



# Polish-Russian Relations in an Eastern Dimension Context

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<b>Report title</b>  Polish-Russian Relations in an Eastern Dimension Context		
<b>Abstract</b> <p>Poland's relations with Russia have to be analyzed in a European and geopolitical context. During its whole existence Poland's security policy has been dimensioned by its geographical location between Russia and Germany. Poland's NATO and EU membership are the most important events in Poland's history ever. Only constructive engagement with Russia, Belarus and Ukraine can create lasting security for Poland in the the East. However, the foundation for good and lasting Polish-Russian relations is the independence of the historically contested lands in between (Belarus and Ukraine). Bilaterally, Polish-Russian relations are asymmetrical and Warsaw can only exert its regional leadership and substantial leverage by working via Brussels (and NATO). However, not all EU and NATO partners are willing to endanger their relations with Russia for the sake of Poland (or Belarus or Ukraine). The relations are further burdened by history and other areas of mutual contacts are highly politicized. A reconciliation process is still badly needed. Cultural relations are the least problematic and could serve as a foundation for improved relations, as could trade, which, however, is highly asymmetrical in volume and structure. Poland's energy dependence on Russia is heatedly debated and Poland's energy strategy 2025 foresees a multifaceted approach including the development of nuclear power. Despite its ambition regional Polish-Russian cooperation within the Euroregion Baltic is very unlikely to improve relations on the state level. The politics of the new Polish government (2005) is counter-productive to realizing its goals of a common EU Eastern policy and energy policy. Whereas Russia under Putin is consolidating its society, strengthening its economy and position on the international arena, Poland is doing more or less the opposite; with the effect that Poland's chances of playing the role of regional leader diminish.</p>		
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<b>Rapportens titel</b> Polsk-ryska relationer i ljuset av den Östliga Dimensionen		
<b>Sammanfattning</b> <p>Polens relationer till Ryssland bör ses i en europeisk och global kontext. Under hela Polens existens har dess säkerhetspolitik dikterats av landets geografiska läge mellan Ryssland och Tyskland. NATO- och EU-medlemskapen är bland de viktigaste händelserna i Polens tusenåriga historia. Endast konstruktiv samverkan med Ryssland, Vitryssland och Ukraina kan skapa varaktig säkerhet för Polen i öster. Under århundradena har en dragkamp om territorierna mellan Polen och Ryssland pågått. Förutsättningen för goda polsk-ryska relationer är att Vitryssland och Ukraina är fria och oberoende stater, dvs. att de historiskt omtvistade områdena förvandlas från objekt till subjekt. De bilaterala relationerna är asymmetriska och Polen kan bara utöva ett inflytande och regionalt ledarskap med stöd NATO och EU. Alla partner är dock inte villiga att riskera sina förbindelser med Ryssland för Polens (och Ukrainas och Vitrysslands) skull. Dessutom tyngs de polsk-ryska relationerna av historien och många samverkansområden är kraftigt politiserade. En försoningsprocess behövs i allra högsta grad. De kulturella relationerna är de minst problematiska och skulle kunna utgöra grunden för förbättrade relationer, liksom handel, vilken dock är asymmetrisk i volym och struktur. Polens energiberoende av Ryssland debatteras het och Polens energistrategi till 2025 förutser en mångfacetterad approach inkl. utveckling av kärnkraft. Trots sin ambition är det mycket osannolikt att det regionala samarbetet inom Euroregion Baltic förbättrar relationerna på statlig nivå. Den nya polska regeringens (2005) politik är kontraproduktiv och minskar Warszawas chanser att realisera Polens ambitioner avseende en EU-gemensam östpolitik och energipolitik. Sammantaget gör detta att Ryssland under Putin konsoliderar samhället, stärker landets ekonomi och position på den internationella arenan medan Polen gör det motsatta. Effekten är att Polens möjlighet att utöva ett regionalt ledarskap minskar.</p>		
<b>Nyckelord</b> Polen, Ryssland, polsk-ryska relationer, polsk grand strategy, polsk geopolitik, Giedroyc, Mieroszewski, EU, NATO, Östliga Dimensionen, Vitryssland, Ukraina, energiberoende, Euroregion Baltic.		
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## Foreword

Among Russia's relations with its Slavic neighbours the relation with Poland is, for historical and geographical reasons, of special importance and weight. For many Western Europeans Polish-Russian quarrels are perceived as a kind of regional infighting between Slavic brothers of rather limited importance for the rest of Europe. However, on closer inspection it turns out that Moscow's relation with Poland is a good thermometer of Russian intentions towards Europe as a whole. Or in the words of the European Parliament

*The manner in which Russia handles cooperation with Poland and the remaining countries of our region will be a test of its credibility in the eyes of the entire European Union.<sup>1</sup>*

Hence, there is a need to carefully monitor this bilateral relationship and analyse it in both a bilateral and multilateral context (EU and NATO foremost).

Since 2000 under president Putin's leadership Russia has embarked on a course of radical strengthening of Russia's international position. In doing so Russia refers to its glorious past (both Tsarist and Soviet), which by the former satellite states in Central Europe and Soviet republics in Eastern Europe is not perceived as very glorious. Central and Eastern European objections to Russian behaviour is sometimes perceived as party spoiling by Western Europeans. This in turn risks dividing “new” Europe from “old” Europe, a situation which Russia benefits from, but which is detrimental to the EU. Hence, there is a need for the EU15 to better understand its new members.

The authors hope that this publication, which is the result of a joint Swedish-Polish research effort, will contribute to an increased understanding in the EU15 and at the same time be of value to Polish decision-makers and other interested readers. A Polish version of the report is published under the title *Polska-Rosja – Wczoraj, dzisiaj, jutro* [Poland-Russia – Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow].

Since 1991 Polish-Russian relations have had their ups and downs. Before Poland's entering NATO relations were strained. However, after Poland became a member of NATO relations improved, only to worsen again before Poland's EU accession. The years 2004 and 2005 have been characterized by almost deep-frozen Polish-Russian relations, culminating in 2005 with the organised beating up of Polish diplomats in Moscow (a method practiced by the Bolsheviks already in the 1920s). Only in early 2006 have there been signs of the bilateral climate improving.

In the current publication the authors take a closer look at the bilateral Polish-Russian relations. In doing so the authors have attempted to keep a balance between more historical/timeless aspects and more current political issues. Aspects of current politics, trade, culture and relations with third parties are analysed. Events up till the end of May 2006 have been taken into account.

*Wilhelm Unge*  
Project coordinator and editor

*Monika Zamarlik*  
Co-editor

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<sup>1</sup> *Unia&Polska* [The EU and Poland], <http://www.unia-polska.com.pl/>, 26 May 2005.





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During the work with the current report the authors have been in contact with Polish, Russian, Swedish and American scholars and experts in the field of Russian affairs, Polish-Russian relations and Polish Eastern policy. Some of them not only took their time to discuss matters of mutual interest with us but, also to pre-peer review single chapters within their respective fields of specialisation. The authors wish to express their gratitude towards all of them. The authors are also indebted to a number of diplomatic sources, who remain anonymous. No one named, no one forgotten.

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Mr Bogdan Klich, member of the European Parliament and chairman of the Board of ISS, despite a very tight calendar read and corrected the chapter on Polish grand strategy, chapter 8 on the new Polish government and the concluding chapter.

Last, but not least the authors are most indebted to Mr Jakob Hedenskog at the Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI), who in a highly knowledgeable and meticulous way reviewed the report in its entirety. Any remaining errors and obscurities are the sole responsibility of the authors.

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## Introduction

*Russia's attitude towards Poland may become the most obvious indicator of its intentions towards the West.*<sup>2</sup>  
Jerzy Pomianowski

The current report on Polish-Russian relations is a joint Swedish-Polish research project. It is a result of an FOI guest researcher visit to the Institute for Strategic Studies (ISS) in Kraków, Poland.

This introductory chapter will give the reader the background to this joint Swedish-Polish study, list some earlier publications relevant to this study and motivate why a separate study on Polish-Russian relations is of importance.

### **Background**

The Defence Analysis Division at the Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI) has several research projects on Eastern Europe, European and transatlantic studies.

Since the 1970s the Eastern Studies project at FOI has monitored and analysed the developments in the Soviet Union and later in the post-Soviet states. Corresponding work is carried out in ISS research programme *Poland's Eastern Policy*, which was inaugurated in 1996.

The FOI project *Security and Stability in Northern Europe* (NOSS) combines the knowledge of several FOI projects dealing with Russian, American, EU and NATO affairs. The enlargement of NATO and EU, as well as developments in Russia, provides new conditions for security in Northern Europe which are monitored. The project aims at contributing to a renewed understanding of the strategic pattern in the northern European region – including the Nordic and Baltic States and Poland and taking into account countries like Belarus, Russia and Ukraine. A common long-range interest of the countries in the region seems to maintain – by sustaining an ability to function as security providers – a credible regional stability in a changing strategic pattern. Various forms for a possibly increased cooperation and integration in the region are considered. Corresponding work is carried out in ISS research programmes *New Shape of Euroatlantic Security* and *Poland in the European Union*.

In an attempt to draw on as much expertise as possible from several of the mentioned projects and programmes the idea of an FOI guest researcher stay in Poland was born. In addition to the possibility of exploiting Polish knowledge about Russian and Eastern affairs, such a stay would also contribute to greatly increased opportunities for the researchers at FOI to deepen their knowledge about Poland itself, its foreign, security and defence policy as well as domestic politics.

This research undertaking and the report also reflects, in the minds of the authors, integration within the European Union on a very practical level. This cooperation has already born fruit in other directions.

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<sup>2</sup> Jerzy Pomianowski, *Na Wschód od Zachodu – Jak być z Rosją?* [East of the West – How to be with Russia?] (Rosner&Wspólnicy, Warszawa 2004), p. 294.

## ***Earlier publications by FOI***

The Eastern Studies project at FOI monitors and analyses the development in the post-Soviet states in the European part of the former Union. A series of reports have been devoted to Russia's bilateral relations with its post-Soviet neighbours. The reports published after the year 2000 are listed below.

- *The Ukrainian Dilemma: Relations with Russia and the West in the Context of the 2004 Presidential Elections*<sup>3</sup>
- *Membership or Partnership: The Relations of Russia and its Neighbours with NATO and the EU in the Enlargement Context*<sup>4</sup> (this report treats Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova)
- *Whither Moldova? Conflicts and Dangers in a Post-Soviet Republic*<sup>5</sup>
- *Belarus Facing Dual Enlargement: Will the EU Squeeze Harder?*<sup>6</sup>
- *Reluctant Rapprochement: Russia and the Baltic States in the Context of NATO and EU Enlargements*<sup>7</sup>
- *Russia's policy vis-à-vis Georgia: Continuity and Change*<sup>8</sup>
- *Kaliningrad – Russian Exclave, European Enclave*<sup>9</sup>

Within the FOI project *Security and Stability in Northern Europe* (NOSS) a number of reports have been published.

- *Nordeuropeisk säkerhet och stabilitet [Security and Stability in Northern Europe]*<sup>10</sup>
- *The Russian Population in Latvia – Puppets of Moscow?*<sup>11</sup>
- *Sweden and the NEGP: A Pilot Study of the Northern European gas Pipeline and Sweden's Dependence on Russian Energy*<sup>12</sup>
- *Aktuell tysk utrikes- och säkerhetspolitik – prioriteringar och tendenser [Current German Foreign and Security Policy – Priorities and Tendencies]*<sup>13</sup>
- *Multinational Corps North East – "Baltic Corps"*<sup>14</sup>

The current report on Polish-Russian relations is the first dealing with Russia's bilateral relations with a former Eastern bloc country, today an EU and NATO member.

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<sup>3</sup> Jakob Hedenskog, FOI-R—1199—SE, 2004.

<sup>4</sup> Ingmar Oldberg, FOI-R--1364—SE, 2004.

<sup>5</sup> Andreas Johansson, FOI-R—0990—SE, 2003.

<sup>6</sup> Vyachaslau Paznyak, FOI-R—0859—SE, 2003.

<sup>7</sup> Ingmar Oldberg, FOI-R—0808—SE, 2003.

<sup>8</sup> Per Normark, FOI-R—0168—SE, 2001.

<sup>9</sup> Ingmar Oldberg, FOI-R—0134—SE, 2001.

<sup>10</sup> Bo Ljung et al, FOI-R—1626, 2005.

<sup>11</sup> Tomas Malmlöf, FOI-R—1975, 2006.

<sup>12</sup> Robert L. Larsson, FOI-R—1984, 2006.

<sup>13</sup> Ingmar Oldberg, FOI-R-1976, 2006.

<sup>14</sup> Karlis Neretnieks, FOI Memo, July 2006.

## ***Earlier publications by ISS***

Within the framework of its research programme *Poland's Eastern Policy* a number of reports dealing with the situation in Russia, Belarus and Ukraine have been published.

A series of reports have been devoted to Russia's bilateral relations with its post-Soviet neighbours. Some of them are listed below.

- *The Dynamics of Polish-Russian Relations 1991-1996*<sup>15</sup>
- *Polish Eastern policy*<sup>16</sup>
- *Russian Foreign Policy*<sup>17</sup>
- *The Effort of Freedom – Ukraine at the Turn of the Millennium*<sup>18</sup>
- *Security Policy of the Baltic States*<sup>19</sup>
- *The Future of the Kaliningrad Region*<sup>20</sup>
- *Eastern Dimension of the European Union*<sup>21</sup>

Apart from the reports listed above a number of other publications can be found on ISS website.<sup>22</sup>

The current report on Polish-Russian relations is not the first ISS publication dealing with Russia's bilateral relations with Poland. It can rather be seen as a continuation of earlier work.

## ***The study's objective***

The Polish-Russian relation is in itself a very special one and interesting. But, most importantly it has great implications for the EU and NATO, especially with regard to their eastern policies. The quotation by one of Poland's most well-renowned publishers and specialist in Russian affairs at the beginning of this Introduction in a very condensed way conveys the essence of the motivation of why Polish-Russian relations are worth studying. The Foreword contained the same message albeit under a different formulation by the European Parliament.

Poland is often talked about as the bridge between Eastern and Western Europe. In 2001-2002 Washington added the role of regional leader in Central and Eastern Europe with a special responsibility for the eastern dimension. Poland, who during the 1990s had adopted a policy of constructive engagement towards Russia, Belarus and Ukraine, willingly accepted this challenge.

But, the role of bridge and leader puts some special demands on capabilities and leverage in order to

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<sup>15</sup> *Dynamika stosunków polsko-rosyjskich w latach 1991-1996*, Andrzej Ananicz (red.), Fundacja Międzynarodowe Centrum Rozwoju Demokracji (MCRD), Kraków 1997. In 1997 the organizational structure of the centre was changed and MCRD was renamed the Institute for Strategic Studies (ISS).

<sup>16</sup> *Polska polityka wschodnia*, ISS, 2000.

<sup>17</sup> *Polityka zagraniczna Rosji*, Monika Zamarlik (red.), ISS, 2002.

<sup>18</sup> *Trud niepodległości – Ukraina na przełomie tysiącleci*, Tadeusz A. Olszański, ISS, 2003.

<sup>19</sup> *Polityka bezpieczeństwa państw bałtyckich*, Jerzy Kozakiewicz, ISS, 2003.

<sup>20</sup> *Przyszłość Obwodu Kaliningradzkiego*, Monika Zamarlik (red.), ISS, 2003.

<sup>21</sup> *Wymiar Wschodni Unii Europejskiej*, Monika Zamarlik (red.), ISS, 2004.

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.iss.krakow.pl>.

materialize this policy. Key research questions are:

- What does Polish grand strategy look like?
- Is the concept of regional leader a good one? Are there any alternatives?
- What kind of leverage does Poland have on Russia?
- What kind of leverage does Russia have on Poland?
- How important is history in this relation?
- How is Poland's and Russia's century-long tug-of-war concerning the "land in-between" (Ukraine and Belarus) developing?

The study aims at placing the Polish-Russian relations in an historical context and with this background describing current events and looking ahead. The emphasis is on current matters.

The report will also highlight implications for Sweden and the EU of Warsaw's relations with Moscow and if possible point towards possible areas of cooperation between Poland and Sweden/EU.

### ***Intended audiences***

The main audiences for this report are the Swedish Ministry of Defence (sponsoring agency) and the Swedish and Polish Ministries for Foreign Affairs, the European Commission, the Council, the European Parliament and other relevant decision-making bodies and interested readers in the transatlantic region.

An additional objective is to shed some light on Poland in general, a country little known to the EU general public despite its geographical location and importance in European history and contemporary matters.

### ***About the report***

Despite the fact that individual chapters have been written by different authors the report should be regarded as a joint publication with all authors being responsible for its contents.

Wilhelm Unge was the coordinator of the undertaking and he co-edited the report together with Monika Zamarlik, deputy director of ISS.

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Author</b>
Introduction	Wilhelm Unge
Chapter 1 Giedroyc-Mieroszewski	Wilhelm Unge
Chapter 2 Bilateral relations	Monika Zamarlik and Wilhelm Unge
Chapter 3 Culture	Piotr Fudała
Chapter 4 Trade	Piotr Fudała and Marcin Mączka
Chapter 5 Energy	Mateusz Tobaczyk and Wilhelm Unge

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Chapter 6 Euroregion Baltic	Łukasz Wojcieszak
Chapter 7 Ukraine and Belarus	Marcin Mączka with contribution by Wilhelm Unge
Chapter 8 New Polish Government	Wilhelm Unge
Chapter 9 Summary and Conclusions	All

# Chapter 1. Poland's Grand Strategy Dilemma and the Giedroyc-Mieroszewski Doctrine – A Point of Departure

*In the geopolitical dimension, Poland has paid the price for abandoning Marshal Pilsudski's far-sighted idea of basing Poland's security in the East on a strategic alliance with a free Ukraine and on a confederation of countries situated between the Baltic and Black Seas that were to a greater or lesser degree linked to the old Republic.<sup>23</sup>*

Bronisław Komorowski

This introductory chapter aims at serving as a point of departure for the analysis and discussions in the following chapters. As a European it is important to keep the contents below in mind if one wishes to fully understand Poland and its politics.

Throughout its thousand years of existence Poland's curse has been its geographical location between two large powers: Germany and Russia. At few instances in time has Poland been strong enough to counteract them effectively on its own. Although Poland is not without guilt it has more often been the victim of aggression than being the aggressor itself. As a result of wars and partitions Poland was absent from the European map for 123 years (1795-1918) and once present its borders have been moved several times.

For this reason Poland's membership in NATO and the European Union mark an historical turn. According to Bogdan Klich, Polish Member of the European Parliament, they are perhaps the two most important events ever in Poland's history.<sup>24</sup> At least the Western flank is now secure. It is therefore natural for Warsaw to focus its interest on its Eastern flank, hence Poland's concern for the developments in Belarus, Ukraine and Russia.

Over the centuries Polish-Russian relations have been plagued by the struggle for dominance over the so-called Borderlands (Pol. *Kresy*), the area between the Baltic Sea and the shores of the Black Sea, which for four hundred years constituted the Polish-Lithuanian kingdom (14<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> century). It comprised today's Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus (in the Polish vocabulary known as the ULB) and Poland.<sup>25</sup> Between 1772 and 1795 this kingdom was divided between Prussia, Austria and Russia and as a result Poland ceased to exist.

As for the Russian national strategy towards the Borderland it has been one of continued attempts at domination up until today. The Polish strategy has been characterized by a struggle between an *incorporative* and a *federative* approach. During the Versailles peace negotiations after World War I (when Poland re-emerged as a state) the Polish strategy was at a crossroads. The head of the Polish delegation, Roman Dmowski, leader of the National-Democratic movement, was in favour of the incorporative approach. *Kresy*, as defined by Poland's borders in 1772, should be incorporated. His concept did not envision any particular rights for people living in the Borderland, not even in areas

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<sup>23</sup> Bronisław Komorowski, „Przez Europę do Rosji” [Through Europe to Russia], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 19 September 2005, p. 24.

<sup>24</sup> Words uttered at presentation during the seminar “Which Poland? Which EU?” celebrating the 13<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Institute for Strategic Studies at the Polish Institute of Foreign Affairs in Warsaw, 22 May 2006.

<sup>25</sup> For a most exhaustive discussion on this topic see Jerzy Pomianowski, *Na Wschód od Zachodu – jak być z Rosją?* [East of the West – How to be with Russia?], (Rosner&Wspolnicy, Warszawa, 2004).



where the Poles were in minority. Dmowski's vision was an ethnically clean Poland under Warsaw's hegemony and based on the earlier territories. The *federative* approach on the other hand, supported by General Piłsudski, talked about the right of self-determination and own political institutions. It was Poland's obligation, as the strongest of these nations, to guarantee the people living in the Borderland a free choice. Both the incorporative and the federative approaches were of course completely incompatible with Soviet Russia's visions.<sup>26</sup>

During the 1960s a modified version of Piłsudski's approach was formulated by philosophical-political thinkers in exile. Around Jerzy Giedroyc, the great editor of the *Kultura* journal, gathered many bright people from the Polish intelligentsia. It became the breeding ground for highly sophisticated thinking and knowledge about the problem of independence from Soviet domination. One of them was the geopolitical thinker Juliusz Mieroszewski.<sup>27</sup> Together with Giedroyc they developed their thoughts and presented them in *Kultura*.<sup>28</sup>

In essence, the Giedroyc-Mieroszewski doctrine has the following elements:<sup>29</sup>

- Conviction that the collapse of the Soviet Union is inevitable.
- Conviction that Poland will have to give up all claims on ULB including the historically important towns of Vilnius, Lwow and Grodno, and accept their full independence (Ukraine, Lithuania and Belarus are natural partners for Poland, not vassals).
- Conviction that by supporting the independence of ULB the object of conflict with Russia will vanish. Hence, it is the number one prerequisite for good Polish-Russian relations.
- Conviction that this will benefit Russia itself.
- Conviction that this concept is a prerequisite to help Russia from yielding to the temptation of “re-conquering” ULB and falling back into neo-imperialism.
- The importance of having a dialogue with true Russian democrats and the intelligentsia.

According to Giedroyc-Mieroszewski Poland (after 1989 when it ceased to be a vassal) can develop normalized and mutually beneficial relations with Russia if three key conditions are fulfilled simultaneously. Improved Polish-Russian relations

- must not be achieved at the expense of independence and vital interests of Poland's and Russia's common neighbours, especially Ukraine.
- require that Russia is incorporated into European community and joint economic structures, egalitarian structures that exclude the possibility anyone's hegemony and guaranteeing prosperity, which in turn transforms aggression into an anachronism.
- have to be achieved with the conscious cooperation of the Russians. Russia cannot be changed without the Russians.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Norman Davies, *Orzeł biały, czerwona gwiazda*, (Znak, Kraków, 1998), p. 25-26. The original English version was published in London 1972 under the title *White Eagle, Red Star. The Polish-Soviet War 1919-1920*. In 2003 a new English edition was published under the same title.

<sup>27</sup> For an authoritative introduction to the works of Juliusz Mieroszewski see Piotr Eberhardt, *Twórcy polskiej geopolityki* [The Makers of Polish Geopolitics] (Arcana, Kraków, 2006), p. 239-260.

<sup>28</sup> The Polish Sejm has declared 2006 the Year of *Kultura* to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the birth of Jerzy Giedroyc and Juliusz Mieroszewski and the 60th anniversary of the foundation of *Kultura*. See Leopold Unger, „'Kultura' na mrozie, Rosja na gazie” [‘Kultura’ against all odds, Russia plays the gas], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 24 January 2006, p. 11.

<sup>29</sup> Jerzy Pomianowski, *Na Wschód od Zachodu – jak być z Rosją?* [East of the West – How to be with Russia?], (Rosner&Wspólnicy, Warszawa, 2004).

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 48. The original text appeared in *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 15-16 September 2001.

These conditions would not only be the prerequisite for improved relations, but were vital in Warsaw's efforts to create *lasting security* in the East. It worked out well in the West, towards Germany, whose unification Poland supported, with whom Poland is integrated in the EU and NATO and whose citizens are mutually positive to these historical changes.

Whereas the two first points are in the domain of the politicians the last point was within the Editor's. As one of the last initiatives Jerzy Giedroyc therefore suggested the foundation of the journal *Novaya Polsha*. It is a vital channel for Poles to speak to the Russian intelligentsia and general public. Giedroyc's disciple and heir, Jerzy Pomianowski, is since the beginning in 1999 its editor.<sup>31</sup>

The only weakness of the Gieroyc-Mieroszewski doctrine is that it requires not only substantial leverage to be implemented, but also patience and belief. If the Russians do not want to be engaged constructively, the implementation of the doctrine is at risk.

At the time it was of course conceived as treason by the Polish Communist regime and by ordinary Poles living in Poland regarded as a utopian vision dreamt up by dissidents abroad not realizing the futility of such an approach. Some of Mieroszewski initial assumptions, such as the irreversible character of Poland's borders, were also criticized by many in the Polish exile, who dreamt about restoring Poland's earlier historical borders.<sup>32</sup>

However, history has proven Giedroyc-Mieroszewski right. In 1989 the Warsaw Pact was disbanded and the satellites in Central (Eastern) Europe became free. In 1991 the Soviet Union was dissolved and Ukraine, Lithuania and Belarus gained *de facto* independence. In 2004 Lithuania became a member of both NATO and the EU. In 2004 Ukraine eventually broke free from Soviet-style domination (although economic and energy-related dependence remain). In terms of Mieroszewski's three-letter abbreviation ULB, the score is currently 2-1 in Poland's favour against Russia.

But, history did not end in 2004. Until Ukraine and Belarus are safely on the road towards real democracy and market economy Poland will go on „fighting the battle” over the Borderland according to the „plan” of Piłsudski and Giedroyc-Mieroszewski.

Already in 1998 as Poland was about to embark on its EU membership negotiations Warsaw proposed the establishment of EU's Eastern Dimension.<sup>33</sup> In January 2003 (a year before Poland became member of the EU) Warsaw renewed this call and prepared a non-paper proposal on launching “The Eastern Dimension” programme. This proposal was based on the EU's Northern Dimension initiative. Its main aim is to prevent new dividing lines from arising in Europe through a strategy of cooperation with the neighbours east of the EU.<sup>34</sup> More important, Warsaw's proposal bears the hallmark of the Giedroyc-Mieroszewski doctrine.<sup>35</sup> But, as many critics observe, the Eastern Dimension has been slow in materializing and Jerzy Pomianowski notes that even Poland has not lived up to its own words.

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<sup>31</sup> Jerzy Giedroyc passed away in the year 2000.

