studies) and Editor of ‘Yearbook of Polish European Studies’. Main fields of interest: history of European integration, European Union’s foreign/security policy, international position and role of the European Union. Visiting Professor at: University of Maastricht (The Netherlands); University of Granada (Spain); University of Hull (U.K.); European University Institute in Florence (Italy), University of Lviv (Ukraine). Author of over 80 different publications, including: The European Union in the Contemporary World (Polish edition in 2005; Ukrainian edition in 2007) and Position and Role of the European Union in International Relations. Selected Theoretical Aspects (2003). Dariusz Milczarek can be contacted at d.milczarek@uw.edu.pl

Małgorzata Pacek – Assistant Professor at the Centre for Europe, University of Warsaw. Ph.D. in Political Science, graduate of Institute of Political Science, Jagiellonian University, specializing in international relations. Topic of doctoral dissertation: Origins and activities of the East Prussian Landsmanschaft. Research interests: migration policy of the EU and its member states, integration of immigrants, particularly from different cultures, Polish–German relations, landsmanschafts, expellee movement in Germany. Consul at Polish Consulate in Hamburg, 1999–2003. Visiting Professor at the Ludwig-Maximilians University in Munich, University of Hamburg and Istanbul University. Małgorzata Pacek can be contacted at m.pacek@uw.edu.pl

Svitlana Pysarenko – Professor, Department of Economic Relations of Ivan Franko National University of Lviv. Her research interests include the world economy, economies in transition, Ukrainian-Polish cross-border cooperation. Author of numerous publications on these topics. Svitlana Pysarenko can be contacted at prosvetka@mail.ru.

Ihor Todorov – Professor at the Department of International Relations and Foreign Policy of Donetsk National University (Ukraine). Graduated from the Faculty of History of Donetsk State University in 1981. Defended PhD dissertation at Lomonosov Moscow State University in 1992. Doctoral research at Kyiv National Taras Shevchenko University, 2002–2005. In 2007 he defended his postdoctoral thesis ‘European and Euro-Atlantic integration of Ukraine: national and regional dimensions (1991–2004).’ Deputy Director of the Research and Information Center for International Security and Euro-Atlantic cooperation at Donetsk National University, a member of a specialized scientific council on historic sciences. The scope of his scientific interests covers: foreign and security policy of Ukraine, in particular relations with the EU and NATO. Chairman of the Euro-Atlantic section, the head of the Donetsk regional department of Ukrainian European Studies Association, Deputy Chairman of the Coordinating Council of All-Ukrainian Civic League ‘Ukraine–NATO’, a member
of the Shevchenko Scientific Society (Donetsk branch), Vice-Chairman of Donetsk Regional NGO ‘Donetsk Institute for Social Research and Political Analysis’, a member of the working group ‘Foreign and Security Policy’ at the Public Expert Council at the Ukrainian division of Committee on cooperation between Ukraine and the EU. Ihor Todorov can be contacted at ihor.todorov@gmail.com

Krzysztof Wielecki – Professor at the Centre for Europe, University of Warsaw. Sociologist and psychologist, Member of the International Sociological Association and Polish Sociological Association. Research interests: sociology of civilization, social order, economy and sociology of Europe, sociology of mass culture, social psychology and philosophical anthropology. Author of about 80 books and articles: *An introduction to the problems of European integration*, Warszawa 1998; *Subjectivity at the time of the postindustrial crisis*, Warszawa 2003; *European Social Order Transformation, Mass Culture and Social Marginalisation Processes* in ‘Yearbook of Polish European Studies’ 2005, vol. 9; *Globalisation and Free Market* in ‘Yearbook of Polish European Studies’ 2004, vol. 8. Krzysztof Wielecki can be contacted at k.wielecki@uw.edu.pl

Anna Wróbel – Assistant Professor at the Institute of International Relations, University of Warsaw. Ph.D. in Political Science. Her doctoral dissertation is on the policy of liberalization of international trade in services. Member of the Polish Association of International Studies. Research interests: international trade in services; processes of international trade liberalization, in particular liberalization of international trade in services; food security; international trade in agri-food commodities; economic dimension of globalization; regional economic integration; EU trade policy; World Trade Organisation. Author of numerous publications on these topics. Anna Wróbel can be contacted at awrobel@uw.edu.pl

Jakub Zająckowski – Assistant Professor at the Institute of International Relations, University of Warsaw (IIR UW). Ph.D. in Political Science. Member of Polish-African Society and Polish Association of International Studies. Head of European Centre for Contemporary India Research and Studies, IIR UW. Research Fellow, Polish Foundation for Science. Awarded Scholarship by Minister of Higher Education. Research interests: international relations in the Asia-Pacific region, foreign and security policy of India, developing countries. Visiting Fellow at Indiana University, Bloomington, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Peking University and Katholieke Universiteit Leuven. Visiting Professor at over 20 European and Asian universities, including Tribhuvan University, Fudan University, Western Australia University, Institut d’Études Politiques de Paris, Oxford University, Heidelberg University. Member of the Research Board of the European University Centre AT Peking University and a member of the following research networks: Europa-China Academic Network, Asia-Europe Human Security Network. Author of two books (*India in International Relations*, Warsaw 2008; *The EU in International Relations*, Warsaw 2006), co-editor of *East Asia and South Asia in International Relations*, Warsaw 2011, and author of over 50 articles published in scientific periodicals. Jakub Zająckowski can be contacted at kubazaj@hot.pl

Kamil Zająckowski – Assistant Professor at the Centre for Europe, University of Warsaw. Ph.D. in Political Science. His doctoral dissertation is on the evolution of the
relationship between the EU and Sub-Saharan countries. Member of the Polish-African Association and Polish Association of International Studies. Research interests: EU in international relations; EU policy towards Africa, Asia and Latin America; development and humanitarian policy; North-South relations; development economics, Polish foreign policy towards non-European countries. Author of over 50 publications on these topics. His recent major studies in English: ‘Development Policy as an Instrument of EU External Policy’ in: ‘Yearbook of Polish European Studies’ 2010, vol. 13; ‘EU Development Policy: A Coherent Model or Illusory Success’ in: *Current Challenges to Peacebuilding Efforts and Development Assistance*, Pędziwiatr K., Kugiel P., Dańda A. (eds.), Tischner European University, Kraków 2011. Visiting Professor at over 20 European and Asian universities, including Airlangga University (Indonesia), Universitas Gadjah Mada (Indonesia), Xiamen University (China), Universidad Autonoma de Madrid; Istambul University; Institut d’Etudes Politiques de Paris; Vienna University, Universidad Autonoma de Granada. Kamil Zajączkowski can be contacted at kamilzaj@hot.pl or k.zajaczkowski@uw.edu.pl