<sup>32</sup> Piotr Eberhardt, *Twórcy polskiej geopolityki* [The Makers of Polish Geopolitics] (Arcana, Kraków, 2006), p. 245.

<sup>33</sup> Marcin Zaborowski, „From America's protégé to constructive European – Polish security policy in the twenty-first century”, EU Institute for Security Studies, *Occasional Paper*, no 56, December 2004, p. 23.

<sup>34</sup> Monika Zamarlik (ed.), *Eastern Dimension of the European Union* [Wymiar Wschodni Unii Europejskiej], Institute for Strategic Studies (ISS), 2004, p. 7.

<sup>35</sup> Jerzy Pomianowski, *Na Wschód od Zachodu – jak być z Rosją?* [East of the West – How to be with Russia?], (Rosner&Wspolnicy, Warszawa, 2004), p. 309.

Apart from the EU the USA is a vital partner for Poland. The American administration seems intent to continue its earlier policy vis-à-vis Poland, i.e. Washington wants Poland to go on playing the role of regional leader in Central and Eastern Europe.<sup>36</sup> Today Poland's grand strategy dilemma, which in essence is a catch 22, can be described as follows: Both NATO and the EU accept that Poland attempts to play the role of regional leader, but are not willing to support Warsaw too far, i.e. risking its relations with Russia. The perception of Poland and its standing in these two structures depend on concrete and positive results with regard to its Eastern policy. But, Poland alone has very little leverage on Russia and the Borderland and so it cannot achieve much on its own. Hence, to be successful in the Eastern Dimension Warsaw has no choice but to work through its reluctant partners in NATO and the EU.

The above of course has to be moderated somewhat since NATO is in fact very active in Ukraine and the EU finally got its act together in late 2004, although under heavy Polish-Lithuanian pressure, and intervened in Ukraine when it became too obvious that the elections were being manipulated. But, on the other hand the unfortunate outcomes in the French and Dutch referenda on the EU constitution and subsequent demands that further enlargement of the Union be temporarily stopped sets the scene for a status quo, where Poland will have little room for manoeuvre.

The dilemma for the EU and NATO, in turn, is that if they do not listen to the arguments of Warsaw and other Central European capitals and support their new members there is a risk that by being unwilling to risk its relations with Moscow, Russia will be left enough space to continue its neo-imperialistic ambitions at the expense of the Borderland and other former Soviet republics.<sup>37</sup> The Union faces still another geostrategic dilemma vis-à-vis Russia: it lacks any substantial leverage and is dependent on Russia energy carriers.<sup>38</sup> On the other hand Russia is dependent on the incomes from energy exports and the EU is Russia's largest trading partner, which supports it with investments and technology. In sum, the EU-Russian relation is one of asymmetrical mutual dependence. The Swedish analyst Robert Larsson formulates it as follows:

*Russia is dependent on Europe for energy exports and raw materials as well as bringing home investments and technology. Similarly, Europe is dependent on imports from Russia. However, the character of this dependence is such that Russia's energy leverage over Europe is greater than Europe's leverage over Russia in the short-run.*<sup>39</sup>

During the Cold War a key Soviet strategic objective was to weaken the transatlantic link and thereby separate the USA from Europe. Today, in an era of a new global (dis)order and war against international terrorism, Russia in many respects has more in common with the USA than Europe. Signs can be seen that the old divide-and-conquer strategy has been transferred to the European arena. An important objective for the Kremlin seems to be to divide the new member states in Central and Eastern Europe (its former satellites) from "Old Europe". Or as one observer put it:

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<sup>36</sup> According to Kyle Scott, Political Minister Counsellor, US Mission to the European Union, as an answer to a direct question from Wilhelm Unge during the expert seminar "The Future of Transatlantic Relations" (including a video-conference link to Brussels) organized jointly by the US Consulate General in Krakow and the Institute for Strategic Studies (ISS), 17 June 2005. For a discussion on the role of Poland as regional leader see Marcin Zaborowski and Kerry Longhurst, "America's protégé in the east? The emergence of Poland as a regional leader", *International Affairs*, nr 5, 2003, p. 1009-1028.

<sup>37</sup> On Russia's great power ambitions see for example Jakob Hedenskog, Vilhelm Konnander, Bertil Nygren, Ingmar Oldberg and Christer Pursiainen (eds.), *Russia as a Great Power* (Routledge, London and New York, 2005).

<sup>38</sup> Dr. Premysław Żurawski vel Grajewski's presentation "EU Policy Towards Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova" during the ISS conference *EU-NATO: A New Partnership*, Krakow, 2-3 December 2005.

<sup>39</sup> Robert Larsson, *Russia's Energy Policy: Security Dimensions and Russia's Reliability as an Energy Supplier*, FOIR—1934—SE, March 2006, p. 194.

“Russia finds it convenient to expose Poland as the party spoiler”.<sup>40</sup>

During the high-level conference *EU-USA: A New Partnership* in Krakow in December 2005 the unanimous message was that to increase its leverage the EU has no choice but to embark on a road of constructive engagement with Washington, and not one of strategic competition if it wants to be able to deal effectively with Moscow.<sup>41</sup> Unfortunately, for the EU the choice is not entirely its own. Washington must also make up its mind as to whether global leadership (implying partnership) or global domination should be its strategy.<sup>42</sup> In his book *The Choice – Global Domination or Global Leadership* Professor Zbigniew Brzeziński puts it as follows:

*The grand strategic choice facing America points to several specific implications. The foremost is the critical importance of a complementary and increasingly binding American-European global partnership. A mutually complementary if still asymmetrical Atlantic alliance with a global reach is clearly in the interest of both. With such an alliance, America becomes a Superpower Plus, and Europe can steadily unite. Without Europe, America is still preponderant but not globally omnipotent, while without America, Europe is rich but impotent. Some European leaders and nations may be tempted to pursue unity through an anti-American (or, rather, an anti-Atlanticist) self-definition, but both America and Europe itself would be the ultimate losers in the effort. As a Superpower Minus, America would find the costs of exercising its global leadership considerably higher, while Europe would then be even less likely to unite, because an anti-Atlanticist platform would not attract a majority of the EU members and prospective members.*

*Only the two sides of the Atlantic working together can chart a truly global course that may significantly improve the worldwide state of affairs. To do so, Europe must wake up from its current coma, realize that its security is even more inseparable from global security than is America's, and draw the inevitable practical conclusions. It cannot be secure without America, it cannot unite against America, and it cannot significantly influence America without being willing to act jointly with America. For some time to come, the much-discussed "autonomous" European political-military role outside of Europe will remain quite limited, largely because the European slogans about it outrun any determination to pay for it.*

*At the same time, America must resist the temptation to divide its most important strategic partner. There is no "old" or "new" Europe. That too is a slogan with no geographical or historical content. Moreover, the gradual unification of Europe does not threaten America; on the contrary, it can only benefit America by increasing the overall weight of the Atlantic community. A policy of "divide et impera", even if tactically tempting for settling scores, would be short-sighted and counterproductive.<sup>43</sup>*

For any attentive observer it has been clear that Russia since the arrival of President Putin to power that the Western strategy of constructive engagement is not working on Russia.<sup>44</sup> Hence, the realization of the Giedroyc-Mieroszewski doctrine is endangered. As the American professor Steven Rosefielde points out Russia is not a western democracy and is not a free enterprise market

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<sup>40</sup> Meeting with a US diplomat, Krakow, 13 December 2005. Poland as the largest of these countries is a suitable target. The other countries are too small, and Germany, for example, is too powerful an adversary to confront openly. Given that fact that Poland also was the black sheep in the Eastern Bloc, which in the end wrecked the whole Soviet enterprise, it is the perfect “party spoiler”.

<sup>41</sup> The ISS conference *EU-USA: A New Partnership*, Krakow, 2-3 December 2005 comprised 10 highly distinguished panelists including politicians and diplomats as well as experts, all with extensive experience as advisors to ministers, governments and presidents. The message was unanimous: there is no alternative to EU-US cooperation both in a global and European context, although some were of the opinion that the common foundations may be about to weaken.

<sup>42</sup> The most authoritative analysis of this choice is Zbigniew Brzeziński, *The Choice – Global Domination or Global Leadership* (Basic Books, New York, 2004).

<sup>43</sup> Zbigniew Brzeziński, *The Choice – Global Domination or Global Leadership*, (Basic Books, New York, 2004), p. 220-221.

<sup>44</sup> The development over the last decade can be seen in for example a series of reports by Jan Leijonhielm et al, *Russian Military Capability in a Ten-Year Perspective*, FOI 1999, 2003 and 2005.

economy, even though the EU and NATO officially declare the contrary. Russia is still allergic to democratic free enterprise, and addicted to authoritarian governance that relies heavily on rent granting, secret police and the military. These pathologies are intertwined. Russia has been shackled to this Muscovite syndrome for more than five hundred years, despite persistent attempts at radical reform. VPK and FSB empowerment impedes westernisation and perpetuates Pareto inefficient modernization, authoritarianism and social injustice. The Soviet variant had a distinct Orwellian overlay in 1984, and a close study of post-Soviet military-industrial, economic and state government suggests that Russia is heading back to 2084; a prospect missed by those who believe that democratisation, free enterprise, and social justice are unstoppable.<sup>45</sup>

And President Putin is not completely the moral re-newer he wants to portray himself as. Putin is the heir and protector of the Family in which the troika Voloshin, Berezovskii and Abramovich played a key role. Voloshin as responsible for the privatisation auctions sold Berezovskiy and Abramovich state companies for nickels. Only on the selling of Sibneft this triumvirate swindled the state of 500 million USD. The case of continuity follows from the fact that Abramovich is Putin's banker as of 2006.<sup>46</sup>

EU and NATO strategies are flawed because they do not take these facts of Russian reality into account. With minor changes the West muddles along in the constructive engagement paradigm and there is no explicit endgame. With incomplete information on the real state of affairs in Russia the West often temporizes, but without an endgame it is difficult to make prudent mid-course corrections. Hence, an unconditional examination of other strategies is needed in order to find mechanisms to modify the prodigal superpower's behaviour, to block neo-imperialism and continued falsification of history, and to build true common grounds for the future.<sup>47</sup>

The official Russian doctrines and strategies display ambiguity.<sup>48</sup> On one hand Russia should integrate into the global economy, but these documents also say that Russian independence must not be infringed by his integration.<sup>49</sup> Such a dichotomy displays the simple fact that the Kremlin does not want to rely on the fact that integration automatically means dependence, and that this dependence is the key to future prosperity. Even though some in the Russian government still see the world as a zero-sum game the Kremlin understands the benefits of positive sum games, and will play them, but they reserve the right to be predatory whenever the opportunity arises. Or in other words, they are happy to sign contracts binding on the other party, while reserving the right to

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<sup>45</sup> Steven Rosefielde, „Russia 2084: The Treadmill of Muscovite Radical Reform”, Proceedings from the conference *Whither Russia?*, Stockholm 6-7 May 2004, *FOI Strategiskt Forum*, Memo 1020, September 2004, p. 32. For an in-depth analysis see Steven Rosefielde, *Russia in the 21st Century – The Prodigal Superpower* (Cambridge University Press, 2005).

<sup>46</sup> Boris Reitschuster, *Wladimir Putin: Dokąd prowadzi Rosję?* [Vladimir Putin: Where is he steering Russia?] (Świat Książki, Warszawa, 2005), p. 46. The title of the German original is "Wladimir Putin: Wohin steuert er Russland?" (2004).

<sup>47</sup> Steven Rosefielde, *Russia in the 21st Century – The Prodigal Superpower* (Cambridge University Press, 2005) and Wilhelm Unge's private communication with the author on 16 November 2005. In his book *Russian Path Dependence* (Routledge, London, 2005) Prof. Stefan Hedlund conveys the same message. However, their views are not uncontested. Transitologists maintain that Russia is a reasonably well-functioning market economy. See for example Andrei Schleifer and Daniel Treisman, "A Normal Country", *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2004, p. 20-38. For an elaboration of arguments and counter-arguments see *The Prodigal Superpower*.

<sup>48</sup> The current official doctrines and strategies are found on the website of the Security Council of the Russian Federation, <http://www.scrf.gov.ru>. (The national security concept, foreign policy concept, the military doctrine, the information security doctrine, the energy strategy 2020 etc.)

<sup>49</sup> Wilhelm Unge, "Russia's Security Doctrines and Concepts" in Anders Lindblad, Lena Norlander, Magnus Normark, John Rydqvist, Wilhelm Unge and Kristina S. Westerdahl, *Russian Biological and Chemical Weapons Capabilities: Future Scenarios and Alternatives of Action*, FOI-R—1561, January 2005, p. 39-45.

abrogate them at will.<sup>50</sup> For this reason it is imperative for the West to review its current strategy towards Russia. A strategy of *behaviour modification* would seem more appropriate today.<sup>51</sup> Such a strategy would come close to the Giedroyc-Mieroszewski concept. Some even go so far as to say that a strategy of *containment* should be adopted.<sup>52</sup>

Hence, Poland's geostrategic dilemma is more or less the dilemma of the West as a whole (cf. the quotation at the beginning of chapter *Introduction* and the statement by the European parliament in the *Foreword*). The formidable task facing Warsaw is therefore not only one of influencing developments in the Borderland and Russia, but rather to make sure the transatlantic community gets its strategy vis-à-vis the Kremlin right, but to succeed it needs solidary support from its allies in the EU and NATO.

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<sup>50</sup> Private communication with Steven Rosefielde, 20 January 2006. The understanding of positive sum games, but with a hedge to fall back in zero-sum thinking, is reflected by Sergei Oznobishchev's presentation "NATO-Russia Relations – A New Partnership?" at the ISS conference *NATO's Eastern Policy*, Krakow, 13 May 2005. Oznobishchev is head of the Institute for Strategic Assessments. According to Oznobishchev it is very positive that Russia has declared partnership relations with NATO and the USA. But, the bottom-line assessment in Moscow is that it is not enough for the relation not to change substantially should anything serious occur. The Russian political and military elites do not entirely trust NATO. The cooperation is superficial and only a political show-case. In his opinion the West should stop pestering Russia about democracy, human rights etc. and look beyond today's frictions. A possibility could be to have Russia as an element of a modernisation of NATO (or a new transatlantic security system) and in the process modernise Russia itself. See also Bengt Andersson, Elisabeth André Turlind, Pär Eriksson, Jan Foghelin, Niklas Granholm, Wilhelm Unge, *Visit to the Centre for Military Strategic Studies at the Russian General Staff*, FOI-R-0438--SE, March 2002.

<sup>51</sup> See for example Alexander L. George, *Bridging the Gap – Theory and Practice In Foreign Policy* (United States Institute of Peace Press, Washington D.C., 1993), p. 50-51. Behaviour modification (or conditional reciprocity) is a strategy of demanding meaningful changes in policy and behaviour in return for each concession or benefit.

<sup>52</sup> See for example Steven Rosefielde's paper *Western Relations with Post-Soviet Russia: Coping with Muscovy* for the ISS conference *EU-USA: A New Partnership*, Krakow, 2-3 December 2005.

## Chapter 2. Bilateral Polish-Russian Relations – How To Proceed?

*Poland's political elite often perceives the present through the prism of historical experience, which distorts the image of the present day.*<sup>53</sup>

Sergei Jastrzembski, advisor to the Russian President on European affairs

*The fact that he himself [Sergei Jastrzembski], the experienced propagandist and skilful courtier, became the emissary sent to establish first relations with the new government in Warsaw, is a good sign for us. This man is used by the Kremlin for tasks that are difficult and unrewarding, but which Moscow deems important.*<sup>54</sup>

Wacław Radziwinowicz

There is no doubt that Polish-Russian relations in 2004 and 2005 were the worst they had been for a long period of time. It is necessary to reflect on the reasons for such a state of affairs, as well as – or perhaps first of all – to reflect on the possibilities for change in the status quo. The obvious and basic reason for such a situation is a conflict of interests between Poland and Russia that seems impossible to overcome.

In the following sub-chapter, we present a list of examples of conflicts between Poland and Russia that occurred in 2004-2005. Then we attempt to analyse the issue of Polish-Russian relations in depth. Finally, we analyse the signs of a possible improvement of the bilateral relations that appeared at the beginning of 2006.

### ***2004-2005 – Virulent polemics and actions of a bad neighbour***

In 2004 and 2005, conflicts between Poland and Russia occurred in all spheres of public life – diplomacy, foreign policy, geopolitics and defence, trade and the power industry. They included elements of defamation and misinforming national and international audiences. Divergent views over the common history of both countries still continue.

The list below is not exhaustive. It merely attempts to highlight the strained relations between Warsaw and Moscow during the last two years.

A key moment in the worsening of Polish–Russian relations was the active participation of Warsaw and Vilnius in settling the conflict over the fraudulent elections in Ukraine in the autumn of 2004. In December, 2004, during a press conference held in the Kremlin, President Putin gave Aleksander Kwaśniewski to understand that Poland should rather concentrate on its unemployment and public debt. The then president of Poland replied: “I have no regrets over what we have done for Ukraine. It was our historical mission.”<sup>55</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Cezary Gmyz, “Ministerstwo prawdy” [Ministry of Truth], *Wprost*, 27 March 2005, p. 68.

<sup>54</sup> Wacław Radziwinowicz, “Jastrzembski zawsze do usług” [Jastrzembski always ready to serve], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 21 February 2006, p. 3.

<sup>55</sup> Marcin Wojciechowski, “Złość Putina” [Putin’s rage], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 24-26 December 2004, p. 1.

In March 2005, an article, allegedly from the Polish Catholic newspaper *Tygodnik Powszechny*, talked about a Polish call to divide Ukraine and to abandon Warsaw's alliance with Kiev. The article caused great concern among many Ukrainians. Ukrainian media unfortunately redistributed the “scoop”, which was almost immediately detected as a Russian falsification spread via the Internet portal InoSMI.ru. But, while attempting to deny the article, the newspaper’s main server was rendered inoperable by hackers, and the paper's communication with the surrounding world was virtually cut off.<sup>56</sup>

In January 2005 president Putin's participation in the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau was questioned, as was president Kwaśniewski's visit to Moscow for the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Victory Day in WWII in May. The key question is: Was Poland liberated in 1945 or was that the end of armed hostilities with Germany and the start of a 50-year long Soviet occupation?<sup>57</sup> During the celebrations in Moscow, General Jaruzelski was awarded a medal from the hand of President Putin for his efforts during the war, which caused irritation in Poland. In his speech president Putin did not mention Poland’s contribution to defeat the nazists, which was a slap in Warsaw’s face given Poland’s huge contribution to the Allied war effort.

As for the Yalta agreement in 1945, the Russians maintain that it is a “sin to complain about Yalta, for Poland gained territory in the west. What is more, the Yalta Declaration stipulated that Poland would be a strong, free, independent and democratic state. For Poles, Yalta means the loss of Vilnius and Lvov, and the beginning of dependence on the USSR. For Poles, Yalta is a symbol of the division of Europe.”<sup>58</sup> As a response, the Sejm in March 2005 adopted a resolution stating that the Katyń massacre was part of a common plan between the Third Reich and the Soviet Union with the aim of “extermination of the most valuable and patriotic citizens of Poland”.<sup>59</sup>

As mayor of Warsaw, the current President Lech Kaczyński repeatedly irritated Russia. With his consent, a traffic roundabout was named after the Chechen General Djochar Dudajev in 2005. He also supported the Chechen separatists and condemned the killing of Aslan Maschadov, calling it a “bloody crime of Moscow”.<sup>60</sup> As a response to the Dudajev roundabout, Moscow officials threatened to rename the street where the Polish embassy in Moscow is located, naming it after the hangman who suppressed the January uprising in 1863, General Michail Muraviov.<sup>61</sup> And city officials of Rjazan wanted to change the name of Kościuszko Square, since the Polish officer's name is associated with armed uprisings against the Tsar.<sup>62</sup>

The year 2005 also saw a classical spy story. The assistant of the head of the parliamentary committee on the investigation of the Orlen Affair and member of the oversight committee of the secret services was arrested, allegedly for spying for Russia.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Bartosz Węglarczyk and Marcin Bosacki, “Czarny PR Rosji” [Russia’s black PR], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 18 March 2005, p. 1; Andrzej Brzeziecki and Małgorzata Nocuń, “Rosyjska prowokacja w internecie: *Tygodnik Powszechny* broni się przed fałszywką” [Russian provocation on the Internet: *Tygodnik Powszechny* defends itself against a fake], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 19-20 March 2005, p. 9 and Małgorzata Nocuń, Andrzej Brzeziecki and Wojciech Pięciak, “Operacja dezinformacja” [Operation disinformation] on behalf of *Tygodnik Powszechny* in *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 22 March 2005, p. 19 (the text was also published in *Tygodnik Powszechny* 13 (2005).

<sup>57</sup> A typical article bears the headline “Wojna nie skończyła się 60 lat temu” [The War did not end 60 years ago], Piotr Lipiński, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 13 May 2005, p. 23.

<sup>58</sup> Wojciech Szacki, “Czy rozmawiać ostro z Rosją?” [Talk tough with Russia?], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 18 February 2005, p. 4.

<sup>59</sup> Paweł Wroński, “Prawda o Katyniu” [The truth about Katyń], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 23 March 2005, p. 1.

<sup>60</sup> Igor Torbakow, “Co z tą Polską?” [What to do about Poland?], *Forum*, 10-16 October 2005, p. 12.

<sup>61</sup> “Wieszatel' za Dudajewa” [Wieszatel in return for Dudaev], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 25 March 2005, p. 11.

<sup>62</sup> “Riazań walczy z Kościuszką” [Riazań battles Kościuszko], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 26 June 2005, p. 2.

<sup>63</sup> Agnieszka Kublik and Wojciech Czuchnowski “Fatalny asystent II” [Fatal assistant II], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 10 March



Although it has long been suspected that the secret service of the Soviet Union was behind the assassination attempt on Pope John Paul II in 1981, final proof was produced only in 2005.<sup>64</sup> During 2005, new evidence suggests that the Soviets had also prepared an assassination attempt on Solidarity leader Lech Wałęsa. For various reasons that plan never materialised and efforts were concentrated on the attack on John Paul.<sup>65</sup> Even if such stories are more of historical interest, they are not designed to improve current bilateral relations.

Another point of friction was the idea of covering the floor of the Warsaw museum commemorating Colonel Kukliński's spying for the CIA between 1972 and 1981 with Soviet flags. This would have meant millions of Polish boots treading on a symbol dear to the Kremlin today.<sup>66</sup> Due to Russian as well as Polish protests, the idea of the flag-covered floor was abandoned.

In July, the city of Kaliningrad celebrated its 750<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Chancellor Schröder and President Chirac were invited, but not the presidents of Lithuania and Poland.<sup>67</sup>

A few days later in July 2005 during a visit to Estonia, President Kwaśniewski declared that Estonia could count on Poland's support in the border dispute with Russia since this is also an EU border.<sup>68</sup> The Russian reply came the day after, saying that the Polish leader supports territorial claims on Russia. Where, if not in Poland, should one understand the irreversibility of today's borders? Russian diplomats added that it was thanks to Russia that Poland's national borders for the first time in history had been acknowledged.<sup>69</sup>

In July 2005, tasked by the Russian Federation Council (upper house of the Parliament), a group of experts containing members of parliament, the foreign minister and representatives of state information agencies discussed how to improve Russia's image abroad. From published fragments, it is known that Poland and the Baltic States are responsible for Russia's current bad image. The report repeats the well-known formula that "accession of these countries to NATO and the European Union has not resulted in improvements in living standards the citizens expected." The ongoing anti-Russian campaign in these countries aims to "marginalize" the social, economic and political problems of these countries."<sup>70</sup>

In late July some children of Russian diplomats were robbed in Warsaw. This incident was by some seen as part of a larger anti-Russian campaign in Poland. The Warsaw police later caught the perpetrators and returned part of the stolen goods to the original owners. Moscow, however, took the opportunity to demand an official excuse for the beating of Russian children of diplomats. Since it was an act of hooliganism, Warsaw did not intend to excuse itself, but renewed its sincere condolences.<sup>71</sup> The Warsaw robbery triggered a series of assaults on three Polish diplomats and one

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2005, p. 4.

<sup>64</sup> In March 2006 an Italian investigation commission stated the Soviet military intelligence GRU was behind the assassination attempt in collaboration with East German Stasi and the Bulgarians. TVP 2, 2 March 2006, 22.20.

<sup>65</sup> Ferdinando Imposimato, "Kto chciał Papieża zabić" [Who wanted to kill the Pope], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 15-16 October 2005, p. 19.

<sup>66</sup> "Będziemy deptać po flagach ZSRR" [We are going to tread on the Soviet flag], *Życie Warszawy*, <http://wiadomosci.wp.pl/kat,9912,wid,8133466,wiadomosc.html>.

<sup>67</sup> Tomasz Bielecki, "Szczyt zdziwionych" [Summit of the surprised], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 4 July 2005, p. 10.

<sup>68</sup> "Popieramy was w sporze z Rosją" [We will support you in the conflict with Russia], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 6 July 2005, p. 11.

<sup>69</sup> "Niech Polska się nie miesza" [Poland, don't get involved], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 7 July 2005, p. 10.

<sup>70</sup> Tomasz Bielecki, "Polacy psują wizerunek Rosji na świecie" [Poles ruin Russians' image in the world], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 14 July 2005, p. 9.

<sup>71</sup> "Moskwa nalega na przeprosiny" [Moscow demands an apology], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 4 August 2005, p. 5.

correspondent in Moscow in August 2005. All four were beaten in an identical manner.<sup>72</sup> According to almost all experts, the incidents were organised and professionally executed. Some interpreted this as merely revenge for the Warsaw incident. Others claim it was an attempt to scare the Poles from further interfering in Ukraine and Belarus.

Russian papers suggested that the third assault in a row on a Polish embassy worker could not have been accidental. Such conclusions were drawn mainly by the press which stood in opposition to the Kremlin. On the other hand, a group of political scientists in Russia blamed Polish authorities for the alleged inspiration of Russophobia in Poland. Events in Moscow were a reply to these actions of the Polish government.<sup>73</sup>

The beating of Polish diplomats marked the height of Polish-Russian tensions in 2005. The PiS party leader Jarosław Kaczyński commented the beating of the Polish diplomats by saying that he could not recall diplomats having been treated in this manner in Berlin during Hitler's reign.<sup>74</sup> During the tense weeks of quarrels over the beating of diplomats, Fyodor Lukianov, editor-in-chief of *Russia in global Policy* stated that “recognising Poland as an important enemy would be humiliating for the Russian elite.”<sup>75</sup> Valery Fiodorov, the boss of the Kremlin-related All-Russian Public Opinion Research Centre, said: “We are not going to reconcile ourselves anytime soon with the thought that a country so small as yours could become a serious enemy for us. We have become accustomed to the fact that our state has powerful enemies: the United States, China, the entire West, and the entire World.”<sup>76</sup>

In September 2005, the Russians and the Germans signed the plan to construct the Baltic gas pipeline (officially North European Gas Pipeline, NEGP), a decision that was perceived not only as negative for Polish energy security, but also as a traditional decision conducted above the heads of the Poles.<sup>77</sup>

In October 2005, a Russian diplomat was stopped by the Polish police in Warsaw for drunk-driving. When stopped he refused to show any ID or blow into the breathalyser. He also threatened the policemen saying “You'll see what will happen to Polish diplomats in Moscow.”<sup>78</sup>

In December 2004, the Russian State Duma decided to abandon the 7 November celebration of the revolution of 1917 as a national holiday. Instead, 4 November, the Day of National Unity, commemorating the expulsion of the Poles from Moscow in 1612, has replaced the Bolshevik holiday.<sup>79</sup> In a shrewd twist, many historically knowledgeable Poles sent their sincere greetings to the Russian people on the 4 November 2005, when they celebrated their new national holiday for the first time. The reason for this highly positive attitude is that 4 November 1612 was the first time a people's uprising had succeeded in Russia, the equivalent of the colour and flower revolutions

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<sup>72</sup> Waław Radziwinowicz, “Polski dyplomata pobity w Moskwie” [Polish diplomat beaten in Moscow], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 11 August 2005, p. 1.

<sup>73</sup> “Rosyjska prasa: Reakcje na pobicie polskich dyptomatów” [Russian press: reactions to beating of Polish diplomats] *Wikinews*, [http://pl.wikinews.org/wiki/Rosyjska\\_prasa:\\_Reakcje\\_na\\_pobicie\\_polskich\\_dyptomat%C3%B3w](http://pl.wikinews.org/wiki/Rosyjska_prasa:_Reakcje_na_pobicie_polskich_dyptomat%C3%B3w).

<sup>74</sup> “CNN cytuję Kaczyńskiego” [CNN cites Kaczynski], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 24-25 September 2005.

<sup>75</sup> Waław Radziwinowicz, “Rozjuszony Kreml, przyjaźni Rosjanie” [Enraged Kremlin, friendly Russians], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 20-21 September 2005, p. 12.

<sup>76</sup> Waław Radziwinowicz, “Rozjuszony Kreml, przyjaźni Rosjanie” [Enraged Kremlin, friendly Russians], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 20-21 September 2005, p. 12.

<sup>77</sup> Andrzej Kublik, “Nad głowami Polski” [Over Poland's heads], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 8 September 2005, p. 1.

<sup>78</sup> Edyta Żemła, “Polska-Rosja: promille dyplomacji” [Poland-Russia: promille diplomacy], *Newsweek Polska*, 9 October 2005, p. 4.

<sup>79</sup> See for example Wikipedia, [http://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dzie%C5%84\\_Jedno%C5%9Bci\\_Narodowej](http://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dzie%C5%84_Jedno%C5%9Bci_Narodowej).

sweeping across the former Soviet Union during 2004 and 2005. And this is truly something to celebrate, according to many Poles.

In November 2005, the friction surrounding Polish exports to Russia was renewed (similar conflicts took place in 2004). The Russian side issued a ban on imports of Polish meat. According to the Russian side, it had observed frequent violations of veterinary regulations and even falsification of certificates. The Polish Ministry of Agriculture was surprised, although it admitted that falsifications had occurred.<sup>80</sup>

As for defence-related matters, the Polish defence minister in late November 2005 declared that Poland would declassify a major part of the Polish Warsaw Pact archive, to Moscow's irritation. According to the Polish government, the declassification of the WP archive was an act designed to put an end to the post-Communist period. The main message was the nuclear holocaust a Third World War would have meant for Poland and the daily paper *Rzeczpospolita* carried the headline "Soviet Plan for Polish Annihilation".<sup>81</sup> According to Polish critics, this was an unwise move since Poland and the other WP member states made a commitment in 1991 when dissolving the WP not to publish any contents of the archives.

In December 2005, the Chief of the Russian General Staff, General Baluevskii, looking with some apprehension on Polish-American talks on placing interceptor missiles as well as radar installations on Polish territory, said that Moscow regarded the missile defence as directed against Russia. He added

*Build your shield, build it. But think about what will fall onto your heads after that. I do not predict a nuclear conflict between Russia and the West. We do not have such plans. But it is clear that the countries being a part of such a shield increase the risk to themselves. However, this is the affair of your government and its responsibility towards its society.*<sup>82</sup>

After this listing of some examples of literal and physical blows and counter-blows it is time to delve somewhat deeper into the bilateral relations.

### ***The problems of Polish-Russian relations***

It is necessary to contemplate who made mistakes during the last fifteen years and where they were made. The moment at which the attempt to settle bilateral relations failed must be found. It is also necessary to answer the question whether Polish-Russian relations after 1991 could have been any different? Was there a chance for real partnership? In the authors' opinion – although some mistakes could have been avoided – Poland was unable really and factually to change its status quo. The strategic choice of Poland's orientation towards integration with Euro-Atlantic and European structures determined the shape of relations with Russia, or frankly speaking – Russia's relations towards Poland. Undoubtedly, for Poland it was the only possible and correct choice. For Russia,

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<sup>80</sup> Tomasz Bielecki, Krystyna Naszkowska and Leszek Kostrzewski, "Szlaban na polskie mięso" [Ban on Polish meat], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 10-11 November 2005, p. 25. According to Prof. Stanisław Zięba the "meat ban" was related to Gazprom's demands a couple of days earlier to acquire complete control of the Yamal pipeline exporting gas to Germany.

<sup>81</sup> Andrzej Kaczyński, "Radziecki plan zagłady Polski" [Soviet Plan for Polish Annihilation], *Rzeczpospolita*, 26-27 November 2005, p. 3. See also <http://www.ipn.gov.pl>.

<sup>82</sup> Tomasz Bielecki, "Przestrogi generała" [General's warning], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 2 December 2005, p. 10.

partnership with Poland was impossible and useless.

Despite the declared democratisation and observance of the standards of international law, in fact Moscow has not changed its basic assumptions upon which it bases its foreign relations. Foreign policy conducted by Moscow is still treated as a fight for political and economic influence. President Putin perceives foreign policy as a playing off – to his benefit – of real and potential conflicts of interests between the most important countries, and unfortunately he does not see Poland among the “players.”

When analysing Polish-Russian relations, it is necessary to refer to the facts – officially very unpopular among both Polish and Russian political elites – i.e. historical facts. Unfortunately, it is not possible to escape the past and each time one party lacks an argument or wishes to strengthen the argument it has - a historical issue is brought up. Until this particular aspect is settled, there is little chance of stopping the present habit, according to which each conflict or difference of opinion becomes a pretext for raising it again and opening old wounds.

Polish-Russian relations have never been idyllic; and, even excepting the period from 1944 to 1989, both nations were in a state of permanent conflict, the roots of which should be looked for in the antagonism between the Orthodox and Catholic Church.

After just acceptable relations between our countries in mediaeval times, when Poland was commonly perceived as a country of religious tolerance, in which the Orthodox and the Catholic Church co-mingled, the situation diametrically changed after the Tatar and Mongol armies invaded Ruthenia.

It was precisely at this moment that the stereotype of the “cruel Latinist” among Russians emerged. As a counterpoint, the Poles created the image of a “wild Muscovite”. A painful historical experience for Poles and Russians was the Time of Troubles (*Smutnoe vremya*) of the beginning of the XVII century and the Polish occupation of the Kremlin. It is worth remembering, however, that Poland’s policy of that period was a reaction to the Russian-Swedish alliance against Poland.

The Russian nation has experienced bitterness under the heel of the Polish nobility and it was during this time that the stereotype of the “Polish lord” was established in Russia, contemptuously named by Russians “Pole” [*Lach*]. Polish citizens perceive this thousand-year antagonism between Poland and Russia as a clash between Europe and Asia, whereas the Russians view it almost as a fight between good and evil. Each side is convinced that it brought the benefits of civilisation to its neighbour, who did not appreciate this gesture.

The experience of the twentieth century only caused the cup of bitterness to overflow. Now the stereotypes have changed, the ways in which they are created have changed, but the aversion and distrust still remain, even though 60 years have passed since the end of the war and more than a decade since the collapse of the USSR. In the past, stereotypes were formed by social elites such as politicians or writers. Now in the era of mass media, images and opinions created as a result of the interactions of millions of people are instantly disseminated.

According to Fyodor Lukianov , the editor-in-chief of *Russia in Global Affairs* and a member of Council on Foreign and Defence Policy (SVOP):

*Russia is not ready to close the historical issues, and the will to review the past, for which Poland strives, must wait for a better moment. It is hard to say how long this Russian maturation will last.*

For the time being, Russian-Polish relations are developing on the basis of a reaction to a position, followed by reactions to the reactions, and so forth. The psychological mechanism of this phenomenon is very clear. Each party thinks that it must answer a provocation, and the answer must always be sharp. This forms a vicious circle, in which, step by step, the central claim is obscured, and the atmosphere of hostility and irritation is shaped. What is more, it seems that conflict is written into current Russian policy towards Poland.

Today, the general sore spot in the relations between Warsaw and Moscow is mutual perception, characterised by deep asymmetry. The point is that the Russian Federation, heir of the Soviet empire, trying to maintain its status of great power, perceives Poland as a country of tertiary importance. In Russian eyes, Poland was at first a rebellious vassal, then an object in the game played between Moscow and Washington over NATO expansion, and now a vassal of the United States and a country that tries to foil Russia's strategic and important business in Ukraine and Belarus.

Poland has always perceived Russia and relations with Russia as important. Despite the western tilt, Polish-Russian relations (previously Soviet-Polish relations) after 1989 became a priority of Polish foreign policy. In the beginning of the attempt to stabilise bilateral relations, this double policy could be seen as having been successful. Later extensions of this idea brought neither partnership nor neighbourly relations.

The task that Poland had to face was not easy. Three principal issues were dominant: the need to create legal and treaty bases to regulate international relations, the removal of Soviet soldiers from Poland and the final explanation of the Katyń massacre.

The purpose of Poland's policy towards Russia was constructive: to obtain the status of partner in bilateral relations, whose independent interests should be, if not accepted, then at least respected by Russia. Unfortunately, the assumption that "we will become partners" was false, not as far as the crux of the assumption was concerned but as far as the chances for its achievement.

The last moment when Polish-Russian relations possessed any dynamic at all was the second half of 1993. The turning point of this stage of bilateral relations was the "Warsaw Declaration" signed during a visit of Boris Yeltsin to Poland in August 1993. For the first and last time, and unfortunately not for long, Russia acknowledged in public Poland's right to make independent choices among its foreign policy options and to enter into alliances compatible with its strategic interests. During the same visit, an agreement to construct a pipeline sending gas from the Yamal deposit to Germany was signed. Three weeks later the last Russian soldiers left Poland.

Later relations only became worse. Although successive governments criticised previous ones over the quality of relations with Russia, in fact they conducted a similar policy, a policy that Russia allowed. Obliging Poland to maintain good relations with Russia as a necessary condition to obtaining NATO membership allowed the Kremlin decision-makers to apply a "deterrent" and to discipline Warsaw, particularly in the matter of relations with Belarus and Ukraine. The period up to 1999 was clearly responsible for creating among Russians the image of Poles as Russophobes.

Political significance was ascribed to tiny incidents. Establishing a Chechen Information Centre in Krakow, the convoy of Polish Humanitarian Action (PAH) with humanitarian aid for Chechnya, President Lech Walesa's absence during the formal celebration of the 50th anniversary of the end of WWII, the beating of Russian tourists at the East Railway Station in Warsaw – all were deemed

intentional provocations. One can get an impression that the purpose of Russian diplomacy was to search for pretexts, which - after proper “enhancement” – could serve as a basis for conflict and presenting Poland in a bad light.

Russia remains a world power, mainly because of its size and natural resources as well as its strategic nuclear arsenal. Putin has made these into a foundation of maintaining the position of Russia’s power until he reconstructs its potential in other fields. Great powers talk with great powers; Poland – as a tiny front country – cannot be an equal partner.

The reason for such a state of affairs is the conflict of strategic interests of Poland and Russia. Russia attempts to keep post-Soviet states in economic and political dependence. Meanwhile, Poland supports liberation movements in this area. Poland and Lithuania engaged most strongly in the Orange Revolution in Ukraine in 2004, which was perceived as a hostile action by the Kremlin. Things appear similarly in Belarus, where Warsaw supports the democratic opposition and Belarusian ethnic Poles. Poland and Russia have different visions regarding the future of Europe, and this difference of opinions inevitably heads for confrontation.

In the European Union forum, Poland is attempting to attain the position of a country shaping the Union’s eastern policy. Russia perceives these strivings as an usurped right to function in the role of mediator, for Moscow and Brussels settle issues without consulting Warsaw.

Thus a question should be posed whether Poland really needs any special policy towards Russia and whether it should still be a priority in Poland’s foreign policy.

In the authors’ opinion, Poland’s chances of stabilising its relations with Russia lie in its active participation in the European Union’s conceptual works towards Russia. Polish diplomacy should exert itself to strengthening its position in the EU forum as a liaison with Russia and shape bilateral relations *via* the EU.

As long as there is no consensus in this area in the community forum, Moscow will not need Poland for anything.

Poland’s error in establishing its relations with Russia was the misleading assumption that Russia, after the fall of communism, would be mature enough to choose democracy and a market economy. Thus, it would conduct its foreign policy based on partnership. The Polish political elite was convinced that the path to partnership would be reconciliation, among others in relations with Poland. For Poland, removing the stains in their mutual history, revealing the truth about Katyń, and the unambiguous assessment of the Ribbentrop-Molotov pact were to put an end to this difficult period in bilateral relations. Yet, Russia is still not ready for reconciliation. For Poland, the basis of relations was to be partnership. So far, such a scenario has turned out to be inconceivable to Russia.

### ***The year 2006 – Light at the end of the tunnel?***

At the beginning of 2006, however, some positive signals came from the Kremlin. During his yearly press conference with Russian and foreign media on 31 January 2006 President Putin said that “we express our immense esteem toward Poland for its contribution to today’s European and world affairs.” Looking ahead, Putin continued by saying that good relations are not only fully

possible, but are vital to both Poland and Russia.<sup>83</sup>

In February 2006, Sergei Jastrzembki, President Putin's special advisor on European affairs visited Warsaw. The atmosphere surrounding the talks was positive and Jastrzembki stressed that he wanted Poland and Russia to “reconcile the differences that are rooted in the tragic past, just as France and Germany have done”. The aim of the visit, according to the Polish side, was to start normalising relations with Moscow and at the same time show European critics, who regard Poles as Russophobes, that they are wrong. According to Jastrzembki, the visit aimed at showing that there are no prejudices toward the new government in Warsaw.<sup>84</sup> Although nothing was said publicly, many experts interpreted the visit as a sign that a meeting between presidents Putin and Kaczyński might be about to materialize. In March, some sources said that President Putin would come to the port city of Gdansk later in 2006.<sup>85</sup> Other sources have suggested that a meeting could take place in Kaliningrad.

A meeting between the Polish and Russian presidents in 2006 would present an opportunity to propose a way out of the historical dilemma of reconciliation.<sup>86</sup> One possibility could be for both parties to agree to de-politicise the historical dimension. This could be achieved if both sides made an obligation not to play the history card for current and future political reasons and at the same time establish a common commission of Polish and Russian historians with a suitable mandate (for example 5 years). The EU should support such an initiative. A joint history commission of this kind has proven successful in Poland's reconciliation process with for example Ukraine. So far, the Russian side has blocked such Polish attempts, but Mr Jastrzembki's words in January 2006 give room for some hope.

The motive behind the seemingly more willing attitude to normalise Polish-Russian relations can probably be found in the fact the Moscow “fears” the pre-election rhetoric about a tougher Polish stance in relations with Russia may be turned into action after elections as well as nationalistic-patriotic slogans coming from the new government.<sup>87, 88</sup> This fact in combination with the fact that Russia seems to be on the way up on Washington's agenda may have triggered more cautious tactics in the Kremlin's relations with Warsaw. During President Kaczyński's visit to the United States in February 2006, he even received promises that Washington would help Warsaw in repairing its relations with Moscow.<sup>89</sup> The activism of Polish and other Central and Eastern European members of the European Parliament have coloured the 2005 yearly report on Russia, which is criticised in many respects. According to Polish MEP Bogdan Klich, this is a way for the EP to influence the politics of the Commission, which it perceives as far too passive vis-a-vis Moscow.<sup>90</sup> At the same time, one cannot rule out a short-term motive. Mr Jastrzembki's visit preceded the presidential elections in Belarus. Russian apprehensions that Brussels would actually

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<sup>83</sup> Homepage of the Russian President, „Stenogramma press-konferentsii dlia rossiiskikh i inostrannykh zhurnalistov” [Recording from press-conference with Russian and foreign journalists], the Kremlin, 31 January 2006, [http://www.kremlin.ru/appears/2006/01/31/1310\\_type63380type63381type82634\\_100848.shtml](http://www.kremlin.ru/appears/2006/01/31/1310_type63380type63381type82634_100848.shtml), downloaded 10 February 2006.

<sup>84</sup> Marcin Bosacki and Marcin Wojciechowski, “Z Rosją cieplej” [Warmer with Russia], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 21 February 2006, p. 1

<sup>85</sup> *Radio Trójka*, 27 March 2006, about 08.00 a.m.

<sup>86</sup> In 2000, Archbishop Życiński proposed an initiative of Polish-Russian reconciliation, which was in a way similar to the initiative of Polish and German bishops in 1965. See e.g. Jerzy Pomianowski, *Na Wschód od Zachodu – jak być z Rosją?* [East of the West – How to be with Russia?], (Rosner&Wspolnicy, Warszawa, 2004) p. 152.

<sup>87</sup> “PiS i PO o Rosji” [PiS and PO on Russia], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 26 September 2005, p. 2.

<sup>88</sup> Igor Torbakow, “Co z tą Polską?” [What to do about Poland?], *Forum*, 10-16 October 2005, p. 12.

<sup>89</sup> Aleksander Smolar, “Świat i Polska według braci Kaczyńskich” [The world and Poland according to the Kaczyński brothers], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 1-2 April 2006, p. 20-22.

<sup>90</sup> Łukasz Adamski, “Europa krytykuje Rosję” [Europe criticises Russia], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 27 May 2005, p. 10.

unite behind Polish (and other Central European states') demands substantially to support the Belarusian democratic opposition may have prompted Moscow to attempt to somewhat defuse the situation beforehand.

In closing, it is worth mentioning a detail from the last, harshest moments of the years 2004-2005. The atmosphere during the first official Polish-Russian contact was better than could be expected. According to one source, Russian foreign minister, Sergei Lavrov, declared that the "round table" (called for at the invitation of the Ukrainian authorities, and at which President Kwaśniewski played a key role) helped to reach an agreement and eased tensions. During this meeting, Poland and Russia's diplomatic leaders reviewed mutual relations and concluded that: "where possible, we cooperate pragmatically; for matters that divide us, we do not get offended"<sup>91</sup> If this sentiment could be the formula for future relations, both sides would gain much.

But, the volatility of Polish-Russian relations was once again shown in May 2006 when Polish defence minister Sikorski unfortunately compared the Baltic gas pipeline (NEGP) with the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact.<sup>92</sup> This of course triggered immediate and negative reactions from Moscow and Berlin.

Some days later President Kaczyński confirmed that he had received a letter already two months ago in which President Putin had proposed to place the Polish-Russian presidential meeting envisioned for 2006 in Belarus.<sup>93</sup> Well knowing Poland's stance on Belarus this proposal was of course unacceptable to Warsaw. Event though President Kaczyński does not rule out a meeting, the light at the end of the tunnel all of a sudden became very dim.

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<sup>91</sup> Marcin Wojciechowski, "Ciepła Moskwa" [Warm Moscow], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 17 December 2004.

<sup>92</sup> *Rzeczpospolita*,  
[http://www.rzeczpospolita.pl/serwisy/login.php?return=/gazeta/wydanie\\_060510/ekonomia/ekonomia\\_a\\_1.html](http://www.rzeczpospolita.pl/serwisy/login.php?return=/gazeta/wydanie_060510/ekonomia/ekonomia_a_1.html).

<sup>93</sup> "Prezydent o: Rosji, TK, wójtach i burmistrzach" [The President on: Russia, the Constitutional Court, village administrators and mayors], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 1 June 2006, p. 6.



## Chapter 3. Polish-Russian Cultural Relations

*The topic of Polish-Russian cooperation does not exist. We settle economic issues and those pertaining to the transit of energy in Brussels. We are not going to talk to you about Ukraine because we view your policy as hostile. That leaves dialogue about history – here the dialogue will be rather unpleasant. But it is always worth discussing cultural cooperation. There is something to be done in this area.<sup>94</sup>*

Advisor to President Putin

Polish-Russian cultural relations, in contrast to the current political and economic relations, appear more profound and active. This does not mean, however, that they are satisfactory and free from mutual prejudice. On the contrary, a heavy burden of historical baggage and a suite of often negative stereotypes greatly encumber these relations.

In the entire history of bilateral relations (apart from the Kievan Rus period), the Poles and the Russians, the two most powerful and dynamic Slavic nations, have never found themselves in a state of equilibrium and full partnership of neighbours. For centuries, they struggled for dominance over the lands inhabited by other Slavic nations, the so-called *Kresy* (Borderlands). The Poles considered the vast expanse of Western Ukraine, Belarus and Lithuania as their own mostly due to the fact that they had been held within Poland's borders and as a result Polish nobles established large estates there. In Russia, these territories were treated as Russian property and their populations (Minor Russians, Belorussians and Great Russians) were perceived as belonging to the former Russian community.<sup>95</sup>

While it is true that periods of cooperation throughout history did occur, they were always superficial and inconsistent and as a result could never be developed into any real cooperation. All of these factors made it impossible to establish a firm foundation for the creation of an atmosphere of mutual trust, agreement, partnership and neighbourly relations.<sup>96</sup>

Civilisational and cultural differences, as well as the extent of similarity and differences in internal state structures and political systems, constituted other factors determining the nature of bilateral relations. Their ancient and common Slavic origins did not mitigate their mutual aversion. Civilisational differences, conditioned by Poles' affiliation with Latin civilisation as well as by Russian connections with the Byzantine and Turan civilizations, had a significant impact on mutual Polish-Russian perceptions.<sup>97</sup>

The Polish-Russian wars of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, as well as the partitions of Poland at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, were of crucial importance to bilateral relations. Since that time, the constant

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<sup>94</sup> Jerzy Marek Nowakowski, "Polska – Rosja" [Poland-Russia], *Wprost*, 24 April 2005, p. 32.

<sup>95</sup> Aleksiej Miller, "Obraz Polski i Polaków w Rosji od roku 1989" [The view of Poland and Poles in Russia since 1989], in *Polska polityka wschodnia* [Poland's Eastern Policy], Institute for Strategic Studies, *Studia i analizy*, no. 8, 2000, p. 132.

<sup>96</sup> B. Rychłowski, "Polityczne uwarunkowania stosunków między społeczeństwami Polski i Rosji" [Political conditions of relations between Poland and Russian societies] in Michał Dobroczyński (ed.) *Polacy i Rosjanie: czynniki zbliżenia* [Poles and Russians: factors of rapprochement], Centre for Eastern Research at the Warsaw University, Warsaw, 1998, p. 63.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 64.

struggle for Polish independence continued (finally brought to an end by the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and Poland's Membership in NATO and the EU). This was also manifested in the fact that Polish emigrants endeavoured to shape, in the general awareness of the English and French, an entirely negative image of Russia and to take advantage of every opportunity to provoke conflicts between these countries and Russia. This Polish struggle with Russia was presented as a struggle between European and anti-European elements. The Poles also tried to win support from the Ukrainians, Cossacks and the Caucasus nations, in other words anyone who could become a potential ally in the struggle against the empire. All of these efforts resulted in the creation of a self-driving mechanism of mutual suspicion and hostility, as well as in the formation of the stereotype of Poles as rebels and a conspiring opposition agitating other nations against the "Slavic unity" under the Russian Empire.<sup>98</sup> This perception was even manifested in language. The Polish word "honor" (Eng. Honour) sounds in Russian like "gonor," meaning "grudge". The Poles' position as "representatives of the Western world" was questioned, because the traits that distinguished Europeans – such as diligence, pragmatism and rationalism – were not observed in Poles. The Poles were also unlikely publicly to admire Russian culture, which at the time was so appreciated in European circles. This mechanism of "mutual underestimation" has been operating up to the present day.<sup>99</sup>

Maximalism, considered one of the most important traits of Russians, always evoked ambivalence in Poles. It is possible that this trait derives from the Russians' special connection with the land and from the sense of its vastness. Geographical features often determine national character. According to Jan Kologrivov, a deep conviction of one's own insignificance and the meaninglessness of all matters took root in this country of unimaginable space and harsh climate that was constantly under threat of attack from all sides.

The collection and pursuit of things that could easily be lost was not worth it. It was also pointless to observe the law, which could be quickly changed.<sup>100</sup> This maximalism was reflected in the perception of national security as the constant aspiration to acquire new lands, yet, it was also fundamental to the individual and cultural consciousness, especially of literature. Maximalism reduced all issues to the dilemma: "all or nothing." Consequently, on moral issues this was absolute perfection and in the social sphere it was the total happiness of paradise on earth. In essence this is a beautiful idea, attempts to implement it in practice, however, have brought only catastrophe and degradation (of which communism was a perfect example). Thus, because no absolute can be introduced in earthly life, this maximalism transforms into a negation of reality and a degradation of moral, state and social order.<sup>101</sup>

Poles approached this "depth of Russian mentality" with great reserve. "And what of it," people used to say, "if the price is so high." Would it not be better to be more "shallow," but to have well-built homes and full stomachs? What good is power, if it is always vested in the central authorities and the average citizen lacks basic rights and needs?<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Natalia Filatowa, "Polska w rosyjskiej myśli historycznej" [Poland in Russian historical thought] in de Lazari A., *Dusza Polska i Rosyjska* [The Polish and Russian Spirit], Warsaw, 2004, p. 22.

<sup>99</sup> Aleksiej Miller, „Obraz Polski i Polaków w Rosji od roku 1989”, in *Polska polityka wschodnia*, Institute for Strategic Studies, Studia i analizy, no. 8, 2000, p. 136.

<sup>100</sup> Edmund Lewandowski, *Rosyjski Sfinks: Rosjanie wśród innych narodów* [The Russian Sphinx: Russian among other nations], Publisher Książka i Wiedza, 1999, p. 79.

<sup>101</sup> Marian Zdziechowski, "Wpływy rosyjskie na duszę polską" [Russian influences on the Polish spirit] in Andrzej Dymitr de Lazari (ed.), *Dusza Polska i Rosyjska*, Warsaw, 2004, p. 152.

<sup>102</sup> Czesław Miłosz, „Rosja” [Russia] in Andrzej Dymitr de Lazari (ed.), *Dusza Polska i Rosyjska*, Warsaw, 2004, p. 404.

The Poles were often discouraged by such Russian features as: volatility, inconstancy, thrill-seeking, immoderation and penchant for the extreme and they could never understand the essence of suffering so valued and respected by the Russians. Fyodor Dostoyevsky believed that, in accordance with the Orthodox point of view, happiness is achieved not through prosperity but through suffering.<sup>103</sup> Russians also exhibit a very developed sense of guilt and remorse, which is completely at odds with the Polish mentality. Poles, however, although reluctant to admit it, admire the Russian melancholy, tendency to daydream, hidden sensitivity and sincere contemplation of the world. "Slavic spontaneity" is close to their hearts. They enjoy the present moment, rarely looking to the future or dwelling on the past. The steely calm that lies deep in the Russian character, as well as their patience and adamance, is often a slap in the face to Poles. Polish conventional politeness, smiles and flattery were for Russians an empty form and thus a deception. They expressed their superiority over their superficial neighbours in their oversensitive honour and predilection to burn out in heroic but pointless outbursts.<sup>104</sup>

Poles, unfortunately, are often affected by the Eastern complex, that is, a second-tier European. They attempt to prove to the "real" Europeans that they have already become Western and that true "barbarity" begins beyond the Bug River, in the Wild Steppes. This horrible mannerism is both easily detected by sensitive Eastern partners and treated with flippant amusement by Western ones.<sup>105</sup>

The period of transformation that began in 1989 brought many changes in social relations between both nations. In the communist period, Polish-Russian relations were highly developed regardless of differences in worldviews, which led gradually to better understanding and often even to lasting manifestations of personal friendship. Originality of opinions and views, human kindness in difficult circumstances and magnificent hospitality were discovered. Cultural activity was intensive, the theatre in particular flourished. Poland at that time was perceived as a kind of "window to the world." A significant share of the Russian intelligentsia learned Polish in order to have access to Western cultural achievements through this language. Popular magazines such as *Polsha* and *Ekran* were published to satisfy the needs of this group of Russians.<sup>106</sup> After 1989, however, these contacts underwent significant reduction in large part due to reductions in Polish-Russian economic, educational and cultural contacts. Both nations opened completely to the enormous influence of western mass culture, for which there was a great demand. Anglo-Saxon culture is much more attractive to them than the culture of their close neighbour. The concept of culture used here is very broad, ranging from clothing fashions, consumption and fast food restaurants to the character of the mass media, the dominance of pop music idols and the omnipresence of American movies. Whereas the adoption of simple western cultural patterns has become widespread and authentic, system reforms, either in the market or the political system, have so far been marked by superficiality and selectivity.

The transformation period has brought about many positive changes; it has afforded greater openness and sincerity in bilateral relations. In Poland, it is possible to hear increasingly frequently voices on the need for Polish-Russian reconciliation, similar to that achieved with Germany, despite the complexities of Polish-German relations. Insofar as it was not necessary for the German side to confess its guilt given that it was fully aware of its culpability, the Russians consider the idea of

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<sup>103</sup> Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *Z notatników* [Notes], Publisher Znak, 1981, no. 1-2, p. 203.

<sup>104</sup> Czesław Miłosz, "Rosja" in Andrzej Dymitr de Lazari (ed.), *Dusza Polska i Rosyjska*, Warsaw, 2004, p. 395.

<sup>105</sup> Stanisław Ciosek, "Stosunki polsko-rosyjskie" [Polish-Russian relations] in *Polska polityka wschodnia* [Poland's eastern policy], Institute for Strategic Studies, *Studia i analizy*, no. 8, 2000, p. 44.

<sup>106</sup> Michał Dobroczyński, *Polacy i Rosjanie: czynniki zbliżenia* [Poles and Russians: factors of rapprochement], Centre for Eastern Research at the Warsaw University, Warsaw, 1998, p. 40.

mutual reconciliation to be a misunderstanding, because in their opinion they were the ones who suffered the most harm under the Soviet totalitarian system. They were the ones who worked for others, including the Poles, and now Poland joined NATO and the EU, leaving the Russians alone with their own problems. Unresolved problems from the past deepen mistrust and reserve, such as the as yet unresolved Katyń case or ambiguous attitude toward the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact. Teaching history is key to elimination of old stereotypes. Despite Polish attempts, a Polish-Russian commission dealing with a joint assessment of history and verification of history books has not yet been established; this is in contrast to dealings with German counterparts.<sup>107</sup>

The Chechen conflict – condemned by the entire world and also viewed negatively by the Russians themselves – engenders a lot of controversy. The Polish reaction went much further, however, as the Poles supported Chechen separatism, viewing it as a struggle for freedom and against the empire, giving rise to indignation in Russia. This motive, interpreted as a readiness to support any uprising whatsoever aimed at the break-up of Russia, revived the aforementioned 19<sup>th</sup> century stereotype, which saw Poles as people dreaming of the humiliation and destruction of Russia. Even the liberal and widely respected daily *Izvestia* published an article entitled “Poland moves toward Caspian oil through Chechnya”.<sup>108</sup> The Polish government’s active role and the Poles’ general approval of Ukrainians during the Orange Revolution in 2004 gave rise to similar suspicions.

The latest public opinion polls on the mutual perception of both societies are worth examining. On 11 October 2001, the Public Opinion Foundation (FOM) announced the results of an opinion poll on the attitude of the Russians toward Poland and Poles. Results revealed a generally positive attitude of Russians towards Poles, although it was clear in respondent answers that they had only rudimentary knowledge of Poland; this engenders suspicion that this positive attitude towards Poland may not be firmly grounded in Russian society. While 57 percent of those surveyed considered Poland to be a friendly country, at the same time one-fourth of the respondents disagreed with this statement. The attitude of surveyed Russians towards Poles as a nation is also quite positive. Sixty-four percent of those surveyed reported friendly attitudes towards Poles, 13% reported antipathy and about 23% were indifferent. At the same time, 44% of respondents expressed the conviction that the majority of Poles harboured affinity toward them, while 22% claimed that Poles disliked them.<sup>109</sup> Two interesting things were revealed. First, respondents with higher education (32%), high incomes (28%) and inhabitants of central regions (34%) and especially Moscow who were more likely to consider Poland to be unfriendly towards Russia. Second, the attitudes towards Poland and Poles varied by region; the further to the East, the more positive the opinions of Poland. As many as 75% of the inhabitants of the Far East considered Poland to be a friendly country.

It may be concluded that the elite of Russian society is much more mistrustful of Poland than the so-called average Russian. At the same time, the increase in affinity with the increase in distance from Poland – with attendant lack of basic knowledge of Poland – demonstrates that Russians simply do not know Poles, know nothing about them and “just in case” report positive answers in opinion polls.

When it comes to Polish attitudes towards Russians, the situation is much worse (see Table 1). The

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<sup>107</sup> Stanisław Ciosek, „Stosunki polsko-rosyjskie” in *Polska polityka wschodnia*, Institute for Strategic Studies, Studia i analizy, no. 8, 2000, p. 43.

<sup>108</sup> Aleksiej Miller, „Obraz Polski i Polaków w Rosji od roku 1989”, in *Polska polityka wschodnia*, Institute for Strategic Studies, Studia i analizy, no. 8, 2000, p. 143.

<sup>109</sup> Andrzej Dymitr de Lazari (ed.), *Wzajemne uprzedzenia pomiędzy Polakami i Rosjanami* [Mutual prejudice between Poles and Russians], Conference materials, *Ibid.*, 1, Łódź, 2001, p. 66.

Poles are much more favourably inclined towards Western and Central than Eastern European countries. More than half of Poles admit that they dislike Russians, while only somewhere between 10 and 20 % of those surveyed reported affinity.<sup>110</sup> A crucial fact is the improvement in Polish

**Table 1. Polish attitudes toward other nationalities.**<sup>111</sup>

Nationality	How would you characterise your attitude toward other nations?				
	Affinity	Indifference	Dislike	Difficult to say	Average*
	In percent				
Italians	50	33	11	6	+0.74
Czech	49	32	14	5	+0.66
Spaniards	47	33	12	8	+0.68
English	46	32	17	6	+0.57
Americans	45	32	20	4	+0.51
French	45	31	19	5	+0.48
Greeks	44	34	12	10	+0.62
Hungarians	43	37	13	7	+0.59
Dutch	42	35	13	10	+0.60
Swedes	42	34	13	11	+0.59
Slovaks	41	35	16	8	+0.48
Irish	39	32	15	15	+0.55
Lithuanians	38	34	21	8	+0.34
Danish	35	38	14	13	+0.45
Germans	33	30	34	3	-0.05
Finns	32	36	16	16	+0.39
Japanese	32	31	22	15	+0.25
Austrians	31	39	21	9	+0.21
Slovenes	30	36	21	13	+0.23
Latvians	29	34	23	14	+0.15
Ukrainians	29	32	34	5	-0.11
Estonians	26	35	21	18	+0.13
Bulgarians	22	35	32	10	-0.19
Belarussians	21	33	37	8	-0.31
Chinese	20	30	37	13	-0.36
Jews	18	29	45	8	-0.67
Russians	18	25	53	4	-0.72
Vietnamese	17	30	38	15	-0.42
Serbs	15	30	40	16	-0.53
Roemer (Gipsies)	15	24	56	5	-1.01
Romanians	14	24	54	8	-0.86
Arabs	11	20	59	9	-1.20

\* Average is measured on a scale of from -3 (maximum dislike) to +3 (maximum affinity).

attitudes towards Ukrainians, connected with the enthusiastic support for the Orange Revolution. Still, negative attitudes prevail.<sup>112</sup> Let us hope that democratic transformation in Russia will bring

<sup>110</sup> *Stosunek do innych narodów* [Attitudes toward other nationalities], [www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2005/K\\_001\\_05.PDF](http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2005/K_001_05.PDF), CBOS, January 2005.

<sup>111</sup> *Stosunek do innych narodów* [Attitudes toward other nationalities], [www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2005/K\\_001\\_05.PDF](http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2005/K_001_05.PDF), CBOS, January 2005.

<sup>112</sup> *Wpływ ostatnich wydarzeń na Ukrainie na stosunek Polaków do Ukraińców* [Impact of recent events in Ukraine on Polish attitudes to Ukrainians], [www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2004/K\\_190\\_04.PDF](http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2004/K_190_04.PDF), and *Reakcje na wydarzenia na*

similar improvements in how Russians are perceived outside Russia. Both of these surveys suggest that despite geographic proximity and common Slavic origin, neither nation knows much about the other. They direct their affinity towards the West and look for credible partners there, as confirmed by the present size and structure of trade. The asymmetric attitudes of Poles and Russians towards one another are extremely evident. Whereas Poles look at themselves through a pair of binoculars, the Russians look at the Poles through binoculars turned the wrong way round. Polish issues are not the most important for Russians and Poles should finally realise this.<sup>113</sup> The lack of knowledge about Poland mostly results from its minimal presence in Russian media both in terms of presenting bilateral relations as well as news from Poland.<sup>114</sup> Together with Russia's opening up to the world, Poland ceased to be as attractive as before the transformation; this is hardly surprising. In fact, this situation applies to the majority of Central and Eastern Europe. At the same time, despite cool political relations, Russia is perceived in Poland as an important neighbour and potential partner. It has become an object of avid interest of the Polish media and journalistic circles.

Considering the aforementioned factors and difficulties, however, Polish-Russian cultural relations currently seem to be heading in the right direction. The number of published books and theatrical performances is increasing on both sides. Polish literature is widely translated into Russian and in this regard is second only to English-language literature. In turn, the Polish cultural environment, inundated by the deluge of Western pop-culture, increasingly more frequently looks to the rich, high quality and flourishing cultural achievements to the East. Despite its limited circulation, the Polish monthly *Novaya Polsha*, published by the Polish Ministry of Culture and designed to inform Russians on modern Polish culture and literature, was very well received in Russia. The events "Polish Season in Russia" and "Russian Season in Poland," presenting the cultural achievements of both countries, enjoy immense popularity.

Both nations, despite historical burdens and the transfer of their affinity to western countries, should seek mutual contacts and attempt to find common ground for agreement. It seems that the cultural sphere, next to trade, is perfectly suited for pursuit of this objective and it should constitute the basis for mutual acceptance, agreement and profound understanding. But, cultural activities are more likely to contribute to improved relations in a bilateral context. Poland will not be able to function as a cultural bridge between Russia and the West. The gravitational force of the West on both Poland and Russia is too strong and the West is more likely to be the hub around which both these Slavic nations circle.

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*Ukrainie* [Reactions to events in Ukraine], [www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2004/K\\_191\\_04.PDF](http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2004/K_191_04.PDF), CBOS, December 2004.

<sup>113</sup> Stanisław Ciosek, „Stosunki polsko-rosyjskie” [Polish-Russian relations] in *Polska polityka wschodnia* [Poland's Eastern Policy], Institute for Strategic Studies, Studia i analizy, no. 8, 2000, p. 47.

<sup>114</sup> A. Michalski, „Obraz Polski w rosyjskich mediach” in Andrzej Dymitr de Lazari (ed.), *Wzajemne uprzedzenia pomiędzy Polakami i Rosjanami*, Conference materials, Ibid., 1, Łódź, 2001, p. 64.

## Chapter 4. Polish-Russian Trade Relations

The following chapter on Polish-Russian economic relations is not an exhaustive analysis, but instead offers a general outline of the development of trade relations and a presentation of the main trends. This analysis is meant to serve as a basis for a wider treatment of Polish-Russian relations, including other subjects as well.

### *Polish-Soviet trade and the years of transition*

With the end of World War II, Poland found itself under the sphere of influence of the USSR. All aspects of internal and external life in socialist Poland (The Peoples' Republic of Poland<sup>115</sup>), including economic policy and international trade were closely adjusted to the rules in force in all socialist countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

Trade between the USSR and other socialist countries was conducted according to principles established by the Soviet Union. In 1949, on Stalin's initiative in order to regulate and stimulate international trade cooperation, the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON<sup>116</sup>) was created. During the next 40 years, its norms were the main determinants of international trade among the Eastern Block countries and the USSR. COMECON was dissolved in 1991.

Trade between Poland and the Soviet Union was characterised by monopolisation by the state apparatus, which through warrants and administrative decrees controlled the entire system of mutual economic trade. The extent and structure of trade were specified under long-term agreements. Trade was conducted based on special "trade protocols" negotiated by the ministries responsible for international trade. The protocol defined in detail the items, prices and amounts of exchange of commodities for the coming years.

For many years, the structure of commodities exported from the USSR to Poland included energy materials (crude oil, natural gas and petrol), iron ore, artificial fertilizers, trucks, refrigerators, clocks, and watches. Poland, among minimally processed commodities, exported coal, coke and sulphur. Poland was also the main supplier of ships and food and occupied a very strong position on the pharmaceuticals market.<sup>117</sup>

The strict adjustment of the Polish economy to Soviet rules resulted in Russia's 80% share in total Polish foreign trade by the late 1970s. This tendency changed in the mid-1980s when only about 30% of Polish export commodities were sent to the USSR. Until the break-up of the Soviet Union, however, Poland remained one of the main exporters of goods to the USSR.

At the end of the 1980s, the oft-concealed economic problems revealed themselves in both countries with a vengeance. The divergence between planned industrial production and that actually achieved increased not only in the heavy industry sector, but in sectors producing to meet the needs of the population. The pace of economic development fell and the disequilibrium in the monetary-

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<sup>115</sup> The official name of Poland 1945-1989.

<sup>116</sup> Also known as CMEA. The history of COMECON is found on <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comecon>.

<sup>117</sup> Dariusz Mongiało, *Wymiana handlowa między Polską i ZSRR w latach rozpadu systemu 1988-1991* [Trade between Poland and USSR in the years of the system's break-up 1988-1991], *Studia i Materiały*, zeszyt 37, Warsaw University, The Centre for Eastern Studies, Warsaw 1994, p. 3.

currency systems in both countries deepened. Service of foreign debt incurred in previous years became an increasing burden on both countries' budgets.<sup>118</sup>

Along with the intensification of negative tendencies and weaker than expected economic results of both the Polish and the Soviet economies, the defects in foreign trade under the COMECON were revealed. Centralised, state-managed trade was not flexible enough and could not react to the changing needs of the market. The assumptions of the annual "trade protocols" did not reflect the real needs of either economy. The artificial system of prices, set according to political principles instead of real market values, significantly reduced the profitability of trade.<sup>119</sup>

Moreover, in both countries, increasingly often some began to speak of the unprofitability of trade among communist block countries, as such trade led to the actual subsidisation of the other partner. The unprofitability of trade with the USSR for satellite countries has for many years also been the topic of interest for western scholars. These views existed in Poland as well as the USSR over the entire period of the Eastern Block's existence, yet in the late 1980s, as the ideological corset on the societies was loosened, discussions on this issue intensified.

Further, in 1989 Poland entered the arduous process of transforming its socialist economy toward the free market. In 1991, using its position as leader in political transformation and as the country most advanced in its free market reforms, Poland attained a trade surplus with the USSR valued at 8 billion transfer roubles.<sup>120</sup>

The decline of Poland's trade with the East was mostly due to the problems of the Soviet economy and the disintegration of the trade system caused by Russia's withdrawal from settlements in transfer roubles that was valid under the COMECON in favour of convertible currencies (mainly US dollars). This decision was made by the II Congress of Peoples' Deputies (December 1990) and came into force on 1 January 1991. This step was long under preparation, but the political arrangements did not coincide with preparations on the economic front, which led to rapid deterioration of mutual trade relations.<sup>121</sup>

Together with the transition to accounting in convertible currencies, the situation of Polish companies exporting to the East worsened (one-third of around 300 enterprises found themselves on the verge of bankruptcy).

This led to a significant decrease in Polish trade with the USSR (mainly the Russian SFSR). In 1992, exports fell by 48% and imports by 46%. According to information from the early 1990s, the value of trade in 1991 (now settled in USD) reached a level of just 2.2 billion, with an attendant

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<sup>118</sup> The USSR, in order to pay its debts and reduce negative trends in the economy, significantly increased its exports of energy resources and gold to Western markets.

<sup>119</sup> The exchange rate between the rouble, transfer rouble and US dollar was always inaccurate.

<sup>120</sup> Kazimierz Ryc, "Makroekonomiczne dostosowania Polski do UE a handel z Rosją" [Macroeconomic adjustments of Poland to the EU and trade with Russia] in Marianna Lipiec-Zajchowska (ed.), *Zmiany systemowe w Polsce i w Rosji* [Political system changes in Poland and Russia], Publisher Wydawnictwa Naukowe WZ UW, Warsaw 1999, p. 49.

<sup>121</sup> Robert Jakimowicz, *Zarys stosunków polsko-rosyjskich 1992-1999* [Outline of Polish-Russian Relations 1992-1999], *Studia i Materiały*, Polish Foundation of International Affairs, 1999, p. 17; also: Aleksander Jerezow, "Rozwój rosyjsko-polskich stosunków handlowo-ekonomicznych w latach 1991-1996" [The Development of Russian-Polish Trade and Economic Relations 1991-1996] in Andrzej Ananicz (ed.) *Dynamika stosunków polsko-rosyjskich w latach 1991-1996* [The Dynamics of Polish-Russian Relations in the Years 1991-1996], International Centre for the Development of Democracy, Kraków 1997, p. 110 and Joanna Strzelczyk, *Ucieczka ze wschodu* [The Escape from the East], (RYTM, Warsaw 2002), p. 31.



negative change in the ratio of exports to imports (Polish exports to the USSR fell to just 0.8 billion while imports to 1.4 billion). In 1991, Polish exports to the USSR, compared to the previous year, fell by 80%.<sup>122</sup>

This dramatic collapse in bilateral trade at the beginning of the 1990s was caused by several economic and non-economic factors. A stable economic situation of both partners always constitutes the basis for the development of healthy trade relations. At the beginning of the 1990s, both countries embarked on the process of moving toward free market economies and struggled (albeit to varying degrees) with the political, social and economic problems that engendered enormous unpredictability, even in the near future.

One of the most important reasons for the decline in mutual trade was the divergence between the transformations of both countries' economies. While Poland began reforms more than two years earlier (Poland 1989 versus Russia 1992), both countries experienced a significant decline in industrial production, a deep financial crisis, budget deficits and an alarming decline in their citizens' real incomes. Each grappling with its own internal problems, neither Poland nor Russia was able to establish and develop active trade.

At that time, the difference in the level of advancement of pro-market economic reforms was evident in Poland and Russia (a kind of transformation dissonance). While Poland applied shock therapy, which resulted in a sudden change in economic parameters, Russia chose an intermediate model and postponed system transformations. Over time, the Polish economy began to recover while in Russia this process was delayed and at first was mild. Yet, eventually shock therapy was applied in Russia, albeit a few years later than in Poland. When in the early 1990s a market collapse in industrial production and GDP occurred in Poland, Russia still had this trial to face. Several years later, the Polish economy began to achieve ever better parameters while the Russian economy wallowed in crisis.

Among other factors that affected trade relations at the time was the complete parting of ways of previous political aims of both countries and the rise of different political and economic priorities after the collapse of the communist block. Poland plotted a course toward the West; clearly declaring that most important to it was integration with the western political and economic system as well as exiting the zone of Russian influence. In the process of integration with the western economic zone, the redirecting of trade priorities towards the free market western economies and increasing trade with them were very important. While western markets became bigger customers and very profitable for Polish exporters, the Russian market was often viewed as uninteresting, not very receptive and exceptionally unstable. Poland's interest in the Russian market was piqued foremost by energy resources, upon which – due to the lack of its own reserves – the Polish economy was totally dependent. An additional asset of the Russian resources was their price and the existence of the infrastructure necessary to transport and process them.

Polish-Russian trade relations were also affected by political issues such as: Polish demands that Russia withdraw its army units from Poland (this last Russian soldier left Poland on 17 September 1993), Poland's public declarations of a desire to join NATO, the opening of Soviet archives and disclosure of the truth concerning communist crimes on Poles. These issues were totally at odds with the Russian vision of at least partial rebuilding its past sway and were reluctantly received by Russian authorities to such an extent that in 1993 Poland was deemed in the Assumptions on

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<sup>122</sup> Joanna Strzelczyk, *Ucieczka ze wschodu* [The Escape from the East], (RYTM, Warsaw 2002), p. 216.

Russian Federation Policy “the main obstacle in restoring Russian influence in Central and Eastern Europe”.<sup>123</sup>

Additionally, the Russian government deemed Poland as high risk and unstable country, which definitely could not be considered as a factor conducive to developing economic relations. Another unfavourable issue not conducive to improving trade relations was rooted in the history of shared enmity of the societies and political elite of both countries due to historical experience (cf. chapter on cultural relations). The issue of Soviet crimes against Polish officers during World War II and the desire of many political environments to emphasise the new state of Poland’s independence from Russia that had been dominated during the last 40 years by the USSR inspired strong emotions.

The turning point in Polish trade not only with Russia but the entire USSR came in 1992 with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the appearance of 15 new countries resulted in enormous geopolitical changes in Europe and a total change in relations between Poland and its eastern economic partners, including the newly formed Russian Federation.

With the collapse of the centrally controlled economy and the beginning of Poland’s transformation process towards a market economy, the government’s monopoly on foreign trade was lifted and foreign trade was liberalised. The reduction in state limitations and control effectively stimulated growth in entrepreneurship and encouraged private companies to develop direct transactions with foreign partners including those in Russia.

Since December 1991, along with the emergence of 15 new countries that grew out of the ashes of the Soviet Union, the adjustment of economic relations with Russia became a priority for the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Russia was a legal successor to all former legislative and economic commitments established by the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, many of them, especially trade contracts, due to the sea change in the political situation, became out-of-date and lost their *raison d’etre*. In 1992, both countries found themselves in a new geopolitical situation, which forced an adjustment of the existing legal norms to the new realities of conducting trade. In May 1992, during the Polish President’s visit to Moscow, a process of normalisation of the trade relations began. The first year – 1992 – of restoring trade relations between Poland and Russia brought a further drop in turnover, due to the structural problems from previous years. In analyses of the time, the trade volume between Poland and Russia was expected to reach 2.5-2.8 billion USD, yet economic difficulties in both countries meant that the actual turnover reached only 2.1 billion USD. Polish exports to Russia decreased by 100 million USD during this period, while imports remained unchanged (exports – 0.7 billion USD, imports – 1.4 billion USD). The aforementioned immense political and economic changes in 1992 brought many difficulties in mutual trade, which led to a drop in Russia’s share in Polish foreign trade to 5% in exports and 7% in imports.<sup>124</sup>

Trade between Poland and Russia became limited to a large extent to a very small assortment of food commodities and a few basic consumer goods. Imports shrank just to energy carriers such as oil and natural gas. The year 1993 saw the deepest slump in trade, as it fell to a record low of

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<sup>123</sup> “Podstawowe tezy doktryny wojennej Federacji Rosyjskiej” [The main theses of the military doctrine of the Russian Federation] – decree of the President of the Russian Federation, 2 November 1993 (summary), *Polityka Wschodnia*, no. 1, 1994.

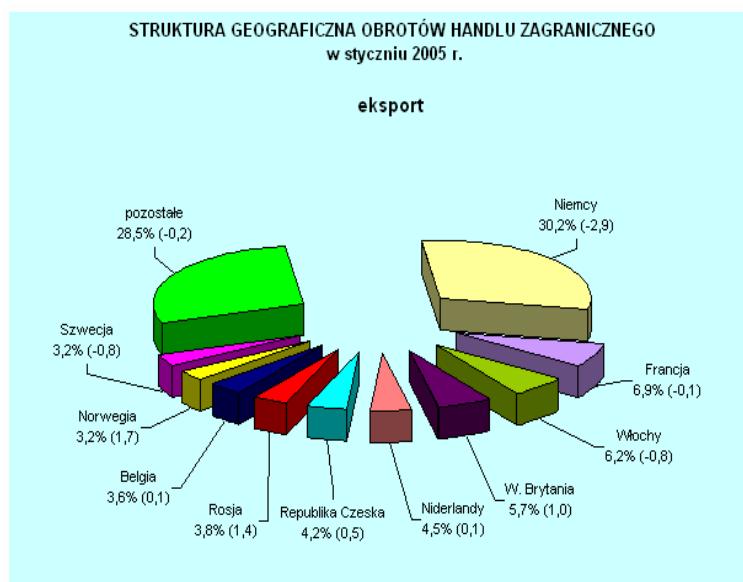
<sup>124</sup> Paweł Bożyk, “Długofalowe tendencje zmian w stosunkach polsko-rosyjskich. Możliwe kierunki zmian” [Long-range trends in Polish-Russian relations. Possible modifications] in Paweł Bożyk (ed.) *Stosunki gospodarcze Polska-Rosja w warunkach integracji z Unią Europejską* [Polish-Russian Economic Relations and EU Enlargement], Warsaw School of Economics – publisher Oficyna Wydawnicza, Warsaw 2004, p. 16.

1.8 billion USD. The balance of trade was exceptionally unfavourable for Poland, as the level of imports was over twice as high as exports (imports – 1.3 billion USD, exports – 0.5 billion USD).

It was only in later years, thanks to the existence of a completely new and free market environment for trade that an unquestionable improvement in mutual trade relations occurred.

### ***Polish-Russian trade in the 1990s and up till 2005***

Over the past 15 years, economic relations between Poland and Russia have exhibited irregularities with ups and downs. After the dramatic slump in bilateral trade in 1991, a further decline ensued. This tendency lasted until the Polish and Russian economies improved in the mid-1990s. Subsequent years brought an increase in mutual trade and investment. In 1998, Polish-Russian trade relations suffered again due to the Russian financial crisis, resulting in a dramatic decline in Polish exports to Russia. Trade relations improved in parallel with Russia's rather quick emergence from the crisis.



**Figure 1. Geographic structure of foreign trade (exports) in January 2005.**<sup>125</sup>

When Poland entered the economic transformation period at the beginning of 1990s it necessitated the creation of new trade relations and finding new markets for Polish goods. The system transformation resulted in a change of trade proportions: developed Western European countries have replaced Russia and the Central and Eastern European countries as Poland's major trading partners. As a result, Western European countries account for more than 75% of Polish foreign trade (this includes Germany accounting for one-third of Polish exports and one-fourth of its imports). Central and Eastern European countries account for about 15% of Polish foreign trade. Russia alone accounts for 5% of Polish foreign trade. All signs indicate that these proportions will

<sup>125</sup> Legends: pozostałe=others, Szwecja=Sweden, Norwegia=Norway, Belgia=Belgium, Rosja=Russia, Republika Czeska=Czech Republic, Niderlandy=Netherlands, W. Brytania=Great Britain, Włochy=Italy, Francja=France and Niemcy=Germany.

not change. However, attention should be drawn to the fact that Russia's share in total exports has the potential to reach at least 7.5-10%.<sup>126</sup>

### **Polish-Russian trade relations between 1992 and 1997 – From crisis to continuous growth**

As was mentioned above another decline in trade occurred in 1992 (Polish exports dropped by 10% and imports by 5.5%),<sup>127</sup> although it did bring the first steps towards reconstructing prior trade relations.

In 1992, Polish exports to Russia were estimated at 728 million USD, while imports at 1,353 million USD.<sup>128</sup> Trade was restricted to an exchange of fuels (from Russia) and raw materials for food products and consumer goods (from Poland). Both sides took steps to create a basis for new agreements to regulate again trade relations, which was definitely a positive step. At that time, a treaty on trade and economic exchange was signed, which was aimed at eliminating double taxation and supporting mutual investment protection. A year later, the said treaty was supplemented with an agreement on the construction of natural gas pipelines from Russia to Western Europe and on natural gas deliveries to Poland.<sup>129</sup>

After this initial decline a rapid growth in trade was recorded between 1994 and 1997 (from 26% to 40% annually).<sup>130</sup> This was caused by the systemic changes in both countries, as well as gradual privatisation and economic growth in Poland, which resulted in a growing demand for fuels. What is more, at that time the Russian market had become more predictable and stable for Polish exporters, who were able to find ready markets for their agricultural and food products in Russia.

In 1997, Polish exports to Russia grew by 30% compared to the previous year, while imports increased by 6%. At that time, Russia was the second most important importer of Polish goods and accounted for 8.4% of Polish exports and 6.3% of its imports. Poland, on the other hand, occupied tenth place in Russian imports (2.6%) and eleventh place in exports (3%).<sup>131</sup>

Four groups of products were dominant in the structure of Polish exports: food and agricultural products (47%), chemicals (17%), electromechanical products (11%) and furniture and lighting products (10.9%).<sup>132</sup>

Polish imports from Russia are much less diversified. Imports of mineral resources account for 85% of Polish imports. In 1997, the value of imports amounted to 2,271 million USD, of which for crude

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<sup>126</sup> Paweł Bożyk *Stosunki gospodarcze Polska-Rosja w warunkach integracji z UE* [Polish-Russian Economic Relations and the EU Enlargement], 2004, p. 25.

<sup>127</sup> Barbara Durka, „Wymiana handlowa Polska-Rosja w warunkach transformacji” [Polish-Russian Trade During the Process of Transformation] in Paweł Bożyk *Stosunki gospodarcze Polska-Rosja w warunkach integracji z UE* [Polish-Russian Economic Relations and the EU Enlargement], p. 113.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid. p. 113.

<sup>129</sup> Barbara Durka, *Present State and Prospects of Polish-Russian Trade in the Context of Russia's Economic Policy*, Foreign Trade Research Institute, Warsaw, 1999, p. 7.

<sup>130</sup> Barbara Durka in *Stosunki gospodarcze Polska-Rosja w warunkach integracji z UE* [Polish-Russian Economic Relations and the EU Enlargement], p. 114.

<sup>131</sup> *Biuletyn ekonomiczny z 1997r.* Wydział Ekonomiczno-Handlowy Ambasady RP w Moskwie [*Economic Bulletin 1997* from the Polish embassy in Moscow].

<sup>132</sup> Barbara Durka in *Stosunki gospodarcze Polska-Rosja w warunkach integracji z UE* [Polish-Russian Economic Relations and the EU Enlargement], p. 114.

oil 1,548 million USD; natural gas 510 million USD; coal 93 million USD and iron ore 81 million USD.<sup>133</sup>

### **The impact of the Russian economic crisis of August 1998 on Polish-Russian trade relations**

In the second half of 1998, an economic crisis in Russia began resulting in depreciation of the rouble (the rouble devaluation in August 1997 did not shield the economy from the crisis), a rapid increase in prices, a decrease in real incomes, as well as a decline in industrial and agricultural production.

It goes without saying that this situation had a negative impact on Polish-Russian trade. Russia dropped from second to third place in Polish exports (from 8.4% to 5.6%) and from third to fourth place in imports (from 6.3% to 5.1%).<sup>134</sup> Polish exports to Russia decreased by 26% (1,597 million USD), while imports decreased by 12% (2,370 million USD).<sup>135</sup> Trade declined because Polish goods ceased to be competitive, their prices increased relatively while Russian consumers began to earn less. An additional brake on Polish exports was a lack of free legal tender on the Russian market.

### **Trends in trade during the period 1999-2004 – Re-emerging from the shock**

After the crisis, between 1998 and 2001, the trade structure did not generally change except for food and agricultural products. Between 1998 and 1999, their share in trade accounted for about 40%, whereas between 2000 and 2001 a significant decrease (to 22%) was observed. The share of electromechanical products, however, increased from 11.6% in 1997 to 18% in 2001. The remaining places were occupied by chemicals (15% in 1998 and 19% in 1999) and furniture (9.5% in 1998 and 5.8% in 1999). With respect to imports from Russia, mineral resources' highest share was retained, accordingly oil and natural gas (82-89%) and base metals (5-6%).<sup>136</sup>

Following the year 2000, a gradual improvement in bilateral trade relations occurred. By 2003, the value of Polish deliveries to the Russian market increased by 75%. At that time, trade turnover was estimated at 6.7 billion USD. Exports of Polish goods generated 1.5 billion USD, while imports reached 5.2 billion USD.<sup>137</sup> It should be noted that the trade deficit with Russia reached about 3.5 billion USD; this asymmetry seems stable. Since the early 1990s, this has been caused by Poland's strong demand for energy carriers imported from Russia, the prices of which are gradually increasing on world markets. It needs to be emphasised that the negative balance of trade with Russia has a structural foundation – the high prices of natural resources (particularly energy carriers) have caused a significant increase in the value of Polish imports.

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<sup>133</sup> *Biuletyn ekonomiczny z 1997r.* Wydział Ekonomiczno-Handlowy Ambasady RP w Moskwie [*Economic Bulletin 1997* from the Polish embassy in Moscow].

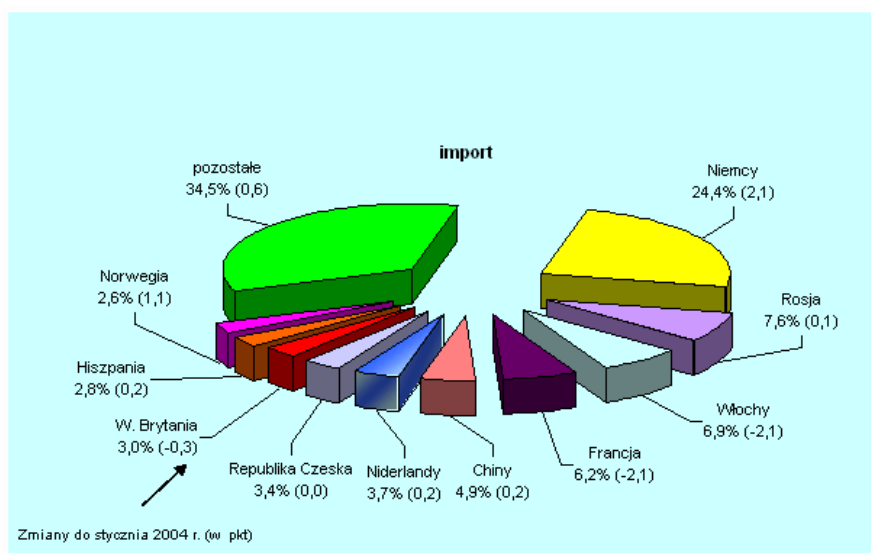
<sup>134</sup> Barbara Durka, *Present State and Prospects of Polish-Russian Trade in the Context of Russia's Economic Policy*, p. 12.

<sup>135</sup> Olga Andrzejewska, *Polska – Rosja: oczyszczone przedpole* [Poland and Russia: a clean slate], *BOSS-Gospodarka*, May 1999.

<sup>136</sup> Wojciech Oniszczyk, *Czynniki zewnętrzne transformacji gospodarki Rosji. Handel zagraniczny, kapitał zagraniczny, transfer technologii* [External factors of Russia's economic transformation. Foreign trade, foreign capital and technology transfer] Series "Problemy Gospodarki Światowej" volume 3, publisher Wydawnictwo Naukowe Temper, Warsaw, 2002, p. 162.

<sup>137</sup> Ministry of the Economy and Labour, 15 September 2004.

The trade deficit with Russia remains at a level of 3.5 billion USD and accounts for 25% of



Poland's total foreign trade deficit (14.1 billion USD).<sup>138</sup> Attempts to restore trade balance by spurring export growth have not been very successful. This may in part be explained by the fact that Russian importers, holding large foreign currency reserves (connected with the favourable export prices of energy carriers and other raw materials) tend to purchase western goods, which while more expensive, enjoy more recognition.<sup>139</sup>

**Figure 2. Polish imports in January 2004 [changes through Jan. 2004 in percent].<sup>140</sup>**

### The impact of Poland's accession to the EU (1 May 2004)

Along with the process of adjusting Polish legislation to the requirements of the *acquis communautaire* (the body of legal regulations of the European Community), the need arose to change existing Polish legislation governing trade relations with Russia.

Since 1 May 2004, Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) signed between the EU and the Russian Federation on 24 June 1994 has become the basic document regulating trade relations between Poland and Russia. The Protocol providing for new member states to become parties to the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, which was signed in Luxembourg, formed the basis of these relations. This Protocol was ratified by the State Duma of the Russian Federation on 22 October 2004.<sup>141</sup>

Before Poland's accession to the European Union, fears were expressed that after 1 May 2004 a downturn in economic relations with eastern neighbours would occur. Instead, despite these fears, bilateral trade turnover (especially Polish exports) has developed dynamically. At the end of 2004,

<sup>138</sup> *Przegląd Gospodarczo-Rynkowy*[Economic and Market Review], 1/2005, Department of Economics and Trade at the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Moscow.

<sup>139</sup> Michał Dobroczyński in *Stosunki gospodarcze Polska-Rosja w warunkach integracji z UE* [Polish-Russian Economic Relations and EU Enlargement], p. 50.

<sup>140</sup> Legends: pozostałe=others, Norwegia=Norway, Hiszpania=Spain, W. Brytania=Great Britain, Republika Czeska=Czech Republic, Niderlandy=Netherlands, Chiny=China, Francja=France, Włochy=Italy, Rosja=Russia, and Niemcy=Germany.

<sup>141</sup> Ministry of the Economy and Labour, November 2004.

Polish exports grew dramatically by 88.8%, reaching a record level of 2,854 million USD, that is, a level significantly higher than the previous record in 1997.<sup>142</sup> Imports, increasing by 23%, also reached a record high of 6,451 million USD. Together, this meant that overall trade turnover reached an unprecedented level of 9.3 billion USD.<sup>143</sup> In January 2005, Russia occupied seventh place among importers of Polish goods and second place among exporters of goods to Poland. As in previous years, Polish imports from Russia are dominated by oil and natural gas. In 2004, the value of these commodities accounted for 87.1% of total imports from Russia.<sup>144</sup>

Despite the tense political relations and some limited trade conflicts in 2004-2005 Polish-Russian trade continued to grow. As of mid-2006 the Ministry of the Economy and Labour expected Polish exports to reach an all-time high of 4 billion USD at the end of 2006 if the mid-year trends were to continue (which they most likely will).<sup>145</sup>

A closer examination of commodity structure of Polish exports to Russia reveals an upward trend in the sale of agricultural and food products (despite obstacles resulting from increasing Russian demands associated with sanitation certificates for meat and dairy products – meat exports dropped nearly by 50%<sup>146</sup>), machinery and mechanical equipment, metallurgical products, plastics as well as chemicals and textiles.<sup>147</sup>

The scale of export growth was connected not only to external demand and rouble devaluation, but also to some extent with the indirect exports to Russia via Lithuania and Latvia. Up to 1 May 2004, the trade facilities and simplified procedures adopted by the governments of Baltic countries in trade with Russia induced Polish exporters to use these countries as intermediaries in exporting to Russia.<sup>148</sup> Indirect exports through Belarus are still conducted. The increase in exports to Russia may be partially connected with EU export subsidies on agricultural and food products that were granted to Polish producers. After 1 May, these subsidies gave Polish companies the opportunity to

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<sup>142</sup> The value of Polish exports for 2005 reached nearly 4 billion USD, Ministry of the Economy and Labour, January 2006.

<sup>143</sup> *Przegląd Gospodarczo-Rynkowy* [Economic and Market Review], 1/2005, Department of Economics and Trade at the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Moscow.

<sup>144</sup> Central Statistical Office, February 2005.

<sup>145</sup> GOST Certification Enterprise, [http://www.news.gost24.com/?news\\_id=32](http://www.news.gost24.com/?news_id=32).

<sup>146</sup> In Poland, this issue is highly publicised and caused quite a stir in the media. It involved not recognising the quality certificates of new Member States, complicated control procedures and a waiting period of several months for the results of inspections conducted by Russian authorities. In November 2005, a temporary ban was even imposed on the import of meat and plant products from Poland (exports to Russia are currently 3.5 % of meat sales abroad). Russian authorities justified their decision by stating that Poland had violated veterinary and phyto-sanitary standards as well as forged Polish export certificates. The entire issue seems to have two threads. First, isolated cases of veterinary certificates forgeries were indeed proven. Either a known brand having the requisite certificates was impersonated or the firms that owned them had sold additional amounts of meat to another producer that did not hold the proper permits. The proper Polish authorities are investigating this case. It is a fact that Polish exporters have “become accustomed” to the eastern market absorbing any goods, even that of lower quality. This case will certainly make them realise that such a procedure does not pay. The monthly losses to exporters are estimated at 50 million USD. The second motif is probably grounded in politics. It seems that Poland is being scolded in this manner for its policies toward Ukraine and Belarus, as evidenced by similar sanctions introduced on imports from Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia. This situation forces Polish exporters to look for more stable markets for their products, e.g., currently talks are underway to open the lucrative Japanese and Chinese markets to Polish meat products. Sources: *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 25 January 2005, *Wprost*, 22 February 2005, Polsko-Rosyjski Portal Współpracy Gospodarczej [Polish-Russian Portal for Economic Cooperation], 20 November 2005 and Ministry of the Economy and Labour, January 2005.

<sup>147</sup> *Przegląd Gospodarczo-Rynkowy* [Economic and Market Review], 1/2005, Department of Economics and Trade at the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Moscow.

<sup>148</sup> *Ocena sytuacji w handlu zagranicznym Polski po 11 miesiącach 2004 roku* [Assessment of the status of Poland's foreign trade after 11 months of 2004], Ministry of the Economy and Labour, (2004).

be competitive with other EU companies on eastern markets. Due to the relatively low costs of production (compared to the costs incurred by the “old” EU countries), market proximity and low costs of transport, Polish producers (especially from the meat and dairy sectors) count on a significant increase in trade with Russia.<sup>149</sup>

All the signs indicated that European Union enlargement will be profitable for Russian exporters as well, because goods meeting Polish technical standards will at the same time meet EU standards. This means that such goods will be sold easily throughout the entire common market.

### **Problems and opportunities for the development of bilateral trade relations**

In analysing bilateral relations between Poland and Russia, it is difficult not to notice the many barriers and impediments that have a negative impact on economic relations. The unfavourable political climate plays a specific role in these relations. Although not easy for either side, political strains should be eased for mutual profit. It is true that Russia has stopped treating Poland as a mediator in relations with the West (Poland used to play this role for many years under the previous system). At present, Russia is establishing direct political and economic contacts with western countries and does not need any intermediaries. The chill in Polish-Russian relations is also a kind of punishment imposed on Poland for leaving the Russian sphere of influence and encouraging other countries to do the same.<sup>150</sup> The Russian tendency to marginalise Poland’s position as a political and economic partner is observable.

Restrictions in bilateral trade mostly involve customs and tariff barriers (resulting from protectionist policy), systemic barriers (absence of free market legal system, lack of observance of ownership rights, corruption etc.), as well as financial or organisational barriers. An expensive and time-consuming goods certification process hinders Polish exports to the Russian market.<sup>151</sup> Additionally, an unfavourable customs policy for Polish exporters means that relatively cheap Polish goods are rendered non-competitive in price with goods of other producers. Further, no favourable and financially and organisationally attractive form of bank transaction exists. A significant portion of payments for exports to Russia and imports from that market are conducted in dollars through US banks, which results in turnovers which are detrimental to the balance of payments.<sup>152</sup>

The problem of Polish trade with Russia is also connected with the dominance of small and medium-sized enterprises. Indeed, these enterprises on the huge Russian market are invisible, have no recognition and can be easily eliminated by large companies. About 390 enterprises involving participation of Polish capital, more than 180 with 100 percent of Polish capital, 20 branch offices and more than 70 representative offices of Polish enterprises are registered in Russia.<sup>153</sup> Most Polish investments in Russia are direct (about 80%), however, their value is quite small (about 90 million

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<sup>149</sup> *Polska w Unii Europejskiej – doświadczenia pierwszego roku członkostwa* [Poland in the European Union – experience from the first year of membership], Office of the Committee of European Integration (2005).

<sup>150</sup> Paweł Bożyk in *Stosunki gospodarcze Polska-Rosja w warunkach integracji z UE* [Polish-Russian Economic Relations and the EU Enlargement], p. 20.

<sup>151</sup> *Portal Promocji Eksportu* [Export Promotion Portal] Ministry of the Economy and Labour (2004).

<sup>152</sup> *Polska 2004. Raport o stanie handlu zagranicznego* [Report on the status of foreign trade], Ministry of the Economy and Labour. Department of Analysis and Economic Forecasts. According to the balance of payments, exports to Russia in 2003 accounted for 0.7 billion USD. At the same time imports reached only 1 billion USD.

<sup>153</sup> *Rynek: wschodni partnerzy* [The market: eastern partners], The Institute of Trends and Foreign Trade Prices, September 2004, Ministry of the Economy and Labour, <http://www.eksporter.gov.pl>.



USD).<sup>154</sup> A significant portion of Polish investments is connected with internal and external trade intermediation. As a rule, these investments are small: contributions totalling several or tens of thousands of US dollars are the most common.<sup>155</sup>

The low level of investment is due both to a lack of capital and the lack of readiness of Polish companies to invest jointly, as well as to the specific nature of the Russian market. Further, the level of investment is connected with the short period of stability and economic growth after the crisis of August 1998, imperfect commercial law, a complicated taxation system and a burdensome bureaucracy.<sup>156</sup> The following regions are the major importers of Polish goods: Moscow (about 40% of exports to the Russian Federation), the Moscow Oblast (19%) and the Kaliningrad Oblast (15%).

The level of state funding for Polish export promotion remains low and stands at about 10 million USD annually, which is five times less than Hungary and twenty times less than Spain spend.<sup>157</sup> Poland *de facto* has no organised plan for promotion of its exports and the majority of actions that do occur are arranged *ad hoc*. Moreover, Poland does not have a long-term government programme to support Polish foreign trade.

Russian companies also factor in the irregularities they have observed in Poland. It is possible to speak of a specific kind of fear of dependence on Russian companies investing in Polish strategic sectors (e.g. Gazprom). These companies are accused of being an instrument of the Kremlin's foreign policy. Such an argument, however, is not advanced with respect to the capital of any other country investing in Poland. These strong links between business and politics do not occur with respect to any other investors on which Poland is dependent. Both sides have postulated the simplification of border crossing procedures and the transit of goods through Poland, the introduction of cheap visas for multiple use and the facilitation of issuing of visas for Russian entrepreneurs cooperating with partners in Poland. As far as the visas issue is concerned, the Russian side on many occasions has not agreed to Polish proposals regarding border crossings: free visas to Poland in return for non-visa travel to Russia.<sup>158</sup> Currently, a strong asymmetry exists in the procedure for obtaining visas; the Russian visa is far more difficult to obtain than a Polish visa.<sup>159</sup>

Further development of Polish-Russian trade relations depends on progress made in the process of

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<sup>154</sup> According to the Federal State Statistics Service (Goskomstat) of the Russian Federation, Polish investments in Russia since 2000 have grown as follows (in million USD): 11.2 (2000); 9.5 (2001); 5.2 (2002); 20.1(2003); 39.5 (2004); and 143.2 (2005). Source: "Interesy z Rosją trzeba robić z głową – Na potęgę rośnie polski handel z Rosją" [You need to use your head to do business in Russia – Polish trade with Russia growing exponentially], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 7 April 2006, p. 30.

<sup>155</sup> M. Żukowski, "The influence of Poland's EU membership on the possibilities of changing the position in Russian foreign trade" in Paweł Bożyk (ed.) *Stosunki gospodarcze Polska-Rosja w warunkach integracji z UE* [Polish-Russian Economic Relations and EU Enlargement], p. 108.

<sup>156</sup> Although positive initiatives do exist, such as the act on Special Economic Zones (with the exception of Kaliningrad), introduced in August 2005 that enables investors to obtain customs duties and VAT exemptions. The condition for this is to invest 10 million EUR (1 million EUR in the first year of the investment), GOST Certification Enterprise, <http://www.news.gost24.com>.

<sup>157</sup> *Polski system wspierania eksportu* [Polish system of export support], Portal Promocji Eksportu, Ministry of the Economy and Labour, [www.eksporter.gov.pl](http://www.eksporter.gov.pl).

<sup>158</sup> This kind of solution was successfully applied for border movement between Poland and Ukraine. Polish citizens do not need visas and citizens of Ukraine receive Polish visas free of charge. The Polish government, in preparing Poland for Schengen accession, was obliged to introduce a visa regime for its neighbours. Unfortunately, Russia rejected this solution.

<sup>159</sup> M. Żukowski, The influence of Poland's EU membership on the possibilities of changing the position in Russian foreign trade; joint research edited by P. Bożyk, *Stosunki gospodarcze Polska-Rosja w warunkach integracji z UE*, Warsaw School of Economics, Warsaw, 2004, p. 111.

foreign trade liberalisation, the removal of barriers and restrictions imposed by Russia. At present, Russia is striving to adjust its legislation to WTO standards, which will undoubtedly improve the transparency and stability of the Russian legal system and will reduce the risk of foreign investments, including Polish. Customs duties on industrial and agricultural products will be gradually reduced. Furthermore, financial support for agricultural production and its exports will be restricted and minimal access to the Russian market for goods imported under tariff quotas will be ensured. Moreover, liberalisation will occur in the Russian policy of controlling access to its market.<sup>160</sup>

The orientation of the Polish economy to the West where, despite fierce competition, it is possible to find attractive trade markets, purchase new technologies, obtain credit and utilise management experience, does not preclude activation of economic relations with the East.<sup>161</sup> Poland's accession to the EU should additionally have a positive impact on effectiveness of the development of these relations. Poland should use its experience in eastern markets as its chief asset in strengthening its cooperation with the West.

According to some experts the strategic geographic situation of Poland, where important (communication, rail, road and pipeline) connections are located, is an important argument for the development of bilateral cooperation. This infrastructure requires considerable financial outlays – funded both by the Polish government and EU regional policy – in order, through modernisation and expansion, to increase its capacity. In particular, this concerns the road infrastructure (motorways). The modernisation and expansion of modern border crossings is a bilateral duty, requiring involvement from the Russian (and Belarusian) side.

According to critics the hope of building a strong Polish economy by acting as a “trade bridge” between the west and east is exaggerated. According to Jarosław Ćwiek-Karpowicz at the Institute for Public Affairs (ISP), for example, being a transit country is not enough in today's globalized world, where countries trade almost as easily with partners far away as their nearest neighbours. Therefore Poland cannot hope to play the role of an important transit country between large economic centres such as Western Europe and Russia. Large economic powers, such as Great Britain, can perhaps play this role. Often an exaggerated emphasis on transit possibilities bears witness of an inadequate development of the economy of the country in question and an inability to offer anything more attractive.<sup>162</sup>

It seems clear that Poland cannot build a strong, future economy solely on transit trade. The main emphasis of Polish economic policy, as Ćwiek-Karpowicz implies, should be put on development of the domestic economy. This, however, does not rule out the possibility of using the EU financial support (especially during the period 2007-2013) to develop Polish regions and improve the general infrastructure including the one needed for transit trade.

Due to the differences in market sizes and the asymmetrical trade structure, Poland does not have any economic leverage over Russia. Russia, on the other hand, because of Poland's energy dependence, can exert significant influence on the Polish economy.

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<sup>160</sup> *Członkostwo Rosji w WTO* [Russia's membership in the WTO], Portal Promocji Eksportu, Ministry of the Economy and Labour, 2003, <http://www.eksporter.gov.pl>.

<sup>161</sup> Wojciech Oniszczyk, *Czynniki zewnętrzne transformacji gospodarki Rosji. Handel zagraniczny, kapitał zagraniczny, transfer technologii* [External factors of Russia's economic transformation. Foreign trade, foreign capital, technology transfer], (2002) p. 162.

<sup>162</sup> Jarosław Ćwiek-Karpowicz, *Polska polityka zagraniczna wobec Rosji – wyzwania dla nowego rządu* [Polish Foreign Policy Toward Russia – Challenges for the New Government], Institute of Public Affairs (ISP), *Analizy i Opinie*, no 58, 2006, p. 4-5.

Russia can decrease Polish competitiveness on the Russian and foreign markets through prices on energy resources. Poland's membership in European structures definitely strengthens its position in contacts with Russia. At the same time, however, this makes Poland dependent on Western partners. Therefore, efforts should be made to concentrate on developing a more coherent and common Eastern policy.

## Chapter 5. The Energy Problem – Security Leverage and Dependence

*Russia's new economic imperialism... yesterday it was tanks, today it's oil.*<sup>163</sup>

Zbigniew Siemiątkowski,  
former head of the Polish security service

*For the past 30 years there have not been any problems with supply either from the USSR or from Russia; and there will not be any, as this would be economic suicide for Russia.*<sup>164</sup>

Roland Götz,  
Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, Berlin

In the new era after the Cold War, a number of new areas of public life are becoming subject to security concerns. Natural resources are one of these areas. Among these, energy carriers are on top of the agenda today, also in Russia and Poland.

This chapter first takes a look at Russia's long-term national energy strategy as well as its dependence on incomes from exports of energy carriers. It then goes on to describe the dependence of Poland and the other new EU member states on Russian energy (especially gas). Thereafter follows an overview of the EU energy dialogue with Russia. Next follows a discussion on Poland's long-term energy strategy until 2025. Towards the end of the chapter, the case for Polish nuclear power as an alternative, long-term viable source of energy is briefly discussed.

### ***The Russian Energy Strategy Up Till 2020***

One of the achievements of the Putin administration in reforming Russia is the production of a number of policy guiding doctrines, strategies and concepts related to national security.<sup>165</sup> Between the year 2000 and 2005 a number of doctrinal documents dealing with various aspects of Russian national security were published.<sup>166</sup> In 2003, a national energy strategy for the period up to 2020 was adopted (hereinafter referred to as energy strategy 2020).<sup>167</sup>

In its foreign policy concept, it explicitly states that Russian foreign policy should be geared towards promoting the country's economy. However, unlike the post-modern EU, increased economic power is not perceived as a tool for increased mutual welfare, but rather as a security and foreign policy leverage to promote Russia's interests in a zero-sum setting.

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<sup>163</sup> Luiza Zalewska and Michał Majewski, "Siemiątkowski odesłał J&S ad acta", [Siemiątkowski sent J&S ad acta] *Rzeczpospolita*, 3 December 2004, p. 1.

<sup>164</sup> Anna Rubinowicz-Grundler, "Marsz na Wschód po energię" [March to the East for energy], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 3 December 2004, p. 27.

<sup>165</sup> Part of this work was initiated already by the Yeltsin administration.

<sup>166</sup> See the homepage of the Security Council of the Russian Federation, <http://www.scrf.gov.ru/>.

<sup>167</sup> Russian Ministry of Industry and Energy, *Energeticheskaia strategija Rossii na period do 2020 goda* [Russia's Energy Strategy for the Period up to 2020], <http://www.mte.gov.ru/docs/32/189.html>, Government decree no 1234, dated 28 August 2003.

This is even more obvious from the national energy strategy 2020. It explicitly states that energy will be used as an instrument for economic and political control over other states and actors. The aim is that others should be dependent on Russia, whereas Russia at the same time should be independent of others. Russia's energy policy is aimed at gaining control over domestic and international markets. Russia, however, is dependent on the export revenues from natural resources, especially energy carriers.

In an extensive analysis *Russia's Strategic Commodities: Energy and Metals as Security Leverage*, the conclusion is drawn that Russia's actual behaviour conforms with the term energy strategy.<sup>168</sup> Natural resources as a whole are seen as means to achieve

- economic growth
- increase Russia's international influence
- guarantee economic independence

The report concludes that Russia has a large capability to influence, but less ability to control world markets. The Kremlin further has extensive capability to influence the outflow and control commodities from Russia. Russia still has a large capacity to influence individual countries (this is especially true for gas). The report underlines that Russia is continuously strengthening its ability to use energy as a foreign policy instrument. Experience shows that Russia has used the energy weapon against countries both within and outside the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

Keith C. Smith from the *Centre for Strategic and International Studies* (CSIS) confirms these conclusions and even goes a bit further in his assessment. In a review of his recent report it says:

*... the current policies of the Russian government, under Vladimir Putin, pose a significant challenge to the development of transparent democratic governments and free markets in those countries dependent on Russia for their energy resources. Over the past few years, the Kremlin has increasingly used its energy monopoly to influence policies in the neighbouring countries of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and Ukraine. Russia's national security interest, as defined by Putin, is to re-establish Moscow's control over strategic infrastructure in neighbouring states. This control is to be used to ensure that there are friendly governments in place to support Russian security and economic interests. It would be an exaggeration to call Russian economic power projection imperialism, but the neo-colonial characteristics of Russia's foreign energy policy are readily apparent to those living in the immediate neighbourhood. According to Keith Smith, the United States should take the lead in working with the EU and the Central Europeans to better understand the political and security risks that stem from Russia's use of energy as an instrument of foreign policy. The consolidation of transparent democracy and open markets in East-Central Europe would have a positive impact on the course of reform in Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine. Therefore, it is in the long-term security interests of the United States and its allies to break the cycle of corruption and political influence that underlie Russia's foreign energy policy in the Baltics, Poland, and Ukraine.*<sup>169</sup>

A sign that the United States government takes the energy issue very seriously was the letter from President Bush to President Putin in April 2006 with six postulates "Back to the Road of Democracy" before the G8 meeting in St. Petersburg in the summer of 2006. In the letter, the US President urges Putin to declare not to extort its neighbours using energy stoppages.<sup>170</sup>

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<sup>168</sup> Jan Leijonhielm and Robert Larsson, *Russia's Strategic Commodities: Energy and Metals as Security Levers*, FOI-R-1346-SE, November 2004.

<sup>169</sup> Abstract of the report at CSIS homepage <http://csis.zoovy.com/product/0892064560>.

<sup>170</sup> Marcin Gadziński, "USA do Rosji: wróćcie na drogę demokracji" [The USA to Russia: Return to the road of

Although most Russian and foreign analysts stress that the imprisonment of Chodorskovskii was a move by the Kremlin to assure that there would be no rival centre of political power, it is also highly likely that another reason was to remove the risk of Russian energy resources ending up in foreign hands via company take-overs or fusions with foreign owners.

Beginning in 2005, only companies where Russian members own 51 percent of stocks will be allowed to purchase natural resource fields in Russia, according to the Ministry of Natural Resources. The Minister of Natural Resources, Yuri Trutnev, says that Russia must no longer supply western business with cheap natural resources.<sup>171</sup> This is further evidence that the Kremlin is intent on strengthening state control over these strategic assets.

### ***Russian dependence and the curse of energy resources***

Natural resources constitute one of the pillars of the Russian economy and they are also an unusually important instrument of domestic and foreign policy. Natural gas occupies an especially important position among natural resources in the Russian economy.<sup>172</sup> Yet, Russia despite its awareness that other European countries are dependent on it for fuel also is aware of its own dependence. Indeed, the sale of crude oil and natural gas constitutes the basis of its exports. In 2003, revenues from the sale of energy carriers (gas, oil, coal, etc.) accounted for approximately 55% of all revenues from exports. According to Sergei Oganessian, Head of the Federal Energy Agency, in this same year, the fuel-energy complex accounted for 28% of Russian GDP, 30% of industrial production, 54% of the federal budget and 45% of currency reserves.<sup>173</sup>

With respect to natural gas, according to Agata Łoskot at the Centre for Eastern Studies (OSW), Gazprom provides about 8% of the consolidated budget (federal budget and regional budgets) and receipts from gas exports constitute about 12% of Russia's foreign currency revenues.<sup>174</sup>

In addition, other factors come into play, e.g. hidden subsidies to the Russian economy through reduced prices from the gas monopoly. The low domestic gas prices are an important tool of the state's social policy.<sup>175</sup>

Paradoxically, however, Russia's strategy does not bode well over the long-term. In theory, thanks to this strategy Russia will be able to extend its influence over the situation in the buyer countries. Unfortunately, in practice basing exports mostly on non-processed materials leads directly to a hobbling of the economy and in particular to its industrial sector. In this way, Russia risks losing even more ground on the developed economies of the West. In addition, all indications are that serious competition for influence in this sector of the economy will occur in Moscow itself. The Warsaw Centre for Eastern Studies (OSW) has written that the battle for assets in the strategic

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democracy], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 9 May 2006, p. 1 and 10.

<sup>171</sup> "Russians restrict foreign access to its oilfields", *Pravda.Ru*, [http://english.pravda.ru/main/18/89/357/14968\\_oil.html](http://english.pravda.ru/main/18/89/357/14968_oil.html), 16 February 2005, downloaded 8 July 2005.

<sup>172</sup> Agata Łoskot, „Bezpieczeństwo dostaw rosyjskiego gazu do UE - kwestia połączeń infrastrukturalnych”, [Security of supply of Russian gas to the EU – the issue of infrastructure connections], *Punkt Widzenia OSW*, February 2005, p. 5-6.

<sup>173</sup> Robert Larsson, *Russia's Energy Policy: Security Dimensions and Russia's Reliability as an Energy Supplier*, FOI-R—1934—SE, March 2006, p. 33-34.

<sup>174</sup> Agata Łoskot, „Bezpieczeństwo dostaw rosyjskiego gazu do UE - kwestia połączeń infrastrukturalnych”, *Punkt Widzenia OSW*, February 2005, p. 6.

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*

energy sector has deeply divided Kremlin politicians. Moreover, it is said that even President Putin is an object of manipulation and that the office of the president is becoming increasingly instrumental. OSW even presents the view that “Putin is slowly beginning to lose control over the race to gain the influence of politicians from his camp.”<sup>176</sup>

Currently, Europe is the largest and *de facto* sole purchaser of Russian gas. The European Union is the most profitable sales market, which is at the same time very strongly dependent.<sup>177</sup> One of the fundamental goals of Russian energy policy is to diversify export paths and to avoid dependency of turnover on transit countries. On the other hand, Central European countries want to remain transit countries for the export of natural resources to Western Europe in order to secure themselves against potential Russian domination. It is possible to decode Russia’s intentions by examining the map. The central pipelines running through Belarus, Ukraine and Poland are to be supplemented by two lines that circumvent Central European countries to the north (Baltic pipeline, or the North European Gas Pipeline (NEGP) as the official name reads) and to the south (Burgas-Aleksandropolis pipeline and the Sukhodolnaia-Rodionovka-Noworosyjsk pipeline transporting Caspian crude oil to Western Europe<sup>178</sup>). In this new game, which vividly recalls the “outflanking the enemy” military manoeuvre, Ukraine and Poland are important participants in it for the European Union.<sup>179</sup>

A similar situation is developing in the Far East. Despite the Russian-Chinese twenty-year treaty on mutual friendship and cooperation, as well as in spite of negotiations, in 2005 the Russian government decided to construct a pipeline to Japan that bypasses China (Angarsk – Nachodka/Perevoznaya Bay) instead of the main pipeline that runs directly to Daqing in China. Shortly after announcing this decision, however, President Putin declared a desire to construct a branch to China. This was likely a tactical manoeuvre intended to encourage Tokyo to make a larger contribution to co-financing the investment. Russia clearly does not want to become dependent exclusively on the government in Beijing.<sup>180</sup> Despite the fact that the NEGP and the Angarsk-Nachodka pipeline are more expensive to construct than alternative projects, the government in Moscow has decided to proceed with their construction. In this manner, Russia wants to eliminate its dependence on transit countries and diversify the customers for its resources. This is consistent with the current energy strategy 2020. At the same time, Russia is seeking strong economic partners (Germany together with a few other countries from EU15, as well as Japan), with whom it could pursue its intentions. Unfortunately, both in the West and in the East, this policy entails serious negative consequences for neighbouring countries.

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<sup>176</sup> Jadwiga Rogoża and Ewa Paszyc, “Kremlowskie klany w wyścigu o wpływ” [Kremlin clan in race for influence], OSW, *Eastweek*, no. 2, 23 June 2005, p. 2-3.

<sup>177</sup> Agata Łoskot, „Bezpieczeństwo dostaw rosyjskiego gazu do UE - kwestia połączeń infrastrukturalnych”, *Punkt Widzenia OSW*, February 2005, p. 6.

<sup>178</sup> Jakob Hedenskog, „Filling 'the gap': Russian security policy towards Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova under Putin” in Jakob Hedenskog, Vilhelm Konnander, Bertil Nygren, Ingmar Oldberg, Christer Pursiainen (ed.) *Russia as a Great Power – Dimensions of security under Putin*, (Routledge, London and New York, 2005), p. 141.

<sup>179</sup> The language in the Russian energy strategy is military in character. Michael Fredholm, *The Russian Energy Strategy and Energy Policy: Pipeline Diplomacy or Mutual Dependence?*, Conflict Studies Research Centre, Swindon, no. 05/41, September 2005, p. 3.

<sup>180</sup> Robert Larsson, *Russia's Energy Policy: Security Dimensions and Russia's Reliability as an Energy Supplier*, FOI-R—1934—SE, March 2006, p. 242-249, Ingolf Kiesow, *China's Quest for Energy: Impact upon Foreign and Security Policy*, FOI-R—1371—SE, November 2004, p. 33-38 and Grzegorz Sadowski, „Błękitny trójkąt” [The blue triangle], *Wprost*, 13 March 2005, p. 86-88.

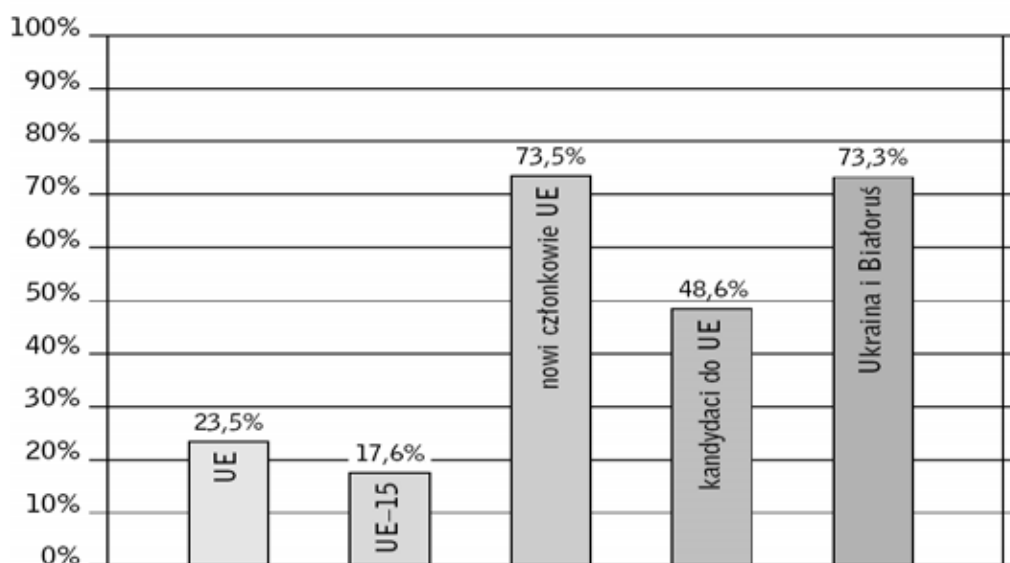
## *EU dependence on Russian gas and the curse of diversification*<sup>181</sup>

Natural gas consumption in EU countries is rising systematically. Currently in the EU, about one-fourth of primary energy is produced from natural gas. Gas consumption in 2003 amounted to about 480 billion m<sup>3</sup>, of which 51% came from imports from outside the EU.

The largest suppliers of natural gas to the EU are Norway, Algeria and Russia. According to every forecast, in the nearest future a significant increase in internal consumption of gas will occur, as well as a gradual exhaustion of European deposits. In this case, the largest world producer and exporter – Russia – plays the main role. Indeed, it appears that the currently existing projects to supply gas from the Caspian region and Iran and Iraq do not have much chance of success (given the unstable political situation of these areas alone) despite the fact that from an EU perspective this would offer an advantageous way to diversify its imports.

**Figure 3. The dependence of various European groups on imports of natural gas from Russia in 2003 (ratio of imports from the Russian Federation to total consumption)**  
[x-axis labels from left to right: EU; EU-15; new EU members; EU candidate countries; Ukraine and Belarus].

**Rys.2. Zależność poszczególnych grup państw europejskich od importu gazu z Rosji (stosunek importu z FR do całkowitej konsumpcji)**



Data from 2003: IEA, Natural Gas Information 2004, and own calculations by the Centre for Eastern Studies (OSW). Figure source and copyright: Agata Łoskot, "Bezpieczeństwo dostaw rosyjskiego gazu do UE-kwestia połączeń infrastrukturalnych", [Security of supply of Russian gas to the EU – the issue of infrastructure connections] Centre for Eastern Studies, *Punkt Widzenia*, February 2005, <http://www.osw.waw.pl/pub/punkt/0502/gaz.htm>.

The EU energy situation has recently undergone significant change due to its enlargement to include Central and Eastern European countries. It is precisely these countries that remain the most

<sup>181</sup> The following subsection is based on the arguments, data and calculations of Agata Łoskot contained in "Bezpieczeństwo dostaw rosyjskiego gazu do UE - kwestia połączeń infrastrukturalnych", *Punkt Widzenia OSW*, February 2005. The authors are particularly grateful for this opportunity and for permission to use two illustrations from her analysis. Whenever the analysis has been supplemented by the authors of this report, the sources are provided in footnotes.



dependent on Russian gas and crude oil. After enlargement in 2004, the level of EU countries' consumption of gas stood at an average of 23%. Countries from EU15 before May 2004 imported 17% of natural gas consumed from Russia. The largest consumers of gas remain Germany – importing over 32% of the resource from Russia – as well as Italy and France, which depend on Russia for about 25% of needs.

The situation is a bit different in the new EU countries, as these countries' dependence is several times higher – 73% of the gas they consume is imported from Russia. Moreover, a large group of countries is completely dependent on Russian resources: Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Slovakia. This significant difference in the degree of dependency on gas from Russia means that discrepancies exist in the basis of contracts with the Russian Federation. Central and Eastern European countries realise that a strong dependency on a single source of gas supplies is problematic from an energy security perspective. Western European countries take a completely different view; for them the transport of gas from Russia provides an opportunity for further diversification of supply of resources and the possibility of stable gas supplies. These different perspectives as well as a certain visible contradiction of interests on these issues present a challenge for the conduct of a uniform energy policy towards the Russian Federation.

**Map 1. The main Russia-Europe gas export pipelines.**

[legend: pipelines; planned pipelines; mld = billion]

Mapa. Główne gazociągi eksportowe Rosja–Europa

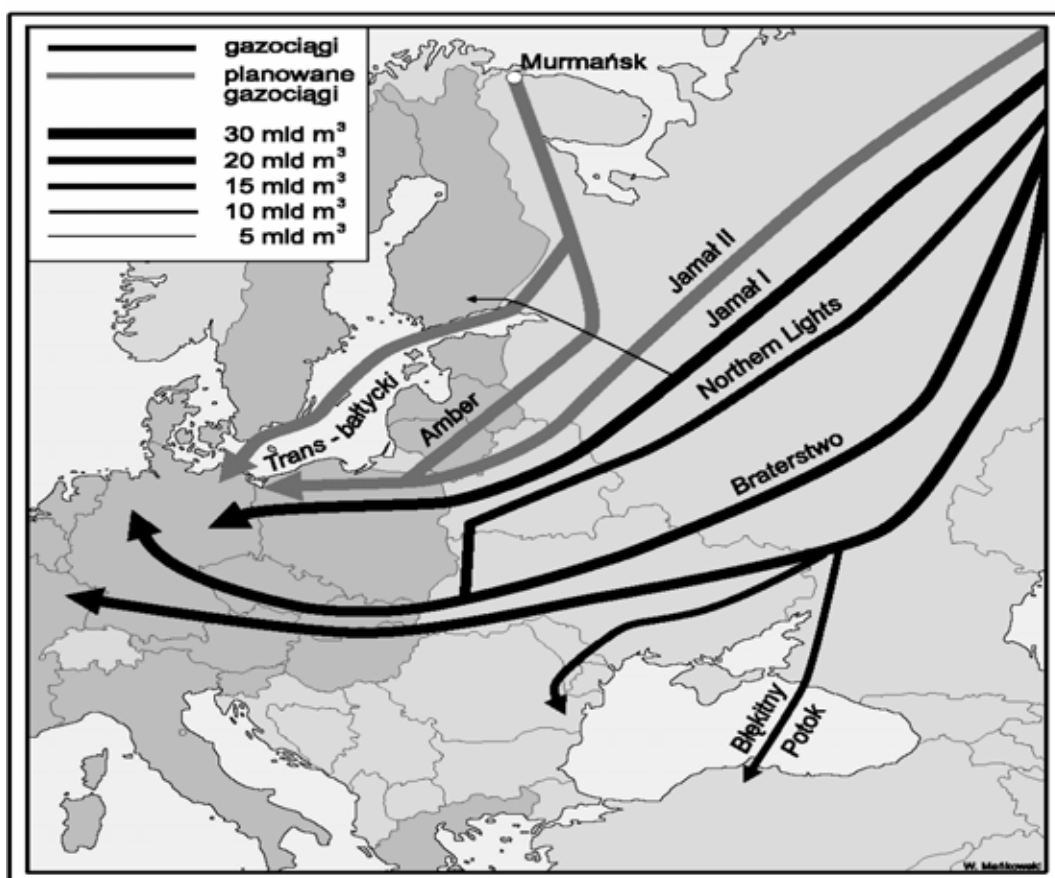


Figure source and copyright: Agata Łoskot, "Bezpieczeństwo dostaw rosyjskiego gazu do UE-kwestia połączeń infrastrukturalnych", [Security of supply of Russian gas to the EU – the issue of infrastructure connections], Centre for Eastern Studies, *Punkt Widzenia*, February 2005, <http://www.osw.waw.pl/pub/punkt/0502/gaz.htm>.

For the new member states, the issue of reducing energy dependence involves diversifying the source of supply. Unfortunately, rapid diversification is at present impossible due to the specific nature of the transport of gas. Indeed, permanent infrastructure connections linking the parties for many years and entailing huge investment costs are essential to transport gas. The chances of significant changes in the source of gas are currently small. Russia continues to be the largest exporter of gas in the immediate neighbourhood and this is why the new member states see their only chance to improve their energy security in counterbalancing resource dependence by increasing their role as transit countries for Russia and by expanding their own distribution networks. It is only in the long-term perspective that these countries can consider opportunities for diversification of gas supplies through projects such as the Norwegian pipeline or Nabucco (Iranian and Caspian gas transported through Turkey) or purchase of gas in Libya. This is why in this region of Europe the issue of the construction of new EU-Russia gas pipeline routes – the NEGP and the Yamal pipeline – has been such an important question.

Both of these projects have certain advantages and limitations. The NEGP is a beneficial project due to the fact that it avoids the transport of gas through unstable Belarus. Constructing this pipeline, however, also involves a negative aspect, as the gas pipeline is to bypass not only Belarus. A pipeline running along the bottom of the Baltic Sea from Russia directly to Germany will also bypass Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, and significantly decrease their energy security. Poland is in an analogous situation, as the document signed by Putin and Schröder without its participation negatively affects its economic and political interests. It also weakens Poland's energy security. Further, construction of this gas pipeline is definitely unfavourable to the Baltic States and Poland because in bypassing their territory, it reduces their transit role and thus their importance to Russia. This system would render it impossible for these countries to counterbalance their supply dependence through the control over the transit of gas. Construction began on 9 December 2005 and the project has engendered many political, economic and environmental controversies (the cost of the project is estimated at 6 billion USD, although it is known that apart from Russia and Germany, most likely French, British or Dutch companies will also participate in the project, which should spread out the costs).<sup>182</sup>

A decidedly more advantageous project from the perspective of the aforementioned countries is the Yamal gas pipeline and in particular the construction of its second line, Yamal-2. This solution would increase the energy security of the new EU member states and at the same time enable the expansion of new transport routes for Russian gas to Western Europe. Unfortunately, despite the fact that this project is much cheaper than construction of the NEGP (the costs are at a ratio of 1 to 4-5), this project did not attract the necessary interest of Gazprom, possibly due to the difficulty of coordinating actions in all countries through which it was designed to pass. In addition, the European Investment Bank (EIB) currently supports the NEGP.

As it follows from the foregoing discussion, Russia treats its energy policy like the perfect foreign policy instrument. This instrument, based on the assumption of the irreplaceability of Russian energy resources, is an excellent instrument for exerting pressure on the EU, especially the new member states that are exceptionally linked to the Russian resources industry. The Russian Federation expressed this approach by temporarily shutting off the supply of gas to EU countries and to Poland (not yet a member) in 2003. Belarus, Lithuania, Kaliningrad and Poland suffered in particular due to this. Although this move was aimed primarily at Belarus, Poland – poised to enter

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<sup>182</sup> On the RynekGazu.pl webpage, one can find estimates of the costs of constructing various gas pipelines, <http://www.rynekgazu.pl/index.html?id=88>. The 6 billion USD estimate comes from Agata Łoskot, „Bezpieczeństwo dostaw rosyjskiego gazu do UE - kwestia połączeń infrastrukturalnych”, *Punkt Widzenia OSW*, February 2005, p. 12.

the EU – felt the impact particularly acutely. Despite the fact that Germany also felt the effects of limits in the gas supplies from Russia, this impact was small thanks to the supply of gas from alternative routes (additionally, it should be added that Germany was forewarned about limits in supply). Poland – without supply other than from Russia – acutely felt the Russian Federation’s actions. This fact clearly demonstrates that the current ruling administration in Russia is capable of resorting to political pressure on neighbouring countries – and therefore the EU itself – by using its energy resources in this manner. This issue is unusually key for Brussels and especially for the new member states that are strongly dependent upon resource supplies from Russia, for it is essential to maintain the uninterrupted supply of oil and gas for the proper functioning and sustained economic growth of the EU Member State economies. Due to the lack of alternative significant sources of supply, the holding of transit lines of Russian resources is particularly important for new European Union member states, including Poland. The current energy situation is in a deadlock and requires effective action; the status quo is neither in the interests of the EU dependent on supplies of Russian gas and oil, nor in the interests of Russia itself, which despite its ability to exert pressure through its control of energy does not have a choice and is dependent on the export of resources to EU countries. In order better to understand the real significance of the energy dialogue, the extent to which the EU country economies are dependent on Russian resources, at what stage is the dialogue currently and what are its effects to date all need to be precisely investigated. Indeed, the degree of the EU’s dependence on Russian energy resources – in particular Russian natural gas – remains a key issue.

If Poland found itself in a tight situation, it would be unable to import a sufficient amount of gas from suppliers other than Russia. Poland has only one connection to the German gas pipeline system – with a capacity sufficient to cover around just 8% of Poland’s annual demand.<sup>183</sup> Therefore, one of the priorities of Polish energy policy should be to work toward opening connections with gas pipelines from the west.

The aforementioned plans and designs are examples of mutual energy relations and are discussed to a significant degree as part of the energy dialogue between the European Union and the Russian Federation. The next subsection deals with the current status of the energy dialogue and the probability that it will remain in a dead-lock.

### ***The Russian-EU energy dialogue***

Russia holds a special place in the European Union’s energy policy and the Energy Dialogue is one of the fundamental elements of strategy for ensuring energy security. At the same time, this dialogue is one of the basic sources of misunderstandings in EU relations with the Russian Federation. The EU and Russia both take a different approach to energy policy.

The energy issue is an area of policy that is extremely important both to the economy as well as to global and European geopolitics. Recent years have vividly shown how both sides treat the energy dialogue and the kind of tool of diplomatic influence it has become for the Russian side.

At present, the dialogue is institutionalised to a considerable extent. Its origins date back to June 1994 when the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) was signed. A further step was the signing of the Energy Charter Treaty during the Lisbon Conference that took place on 16-17 December 1994. It was the first legal agreement of which all of the countries of the former USSR,

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<sup>183</sup> Adam Grzeszak, “Iwan i gazurka” [Ivan and the gas pipeline], *Polityka*, no 50, 11 December 2004, p. 8, 10.

the countries of Central and Eastern Europe as well as the members of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) became signatories.<sup>184</sup>

The signing of this document enabled the development of cooperation in the area of fuels and energy. Commitments were made to take a series of steps such as: facilitating the movement of resources in line with the freedom of transit principle without distinction as to the origin, destination or ownership of the energy materials, security of action. Supply was also guaranteed and environmental protection considered.

The next stages in strengthening the dialogue involved bilateral meetings at the summit in Paris in 2000 (EU-Russia Energy Dialogue) as well as in Brussels in 2001, where the concept of “Dialogue and Partnership” was made more precise and where – which is extremely important – it was proposed to form substantive working groups, inter alia, on strategy and energy efficiency and investments. Their aim was to monitor the “dialogue” and to solve problems. A timeline for reform of the Russian energy sector up to 2004 was also established. Short-term projects were intended to adapt Russian law to facilitate investment cooperation, including PSA (Production Sharing Agreement) – this agreement on the division of production was to ensure conditions for the modernisation of the extraction and transportation infrastructure. Medium-term projects, on the other hand, were to involve Russia’s entry into the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and ratification of the Energy Charter Treaty.

To date, some of the intended aims have been achieved, such as implementation of a portion of the investment projects – the so-called energy projects of mutual interest and the start-up of the commercial guarantee fund designed to support the implementation of these projects. The legal framework was also improved and a model PSA was developed specifying the volume of oil and gas.

Unfortunately, despite all of these successes, significant problems stemming from Russian action or inaction still exist. Russia wants, for example, to continue to maintain the heretofore long-term contracts that are disadvantageous for the new member states due to the terms and conditions of contracts based on the “take or pay” rule (“take or pay” contracts are a type of contract that does not entail the right of re-export or re-sale of gas and involves a high and stiff level of commitment to purchase). The European Commission would prefer to alter the heretofore rules of contracts and would like for the new long-term contracts to ensure producers of the receipt and purchase of a minimal level of gas by customers despite having exhibited understanding of the Russian Federation’s desire to maintain these contracts due to the fact that they are used to secure loans for infrastructure investments. The remaining gas should be sold under “spot gas trading;” this would enable gas to the EU to be imported according to the principle of competition. Moreover, Russia at present is not permitting the wider entry of foreign investors into its gas sector, which is confirmed by the fact that it has not ratified a document as important as the Energy Charter Treaty and that it does not agree with market rules of transit. This posture is significantly blocking further development of the energy dialogue. And despite EU awareness of the fact that Russia needs EU markets to sell its resources, it remains too passive in its negotiations with the Russian Federation. The EU is concerned about the security of supply, which results in it exerting insufficient pressure on such issues as for instance the ratification of the Energy Charter Treaty.

Thus, currently we are observing a standstill in EU investments in the Russian energy sector. The process of restructuring has also been halted. This ebbing of EU interest should alarm Russian

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<sup>184</sup> At present, 51 countries are signatories; this includes Poland, which ratified the Treaty in May 2000. See for example <http://www.warsawvoice.pl/view/3572/>.

politicians because investments are highly needed in the Federation. The more so given that Russia is striving toward WTO membership – and on preferential rules – and it may obtain the necessary EU support only by transforming into a market economy, for which modernisation of the energy sector is essential.

It appears that Russian thinking on this issue as well requires special interpretation. Russia perceives the problem of the exhaustion of its own reserves and attempts to purchase cheap resources from, for instance, Turkmenistan to meet its domestic needs while it sells its own gas at a higher price abroad. In the future, Russia's practice of purchasing gas from Central Asia may become common, and Russia's re-export of gas from Central Asia seems unfavourable to the EU (despite the fact that the Russian Federation is a well-known and long-term trade partner of the EU) and in addition discriminates against Central Asian countries and makes them dependent – politically as well – on the Russian Federation. This could result in even greater Russian domination in gas deliveries to the EU, which would affect the price of this resource on EU markets. Precisely due to the possibility of this kind of development of the situation, continued development of the energy dialogue, or another form of bilateral energy talks combined with pressure on Russia to apply freedom of transit developed under the Transit Protocol of the Energy Charter, is essential. Also key is to seek alternative sources of transporting resources, such as transit through Turkey, which has European aspirations. This scenario is advantageous for the EU and it is actively interested in and supports it. The problem lies in the fact that Russia takes precisely the opposite view. This solution is decidedly disadvantageous for the Russian Federation, whose position on the EU market would be significantly reduced in favour of new suppliers. The European Union should avail itself of the opportunity this alternative presents, not only in the literal context – that is, the transit of gas – but this solution should also serve Brussels in exerting pressure to obtain the best possible terms for the import of resources into its territory and strengthen the role of the energy dialogue and ensure its continued development. Each alternative creates an opportunity to reduce the dependence on past solutions and in this case also affords a chance to increase the effectiveness of past policies towards Russia and as such should be applied for the sake of European energy security.

### ***Energy Policy of Poland Until 2025***

On 4 January 2005, the Council of Ministers approved the document *Energy Policy of Poland Until 2025* (hereafter called Energy Policy 2025), which is key given that it defines Poland's energy security strategy.

The Ministry of the Economy's website provides information that the Programme confirms the expediency of continuing the energy policy, the objective of which is to:

- ensure the nation's energy security,
- increase the competitiveness of the economy and its energy efficiency,
- protect the environment against the negative effects of energy-related activities, concerning the generation, transmission and distribution of energy and fuels.<sup>185</sup>

The Energy Policy 2025 defines energy security as:

- a state of the economy that makes it possible to meet current and future demand for fuels and energy in a technically and economically justifiable manner, while minimising the

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<sup>185</sup> <http://www.mgip.gov.pl/GOSPODARKA/Energetyka/Polityka+energetyczna+Polski+do+2025+roku.htm>.

negative impact of the energy sector on the environment and living conditions of society.<sup>186</sup>

Poland's accession to the European Union as well as new challenges for energy security resulting from the international geopolitical situation has forced the development of a new energy strategy for Poland that will take into account the updating of energy forecasts, the issue of national energy security and the issue of environmental protection.

According to information obtained from the Chancellery of the Prime Minister, the Energy Policy 2025 was prepared under the direction of the Energy Policy Team appointed by the Prime Minister. The new document is consistent with the principles set out in *Assumptions for the National Development Plan for 2007-2013*. This document replaces the heretofore binding *Assumptions of Poland's energy policy until the year 2020*, adopted by the Council of Ministers in 2000 together with the amendments to these assumptions adopted by the government in 2002.<sup>187</sup>

The document sets out the following key principles of energy policy: principle of harmonious energy management under conditions of a social market economy, full integration of the Polish energy sector with the European and global sectors, principle of a competitive market with necessary administrative regulation in those areas where market mechanisms do not function and supporting the development of renewable energy sources (RES).<sup>188</sup> The Energy Policy 2025 also discusses other alternative sources of energy, including nuclear energy. The current Polish approach toward atomic energy is considered below in a separate section.

This document also contains for the first time an outline of a comprehensive energy security management system that specifies areas of activities undertaken in energy policy and the bodies responsible for implementation. These activities are to involve: planning, organising, coordination, supervision and monitoring of energy security. The bodies responsible for this security are also clearly identified: government administration, voivodship and commune local governments and network system operators (transmission and distribution).

The strategy adopted by the Council of Ministers in 2005 introduces a clear differentiation of energy security according to time. The competencies of each responsible body are also laid out in detail according to different time frames. The government administration is responsible for long-term energy security (investments), involving the creation of incentives to undertake development activities in this sector. Operators are responsible for short-term (technical) security of network systems operations, as viewed depending on the type of energy carrier in terms of seconds, minutes or hours. Energy consumers conducting transactions in market conditions are responsible for medium-term (commercial, understood as securing energy supplies) security. In the case of tariffed consumers or those not using the energy market, their suppliers of last resort are responsible.

The key issue of storage of energy resources is also emphasised and the amount of each type of fuel that should be stocked in order to provide for energy self-sufficiency is defined. The key issue involving the network of transboundary connections was also acknowledged. The document asserts that the current level of cross-border connections is neither sufficient to ensure the effective

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<sup>186</sup> *Energy policy of Poland until 2025*, Ministry of the Economy and Labour, <http://www.mgip.gov.pl/GOSPODARKA/Energetyka/Polityka+energetyczna+Polski+do+2025+roku.htm>, 4 January 2005, p. 5.

<sup>187</sup> *Poland's Energy Policy until 2025*, Press Centre of the Chancellery of the Prime Minister, [www.kprm.gov.pl/3585\\_12945.htm](http://www.kprm.gov.pl/3585_12945.htm).

<sup>188</sup> Ministry of the Economy and Labour, [www.mgip.gov.pl/NR/rdonlyres/2C5C0042-1C02-4091-B889-E0D26448BBC3/0/polityka\\_energet\\_pol\\_do2025.pdf](http://www.mgip.gov.pl/NR/rdonlyres/2C5C0042-1C02-4091-B889-E0D26448BBC3/0/polityka_energet_pol_do2025.pdf).

functioning of the natural gas market in Poland nor does it enable Poland's transit location in Europe to be utilised. Poland should – through its location – strive to increase its position as a transit country for Russian natural resources to the European Union.

With regard to the national transmission infrastructure, the document holds that

*Maintaining the state's ownership supervision over entities holding the transmission and trans-shipment infrastructure, including transmission system operators (TSO), whose sole function is to ensure the operation and development of the infrastructure of the competitive market in electricity, natural gas and liquid fuel.*

It appears, however, that the Polish strategy does not sufficiently and clearly stress the need to diversify the supply of energy materials especially in the context of Russia and Poland's dependence on Russian stocks of oil and natural gas.

Despite attempts at a comprehensive treatment of energy policy and the issue of energy security, the strategy does not stress the danger that ensues from insufficient diversification of the supply of oil and gas. Indeed, the fundamental issue is development of a level of cross-border connections that would provide a minimal capacity for the energy sector to function in the event of limitations in other supply. Currently, Poland does not have a sufficiently diverse (in terms of direction) network of cross-border connections. Together with other countries that joined the EU in 2004, Poland is highly dependent on Russia for energy. This situation is the most dangerous with respect to natural gas dependence. The continued dependence on one direction for the import of gas cannot be permitted and appropriate action aimed at securing supply from several sources should be taken.

An important opportunity to ensure itself energy security is the bolstering of Poland's role as an intermediary between the EU and Russia. A system in which Poland would become one of the important transit countries for Russian natural gas would provide security against energy pressure from Russia. An interruption in supply by Russia would invoke EU intervention and the threat of halting the flow of gas and oil through Poland to EU countries would put Russia in a situation from which it does not benefit given that Russia is very strongly dependent on the sale of its fuels to European markets. Apart from the European market, only an insignificant amount of crude oil is sold to other markets, such as China and the United States.

However, the planned North European Gas Pipeline would diminish Poland's role as a transit country, or alluding to the research questions posed in the Introduction: Poland's importance as an "energy bridge" between the West and East would decrease.

International cooperation in energy – one of the guarantees of a nation's energy security – remains important for building Polish energy security. Close cooperation with foreign partners attracts foreign investment to Poland and conducting Polish investments abroad. Poland should also strive for close cooperation with the European Union and actively participate in the energy dialogue between the EU and Russia. The tightening of international cooperation is also planned, especially in the Baltic region and in the Visegrad Group, as well as pursuing active bilateral cooperation with neighbouring countries aimed at bolstering the security of deliveries and securing the diversification of supply.

## *Alternative sources of energy – Poland going nuclear 2021-2022*

*In view of the need to diversify the primary energy carriers and the need to limit greenhouse gases emissions to the atmosphere, the introduction of nuclear energy to the domestic system becomes substantiated.<sup>189</sup>*

Energy Policy of Poland Until 2025

So far this report has discussed oil and gas and the problems connected with these two main energy carriers. But, a holistic approach to Poland's energy security has also to take into account Poland's heavy dependence on coal for energy production, which is unique on a global scale (cf. The section Discussion and Conclusions below).

In its *Energy Policy of Poland Until 2025* the government projects that by 2025 domestic consumption of final energy will grow with some 50%, of primary energy by ca. 40-50% and of electricity by around 80-90%. If Poland is to meet its objectives of ensuring its energy security, to increase the competitiveness of its economy and increase energy efficiency as well as to protect the environment, it will have to decrease its dependence on coal. Oil and petroleum products, natural gas, renewable energy sources and nuclear power in a rational mix will have to be the solution.<sup>190</sup>

In its *Energy Policy 2025*, the government envisages four scenarios of future domestic energy demand until 2025. In all four scenarios for future developments, the start-up of the first nuclear power station around 2021-2022 is projected. An earlier start-up is not considered viable for social and technological reasons, even if the decision on starting investment preparations were to be taken in 2005. The duration of the investment process is estimated at on the order of ten years. This investment process has to be preceded by a five-year public opinion campaign to generate support for nuclear power, hence the year 2021-2022.<sup>191</sup>

If the Polish government is to realise successfully its nuclear power plans, three main obstacles will need to be overcome:

- public opinion,
- access to adequately trained personnel capable of operating a nuclear power plant, and
- financing.

In the 1980s, a decision was made to construct a nuclear power plant. Mainly due to the vehement public protests in the aftermath of the Soviet nuclear catastrophe in Chernobyl in 1986, construction work was halted and plans abandoned. Since then, the *National Atomic Energy Agency* (NAEA) has been polling public opinion continuously. In 2004, adherents of nuclear power were in the majority (42%) for the first time and opponents in the minority (38%).<sup>192</sup>

Poland has been geologically surveyed and a number of suitable sites have been identified for future plants. The original site (Żarnowiec on the Baltic coast) is very unlikely to be chosen because of

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<sup>189</sup> *Energy Policy of Poland Until 2025*, Ministry of Economy and Labour, <http://www.mgip.gov.pl/GOSPODARKA/Energetyka/Polityka+energetyczna+Polski+do+2025+roku.htm>, p. 18.

<sup>190</sup> *Energy Policy of Poland Until 2025*, p. 23 and appendix 2.

<sup>191</sup> *Energy Policy of Poland Until 2025*, appendix 2.

<sup>192</sup> Bernadeta Waszkielewicz, "Polska atomowa" [Atomic Poland], *Newsweek Polska*, 9 January 2005, p. 20-23.



lingering local resistance, protests from environmentalists and the fact that it has the status of a special economic zone. Other locations (such as Klempicz, Kopań, Korolewo, Nieszawa, Chełmno and Tczew), however, where unemployment is rampant, are more than willing to accept having a nuclear power plant in their village given the number of jobs it would create.<sup>193</sup>

Considering this fact and the fact that Poland will invest in the latest and safest generation of nuclear reactors, public opinion might not be insurmountable. Given the growing public awareness and disapproval of the energy dependence on Russia, the number of adherents may rise even further. In May 2005, the government informed that it will start an information campaign with the purpose of convincing citizens of the need to build a nuclear power station.<sup>194</sup>

The building of two nuclear reactors of a combined 1,600 megawatts would cost approximately 4 billion USD. Western companies are already submitting their offers to the NAEA. But, although the costs are considerable, the NAEA assesses that the most pressing problem is the lack of skilled personnel. The specialists earlier planned to run the Żarnowiec plant have retired and there are no “heirs” since the educational programmes at Polish universities were disbanded together with the 1990 decision not to go forward with nuclear power. Since 1974, Poland has a research reactor outside Warsaw, but it has mainly supported basic nuclear research and has not been a platform for education. Currently, some specialists are being trained in, for example, the United States.<sup>195</sup>

## ***Discussion and conclusions***

As is the case in many other areas of mutual Polish-Russian relations, energy relations are asymmetrical. Russia has the resources and leverage, hence its offensive national energy strategy, which stresses increased international influence. Poland, which is dependent on Russia for oil and gas, is on the defensive and hence stresses energy security (uninterrupted supplies at reasonable prices). Whereas Russia can exert influence unilaterally, Poland can most effectively counteract such influence multilaterally within the EU framework.

The Polish energy strategy until 2025 states that the objectives of the state’s energy policy are

- to ensure the energy security of the country,
- to increase the competitiveness of the economy and its energy efficiency,
- to protect the environment from the negative effects of energy-related activities, concerning generation, transmission and distribution of energy and fuels.

Poland’s energy security situation is not as bad as one may think from the heated public debate. Poland is self-sufficient to 80 percent. Coal, the backbone of energy production, meets two-thirds of energy consumption. In a longer perspective, however, EU environmental regulations and Kyoto protocol commitments will force Warsaw to replace coal with other sources. Gas and oil are among the candidates and here the dependence on Russian supplies is a problem. Poland is already highly dependent on Russian gas and has very few means of diversifying its supplies. As for oil other

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<sup>193</sup> Konrad Niklewicz, “Polska atomowa” [Atomic Poland], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 17 March 2005, p. 20 and Bernadeta Waszkielewicz, “Polska atomowa” [Atomic Poland], *Newsweek Polska*, 9 January 2005, p. 20-23.

<sup>194</sup> “Będzie atomowa kampania informacyjna” [There will be a nuclear information campaign], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 19 May 2005, p. 29.

<sup>195</sup> Bernadeta Waszkielewicz, “Polska atomowa” [Atomic Poland], *Newsweek Polska*, 9 January 2005, p. 20-23.

sources are available, but at a higher cost. An important step will be to link the Polish pipeline infrastructure to that of the EU more firmly (for example, gas pipelines to Germany) as a way of increasing energy security. Liquefied Natural gas (LNG) will be one important direction of development to ensure diversification.

Renewable energy resources will be of importance in the future and Poland has already embarked on the road towards nuclear power as an unavoidable future source of energy. Polish nuclear power is very likely to become reality during the first couple of years after 2020.

An important development for Poland to pursue is energy saving technologies. According to some estimates, every investment in energy saving technologies is three times cheaper than attempting to increase energy production by the same amount.<sup>196</sup>

In sum, even if Poland were to ensure its energy security and increase its energy efficiency, these measures would negatively affect Polish competitiveness. There is a risk that environmental considerations could be used as a regulator to diminish potential negative effects on the economy.

In order to meet all three objectives of the Energy Policy 2025 simultaneously, Poland will have to work through the EU. But, this will not be enough. It also requires that the EU show real solidarity with its ten new member states, including Poland, when it comes to the EU-Russia energy dialogue. The NEGP, which is 4-5 more expensive than a land-based alternative, should not be supported by Brussels if it is sincere about rational economic behaviour, competition and equality for its member states. The NEGP will diminish Poland's possibilities to play the role of "energy bridge" between Russia and Western Europe.

The EU should support the Odessa-Brody pipeline transporting Caspian oil via Ukraine and Poland to Europe. Such a pipeline would have a strategic importance in that it would counteract Russian potential for energy dominance. At the same time, this would tie Ukraine closer to Poland and the EU. This point is particularly important today since the window of opportunity for a third enlargement of the Union has closed for some time to come due to French and Dutch rejections of the EU constitution.

Apart from the foregoing considerations, the EU will have to think more seriously about its long-term energy supply. In 20-50 years time it seems rather unlikely that any newly discovered source of energy will be able to replace fossil fuels. Hence, nuclear power (fission power) is still a highly viable option if one is serious about counteracting the greenhouse effect.<sup>197</sup> Even if the EU is successful in closing down the Ignalina nuclear power plant in Lithuania and even if some member states of the old fifteen (Germany and Sweden for example) decommission their nuclear power plants, Poland and other Central and Eastern European states are likely to go in the opposite direction. The lack of energy solidarity within the EU and a willingness to diminish energy dependence on Russia are the key factors for these countries. In addition, in 2005, the United States declared its willingness to support further development of Ukraine's nuclear power capacity as a means to counteract Moscow's energy leverage.

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<sup>196</sup> Adam Grzeszak, "Iwan i gazurka" [Ivan and the gas pipeline], *Polityka*, nr 50, 11 December 2004, p. 12.

<sup>197</sup> Nuclear fusion power may become a reality in this timeframe, but research still envisages considerable problems before the world will see a fusion reactor for commercial use.

## Chapter 6. Polish-Russian Regional Cooperation in Euroregion “Baltic”

*[...] no one – not Russia, not Poland, not the European Union – has any idea what to do about Kaliningrad.*<sup>198</sup>

Stanisław Ciosek, former advisor to the President of the Republic of Poland

*“Cognizant of the special geographical and economic location of the Kaliningrad Region, essential external conditions for its functioning and development as an inseparable part of the Russian Federation and as an active participant in transborder and inter-regional cooperation need to be provided. The Region’s prospects and optimal economic, energy and communications specialisation that would enable its effective functioning under new conditions need to be identified. Reliable communications with the rest of Russia need to be organised. If needed, a special agreement should be drawn up with the European Union guaranteeing the protection of the Kaliningrad Region’s interests as a part of the Russian Federation during EU enlargement, as well as, if possible, transforming it into a pilot Russian region of EU-Russian cooperation in the twenty-first century.”<sup>199</sup> In my opinion, this quote is an apt response to Ambassador Ciosek’s comments that no ideas exist for the future development of the Kaliningrad Region. There are many ideas. Real intentions should exist to pursue them. This was announced three years ago.<sup>200</sup>*

Nikolay Afanasyevsky, former Russian ambassador to Poland

The aim of this chapter is to describe relations between Poland and Russia (in particular between Poland and the Kaliningrad Region<sup>201</sup>) in the so-called Euroregion Baltic (ERB) and to present the structure of this Euroregion. This analysis does not provide information regarding the issue of visa-free cross-border traffic. Keeping in mind the many difficulties and barriers that exist between the central governments of Poland and Russia and the fact that this transborder cooperation is not always successful, its worth noting that there are also favourable aspects of this collaboration within the framework of Euroregion Baltic.

Issues of Polish-Russian regional relations have been the subject of many papers and studies. Most of these works, however, do not deal with these relations in connection with the functioning of the Euroregion itself, or its structures and objectives. Nevertheless worth attention are M. Olszewski’s work “Development of border cooperation of districts of the Warmia-Mazurskie Voivodship with the border regions of the Kaliningrad Oblast”<sup>202</sup> and W.T. Modzelewski’s work “Cooperation on

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<sup>198</sup> Stanisław Ciosek, “Polska a Obwód Kaliningradzki” [Poland and the Kaliningrad Oblast] in Monika Zamarlik (ed.) *Przyszłość Obwodu Kaliningradzkiego* [The future of the Kaliningrad Oblast], Institute for Strategic Studies, Kraków 2003, p. 17.

<sup>199</sup> Quote from the strategy for the development of Russian and European Union relations up to 2010.

<sup>200</sup> Nikolay Afanasyevsky, “Miejsce Kaliningradu w europejskiej polityce Rosji” [Kaliningrad’s place in Russia’s European policy] in Monika Zamarlik (ed.) *Przyszłość Obwodu Kaliningradzkiego* [The future of the Kaliningrad Oblast], Institute for Strategic Studies, Kraków 2003, p. 24.

<sup>201</sup> Quote from the strategy The Kaliningrad Region is also referred to as the Kaliningrad District and the Kaliningrad Oblast.

<sup>202</sup> M. Olszewski, “Rozwój współpracy przygranicznych powiatów województwa warmińsko –mazurskiego z

the Polish-Russian border: Regional and local dimensions”, contained in the volume *Poland and the Kaliningrad Oblast of the Russian Federation* edited by Arkadiusz Żukowski.<sup>203</sup>

The problems of the euroregions, their formation, how they operate and their future have been the subject of much research, studies and forecasts. Euroregions exist on the territory of EU member states, as well as on the territory of non-member states, such as Russia. Euroregions are a form of cross-border cooperation between regions of neighbouring countries. Importantly, this transborder, regional cooperation respects national borders and the legislation of the countries in which they operate. The activity of euroregions is highly diverse. Although it may be tempting to think that economic, educational and cultural aspects are the most important, euroregional cooperation affects many other areas of societal activities.

The aims of euroregions include, *inter alia*:

- improving inter-community relations between border regions,
- improving the living conditions of their populations,
- supporting economic development,
- protecting the natural environment,
- eliminating historical prejudices and negative stereotypes,
- organising student and youth exchanges

and many other kinds of activities, which the euroregion members can undertake in a transborder cooperation framework.

The Kaliningrad Region, part of Euroregion Baltic, is important to Polish-Russian relations. It is a Russia’s Baltic exclave situated between EU member states: Poland and Lithuania. The year 2005 marked the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the liberation of Königsberg (today Kaliningrad) by the Soviet army and the 750<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Königsberg’s foundation. After Königsberg became part of the Soviet Union, the history of the Kaliningrad Region began. Although the Kaliningrad Region is heavily dependent on Moscow and has many economic problems, it remains an important area of European Union activities. The strategic location of this territory explains why the European Union has been interested in supporting the Kaliningrad Region for years. The benefits, which may accrue not only to this region but also to the European Union, are considerable. Important in this respect is the regional cooperation (ongoing since 1998) between countries in north-eastern Europe within the framework of Euroregion Baltic.

Euroregion Baltic involves an interesting field for cooperation between a group of European Union member states on the one side and the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation on the other side. Some countries that have territories belonging to the Euroregion Baltic area became EU members only in 2004 and the path to EU membership was long and arduous. One of these countries is Poland, with its north-eastern part belonging to Euroregion Baltic. Not only this generally poor Polish region, but also the Kaliningrad Region can profit from the transborder

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przygranicznymi rejonami Obwodu Kaliningradzkiego”, in T. Malec (ed.) *Strategia rozwoju współpracy przygranicznej województwa warmińskiego –mazurskiego w kontekście integracji z Unią Europejską. Wybrane problemy* [Strategy for development of cooperation of the border voivodship of Warmia-Mazurskie Voivodship in the context of European integration. Selected issues], Olsztyn, 2002.

<sup>203</sup> Wojciech Tomasz Modzelewski, “Współpraca na pograniczu polsko –rosyjskim. Wymiar regionalny i lokalny” [Cooperation on the Polish-Russian border. Regional and local dimensions] in Arkadiusz Żukowski, *Polska wobec Obwodu Kaliningradzkiego Federacji Rosyjskiej* [Poland and the Kaliningrad Oblast of the Russian Federation], Institute of Political Science of the Warmia–Mazurskie University in Olsztyn, Olsztyn, 2004.

cooperation within Euroregion Baltic; in particular the economic situation of both regions can be improved. The partnership within a euroregion offers an opportunity to establish solid and amicable relations between cooperating regions, which in turn may lead to closer ties between neighbouring states.

### ***Origins of Euroregion Baltic***

An important stage in the process of formation of euroregions was the ratification of the *European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Co-operation between Territorial Communities or Authorities* (the so-called Madrid Convention) by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.<sup>204</sup> Signed in Madrid on 21 May 1980, the convention aims at facilitating cooperation within euroregions, helping to solve problems that arise and supporting the agreements between collaborating countries. Euroregions have already existed in Western Europe for years (the first euroregion was established in 1958 on the Dutch-German border) and have proven their utility through the number of benefits they have delivered. The political system transformation that took place in Poland and other Central and Eastern European countries, also contributed to the idea of forming euroregions in these countries. Established in 1991, the Euroregion Nysa was the first euroregion in Poland. Later other euroregions followed such as: Pomerania, Bug, Niemen and others. Within Poland's borders, about a dozen euroregions exist, but only a handful of them involve cooperation with regions on its eastern border.

Initially intended to be named Jantar, Euroregion Baltic was established with the intention to strengthen cooperation between the territories of countries bordering the Baltic Sea, including Russia. After a short, one-year preparation phase, Euroregion Baltic came into being. This enterprise was quite exceptional due to the fact that one of the cooperating partners was a region of Russia, the Kaliningrad Region. This was not the first attempt to initiate Polish–Russian collaboration in the creation of euroregions. The formation of Euroregion Niemen was also preceded by multilateral negotiations and agreements between representatives of Poland, Russia, Belarus and Lithuania. Before Euroregion Baltic was established, many differences of opinions were expressed, even on important, substantive matters. Reconciling economic, political and social interests of all the partners was not easy. Finally, after bilateral negotiations between Polish and Russian representatives, an agreement on transborder cooperation was signed in 1992.<sup>205</sup>

The agreement, which established Euroregion Baltic, was signed on the 22 February 1998 in Malbork, Poland. The agreement, which is concluded for an indefinite time, defines the legal principles of governing the work of the Euroregion. With its 101,034 km<sup>2</sup> and a population of nearly six million, Euroregion Baltic, which associates the regions of six countries, is one of the largest euroregions.

### ***Principles of Euroregion Baltic***

The Preamble of the Agreement on establishing Euroregion Baltic contains the objectives that are important to the Parties of this enterprise. One objective is for local communities to “strive [toward] multilateral cooperation” based on bilateral relations. As important as the first goal was creating a

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<sup>204</sup> Cf. <http://www.ena.lu/europe/council/territorial-communities-authorities-madrid-1980.htm>.

<sup>205</sup> Stanisław Malarski, “Regiony i Euroregiony. Zagadnienia organizacyjne, prawne i administracyjne” [Regions and Euroregions. Organisational, legal and administrative issues], Opole, 2003, p.184.

forum for contacts among people, social organisations and authorities. Other objectives of this Euroregion are “preparing and implementing joint and development projects” within the territories that are partners to this agreement. This coming together is meant to remove barriers that hinder cooperation.<sup>206</sup> Other objectives included in the Euroregion Baltic statute are: improving living conditions of those inhabiting the area of Euroregion Baltic, planning activities aimed at ensuring sustainable development among the Parties to the Agreement and eliminating historical prejudices.<sup>207</sup>

Euroregion Baltic brings together the territories of six countries: Poland, Russia, Lithuania, Latvia, Sweden and Denmark. Five of these six states are members of the European Union. The territory of Euroregion Baltic can be changed because euroregions are “open” organisations. The Parties to the Agreement may also belong to other organisations and associations.

Euroregion Baltic has the following bodies:

- Council
- Executive Board
- working groups

and administrative bodies:

- International Permanent Secretariat and
- national secretariats

Located in various towns, such as e.g. Baltiisk, Riga or Ronne, the National Secretariats play a very important role as contact points and liaison offices. An idea was advanced to create a concrete institution that would coordinate the operations of the national secretariats of Denmark, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Russia and Sweden. A further aim of this institution would also be to support the activities of the Euroregion. In 2004, in Golczewo, the Board of the Polish side ratified the organisational chart of the International Permanent Secretariat, which was established within the Polish National Secretariat in Elbląg. The International Permanent Secretariat commenced its work pursuant to the Decision of 1 July 2004 of the Euroregion Baltic Council. It is worth emphasising that the financing of this Secretariat, in which all Parties are to participate, was the first joint financial undertaking under the Euroregion.<sup>208</sup>

The Euroregion’s statute can be implemented in the following ways:

- Support cross-border social and economic development projects in various areas,
- Cooperate in the implementation of various common municipal projects in the border territories,
- Cooperate in spatial planning for the border territories and for the entire Euroregion Baltic,
- Develop the border-crossings infrastructure,
- Increase the professional qualifications and directing re-qualification systems to decrease unemployment, especially among young people,
- Organise exchanges of groups of scientists, athletes, persons working in culture, youth and children,

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<sup>206</sup> Agreement on creation of the Euroregion Baltic, [www.eurobalt.org.pl/downloads/dok23.pdf](http://www.eurobalt.org.pl/downloads/dok23.pdf).

<sup>207</sup> Euroregion Baltic Statute, Malbork 1998, corrected Elbląg 2004 in [www.eurobalt.org.pl/downloads/dok22.pdf](http://www.eurobalt.org.pl/downloads/dok22.pdf).

<sup>208</sup> [www.eurobalt.org.pl/sekretariat.php](http://www.eurobalt.org.pl/sekretariat.php), 27 October 2005.

- Cooperate on tourism development,
- Stimulate the study of neighbouring languages,
- Protect common cultural heritage,
- Organise information channels of ERB and supporting media development to provide all Parties with current information,
- Cooperate in fighting natural and environmental disasters, fire and other emergencies. Exchange information on the aforementioned threats.<sup>209</sup>

## ***Poland in Euroregion Baltic***

The Polish territories that are members of Euroregion Baltic, deal with unemployment issues and low mobility of the population. The Polish area contains no well-developed industry and the amount of innovative branches in industrial production is very small. The lack of prospects for a higher standard of living lead many people to elect to migrate to larger cities, which is also disadvantageous for transborder cooperation.

One of the aims of the Euroregion is to implement funding programs within the framework of Phare Credo and Phare CBC.<sup>210</sup> The Euroregion also participates in a Interreg Seagull DevERB project, the aim of which is to deepen and focus Euroregion Baltic cooperation and develop a joint strategy for the long-term development of the Euroregion Baltic.

The Phare programme and the Small Project Fund are also of great importance; the Fund supports many objectives and priorities in the Euroregion. Due to positive transborder cooperation, many supra-regional and international projects are carried out. The Small Projects Fund also supports other projects, involving:

- cultural exchange,
- development of local democracy,
- studies and development concepts,
- economic development and
- tourism.

Many events are also organised within the framework of Euroregion Baltic, such as, for example the Euroregional Fair and the Tourism Fair, which promote the region's tourist attractions that remain insufficiently well-known in Europe. Young people can participate in international environmental camps or sports events e.g.: Euroregion Baltic Youth Games. The Baltic Children's Drawing Competition is also organised annually. Participation in these events is popular among both Polish and Russian partners.<sup>211</sup>

The Polish side is very active in Euroregion, especially in implementing projects at the lowest, communal (local government) level. The roles that the regional governors (*voivods*) and marshals of regional parliaments play are also very important. Since 27 February 2004, the prestigious function

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<sup>209</sup> Euroregion Baltic Statute.

<sup>210</sup> Financed by the European Union's Phare Programme, the Credo Programme is a multi-country grant scheme for cross-border cooperation projects between CEC-CEC (Central and Eastern European countries) and CEC-NIS (Newly Independent States) border regions, cf. <http://www.bsc.rousse.bg/en/credo.htm>; Phare CBC (Cross-Border Co-operation) cf. <http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/pas/phare/programmes/>.

<sup>211</sup> [www.eurobalt.org.pl/onas.php?id=2](http://www.eurobalt.org.pl/onas.php?id=2), 3 November 2005.

of Euroregion President is held by Jan Kozłowski, Marshal of Pomeranian Voivodship regional parliament and experienced local government activist.<sup>212</sup>

### ***Association of Polish Communes of Euroregion Baltic***

The foundation of this Association was initiated by the Organising Committee of Euroregion Baltic. Established in February 1997 and registered in December 1997, the association bands together 91 communes and two districts. The aim of the organisation is to improve the living conditions of residents of member communes with particular emphasis on the border territories.<sup>213</sup> The Association statute provides the following objectives:

- maintain national traditions, foster national, civic and cultural consciousness,
- support national minorities,
- promote employment and professional activity of persons unemployed and in danger of job loss,
- support economic development, including development of entrepreneurship,
- plan activities aimed at developing of local communities and societies,
- support development of education and science,
- promote and protect freedom, human rights and civic freedoms, support actions aimed at developing democracy,
- support activities benefiting European integration and cooperation between communities.

The Association's objectives will be achieved through:

- cooperation with similar institutions and organisations located within the Euroregion,
- independent implementation of programmes and projects,
- assisting Association members to obtain European funds,
- promoting transborder cooperation.<sup>214</sup>

### ***Forms of Polish –Russian cooperation***

Euroregion Baltic aims at being a specific link between countries and the associated territories. One of the most important problems is cooperation with the Kaliningrad Region. Relations at the local level are not only essential for the cooperating regions, but also for cooperation between governments of the countries involved. The Russian side to the Euroregion was enlarged to include representatives from the Kaliningrad Regional Duma and Administration. The result is that now all levels of state and self-government authorities from Kaliningrad's Region participate in Euroregion Baltic bodies.<sup>215</sup>

Developing cooperation between communes and districts (rural and urban districts) and their partners in the Kaliningrad Region demonstrates the benefits associated with the Euroregion's

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<sup>212</sup> <http://bip.woj.-pomorskie.pl/strony/sejmik/dossier.php?kto=17>.

<sup>213</sup> <http://www.eurobalt.org.pl/onas.php?id=1>, 7 November 2005.

<sup>214</sup> Statute of the Association of Polish Communes of Euroregion Baltic in: [www.eurobalt.org.pl/downloads/dok30.pdf](http://www.eurobalt.org.pl/downloads/dok30.pdf).

<sup>215</sup> Ministry of Internal Affairs page: Protocol from the VII session of the Polish-Russian Council on Cooperation of the Regions of the Republic of Poland with the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation.: [www\\_mswia\\_gov\\_pl.htm](http://www_mswia_gov_pl.htm).



activities. It is important to stress that Euroregion Baltic is not the only example of Polish-Russian transborder cooperation. Poland and Russia also collaborate within the Association of the Border Self-Governments of the Euroregion Lyna-Lava. Urban districts, such as Olsztyn and Elbląg cooperate within the Euroregion Baltic framework and can work alone or in cooperation with communes. These activities are conducted within the framework of local development policy.<sup>216</sup>

Districts create their own areas of cooperation in many different fields, such as the environment, culture, education and sport. Emergency rescue services are a new area in which the Polish and Russian sides collaborate. Districts should also initiate and promote contacts, which are realised by organisation units subordinate to the districts. Another aim of districts associated within Euroregion Baltic is to combat unemployment, the largest problem in north-western Poland. District authorities perceive in the transborder cooperation a chance to accelerate socio-economic development. There is also hope that foreign investors – including from Russia – can be attracted to this part of Europe due to the neighbourhood of the Kaliningrad exclave, a kind of “window to Russia”. Holding positions in common bodies of the Euroregion and euroregional structures can improve relations between Polish and Russian partners. Examples of such bodies include working commissions of the Polish-Russian Council on Cooperation of Regions of the Republic of Poland with the Kaliningrad Oblast of the Russian Federation. Another example is the Commission on Border Crossings, which plays a very important role among these commissions.<sup>217</sup>

Apart from the aforementioned examples, many other forms of cooperation exist such as the so-called “twinning associations”, which connect Polish communes and cities with Russian partners from the Kaliningrad Region. The collaborating cities organise youth exchanges and interesting cultural events; all of this is intended to lead to the elimination of prejudice and animosity. Partner agreements have twinned such cities as Olsztyn with Kaliningrad and Elbląg with Baltiisk and Kaliningrad.

The basic territorial self-government units in Poland – communes – also play a key role for transborder Polish-Russian cooperation. Problems still exist, however, for example concerning collaboration on communal management (utilities, housing, etc). It is possible that these problems will be solved in the future. Euroregions in Poland generally do not lead to such advanced cooperation as that those Euroregions in Western Europe.

The communes associated in the Euroregion Baltic support entrepreneurs interested in investing in the Kaliningrad Oblast by organising trade fairs, conferences and trainings. The communes in the border areas of Poland and Russia are interested in better relations with the Kaliningrad exclave. Noteworthy is the huge variety of measures in which these communes are engaged. As previously mentioned, many barriers exist on both the Polish and Russian side caused by problems existing either in self-governments or within the government of either country. These barriers not only lead to difficulties in cooperation, but can also have a negative impact on Polish-Russian bilateral relations in the future.

The following barriers and irregularities are noted on the Polish side:

- no coordination of activities between individual subjects,
- no continuation of the predecessors' activities,

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<sup>216</sup> W. T. Modzelewski, „Współpraca na pograniczu polsko-rosyjskim. Wymiar regionalny i lokalny” in A. Żukowski (ed.) *Polska wobec Obwodu Kaliningradzkiego Federacji Rosyjskiej*, Olsztyn 2004, p. 79-80.

<sup>217</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 80-81.

- improper use of European aid funds, and
- lack of leadership role of the regional self-government (parliament) in transborder cooperation.

The obstacles that exist on the Russian side include:

- problems associated with border crossings, such as for example low capacity of border crossings and complicated border procedures,
- weak development of local self-governments in the Kaliningrad Region and their significant dependence on the state administration; Moscow still plays a very important role in the Kaliningrad Region and its strategy of political centralisation has often had a negative impact on the relations between Kaliningrad and another countries,
- insufficient information on partners within the Euroregion,
- differences in administrative structures between Poland and Kaliningrad,
- incoherent law and
- budget problems that exist in Poland as well as in the Kaliningrad Region.<sup>218</sup>

Another problem connected with cross-border economic contacts are small smugglers (“ants”), dealing in illegal trade of excise products. These persons crossing the Polish-Russian national border for the most part smuggle tobacco products and alcoholic beverages. Due to the large scale of this activity, the treasury incurs substantial losses. To counteract this problem and reduce the number of people dealing in illegal traffic, Poland introduced changes in border crossing regulations that significantly affect these activities, which caused many protests from these small smugglers.

Because of the Kaliningrad Region’s strategic location, the Polish and Russian sides want to create a pilot region between the EU and Russia in these border territories. The Kaliningrad Region could become a test zone for Russia and intensify its integration towards the enlarged EU. Kaliningrad, however, may also be regarded as problem for Moscow. This Region is an exclave located 200 miles from the border of Russia proper and due to this fact, Moscow is afraid of increasing separatist tendencies. Still, the Kremlin supports the economic development of this region and realises, that the cooperation with European Union member states can help in dealing with Kaliningrad’s economic difficulties.

Nowadays, development of tourism in the Kaliningrad Region, is becoming increasingly important. During the Soviet era, Kaliningrad was a closed territory because of its strategic location. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the fall of communism had a great impact on the Region. The gradual withdrawal of armed forces was connected with the opening of the Kaliningrad Region to the world. At present, this territory is no longer regarded as an inaccessible and highly militarised region and many people recognise the tourist values of the area. Many trips to Kaliningrad and its environs are organised and the number of tourists visiting this region continues to increase. Despite heavy destruction during World War II, the capital of the region has managed to rebuild its infrastructure and nowadays it can attract tourists, not only from neighbouring states but from all of Europe. Euroregion Baltic activities have also contributed to increasing the popularity of Kaliningrad Region.

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<sup>218</sup> Ibid., p. 82-84.

## *The role of European Union funds*

It was very important for the Kaliningrad Region to receive in 1996 the status of special economic zone, which operates in a customs-free zone regime. For the Russian side, the attraction of external investments was a chance to improve development, accelerate the economic transformation of the Kaliningrad Region and bring high quality goods to the market. The European Union supports the Region within the framework of the TACIS programme, the regional office of which is located in Kaliningrad.<sup>219</sup> Aimed at strengthening the economy of Kaliningrad, the TACIS programme was initiated in 1991. It also supports market and democratic reforms in former USSR republics. The Euroregion Baltic plays an active role in the implementation of many projects, which must promote the transborder cooperation between Poland and the Kaliningrad Region. The European Union supports the territories in north-eastern Europe not only within the framework of TACIS or Phare. Also in place are the European Union's external and cross-border policies, which cover the Baltic Sea region, Arctic Sea region and northwest Russia - the Northern Dimension.<sup>220</sup> Other important foreign funds include e.g.: Neighbourhood Programme of Poland-Lithuania-Russia (Kaliningrad Region), Interreg and the Schengen Fund.

Since 2002, the Joint Transnational Development Programme within the framework of the Seagull Dev ERB project has been under development. This programme has similar aims as TACIS and Phare, as follows: create a competitive business environment, develop labour market cooperation within the region, implement EU environment and energy policies, support sustainable development in the Kaliningrad Region, and improve the transportation infrastructure. All partners in Euroregion should attain the same level of development. The Phare CBC programme implemented by the Association of Polish Communes of Euroregion Baltic helps to achieve this aim. Other important programmes include Interreg III A and the new programme Seagull II, the purpose of which is to prepare a joint development plan for the region concerning the environment and infrastructure. For the Kaliningrad Region, the most significant is that a programme objective is also to strive to reduce the differences among partner regions.<sup>221</sup>

## *Present status and future prospects*

Vladimir Yegorov served as governor of Kaliningrad Region until recently when Georgij Boos replaced him in September 2005. Under Yegorov, the economic situation in the Region improved, but Yegorov was unable effectively to govern the regional administration as he was too deeply involved in local, personal and business connections. Another opinion on the cause of governor's recall holds that Yegorov sought to obtain for the Kaliningrad Region a special status within the Russian Federation. Unfortunately, Moscow does not agree to such far-reaching "independence" of its exclave.<sup>222</sup>

Many agreements were completed during the seventh session of the Polish-Russian Council on Co-

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<sup>219</sup> [www.gov.kaliningrad.ru/indeks/.php?sgrp=stat&idn=oez](http://www.gov.kaliningrad.ru/indeks/.php?sgrp=stat&idn=oez), 10 November 2005.

<sup>220</sup> Cf. Olga Baran: "Kaliningrad w perspektywie rozszerzenia Unii Europejskiej" [Kaliningrad in the perspective of EU enlargement] in Monika Zamarlik (ed.) *Przyszłość Obwodu Kaliningradzkiego* [The Future of the Kaliningrad Region], Institute for Strategic Studies, Kraków 2003, p. 66.

<sup>221</sup> Monthly "Euroregiony-Polska" [Euroregions-Poland]: <http://euroregiony.pl/html/138.html>, 12 November 2005.

<sup>222</sup> Katarzyna Pełczyńska-Nałęcz and Maciej Falkowski, „Moskiewski' gubernator obwodu kaliningradzkiego" [Moscovite governor of the Kaliningrad Region], *Komentarze Ośrodka Studiów Wschodnich* [Commentary of the Centre for Eastern Studies], <http://www.osw.waw.pl/pub/koment/2005/09/050922b.htm>.

operation of the Regions of the Republic of Poland with the Kaliningrad Oblast of the Russian Federation held in Svetlogorsk in March 2005. A large number of projects are currently underway, such as the construction of the border crossings: Grzechotniki/Mamonowo II, Perły–Krylovo, Michałkowo-Zheleznodorozhnyj and Piaski-Baltiisk. It is important to increase the capacity of border checkpoints and improve customs control procedures. Polish-Russian cooperation in customs control is the subject of many initiatives, especially from the Polish side. During the session, the following water transport issues were discussed: project on a regular ferry connection between the ports of Gdańsk, Elbląg and Baltiisk and the issue of navigation in the Vistula Bay.<sup>223</sup>

A key project is to improve road transportation between Elbląg and Kaliningrad until 2005 by rebuilding the road connecting these two cities. This road will be the shortest connection between Western Europe and the Kaliningrad Region, the Baltic States and north-eastern Russia.<sup>224</sup>

The seventh session of the Council dealt with problems of Polish-Russian cooperation at the regional level. Especially important is the continued establishment of direct contacts in the field of education, science, culture, sports and tourism. The Council was also interested in organising cultural events and monitoring of the environment in the vicinity of the Vistula Bay. Further, the Council analysed the activities of the commission on criminality and an exchange of information takes place on prepared or committed crimes and their perpetrators within the framework of cooperation between the respective services responsible for security. During trainings sessions and meetings, the methods of combating automobile theft and terrorism were discussed. On the 26 August 2004, the protocol on cooperation between the Commandant of the Voivodship Police in Olsztyn and the Department of Internal Affairs of Kaliningrad Region was signed in Kaliningrad.<sup>225</sup>

It is also important to note that the cooperation of the Kaliningrad Region's local authorities with its Polish counterparts was recently quite active. Plans are also in the works to develop further principles for spatial development along the Polish-Russian border. Also noteworthy is cooperation of both countries on their electric power generation systems. Research, consultations and talks are planned to continue on construction of the electricity line Kaliningrad-Elbląg in the framework of the Baltic Ring project (Baltic Energy Ring) as well as on construction of the Braniewo-Mamovo line in order to exchange electricity in the border areas. The cooperation of Polish and Russian energy generating enterprises is to be continued and both partners are to exchange information on planned energy investments.<sup>226</sup>

Striving to strengthen cooperation and development of the Euroregion Baltic, it has been proposed to make efforts so that this Euroregion obtains the status of transborder cooperation area. With this status, the Euroregion can receive more grants and aid from the European Union. Plans are also in place to create a specific platform to support a competitive business environment in the region and to promote the development of small and medium-sized enterprises in the form of a broad public-private partnership. Work is expected to be initiated on establishing a Water Forum and a Renewable Energy Forum.<sup>227</sup>

When he took over the duties as governor, Georgij Boos announced his intent to introduce many

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<sup>223</sup> Ministry of Internal Affairs page: Protocol from the VII session of the Polish-Russian Council on Cooperation of the Regions of the Republic of Poland with the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation.: [www\\_mswia\\_gov\\_pl.htm](http://www.mswia.gov.pl.htm).

<sup>224</sup> Website of Town Hall in Elbląg, [http://www.umelblag.pl/turysta/historia\\_miasta.htm](http://www.umelblag.pl/turysta/historia_miasta.htm).

<sup>225</sup> Ibid.

<sup>226</sup> Ibid.

<sup>227</sup> Monthly "Euroregiony-Polska" [Euroregions-Poland]: <http://euroregiony.pl/html/138.html> 12 November 2005.

changes. However, these changes do not have to mean an increase of Kaliningrad's activities within the Euroregion Baltic. At present, many investments are still waiting to be implemented.

In 2005, new challenges appeared due to the worsening of Polish-Russian relations. Prohibitions of imports from Poland (of meat and plants) introduced by Moscow, cause large economic losses for Polish firms and adversely affected Russia's image in Poland. These difficulties can also have a negative impact on the transborder cooperation between these two countries.

### *Conclusions*

The objective of Moscow's policy is to ensure the Kaliningrad Region's heavy dependence on Russia. This Region is regarded as a test zone opened for external relations. These contacts can help the Kaliningrad Region, the westernmost region of Russia, to overcome economic problems. Despite EU support aimed at the economic transformation of this region, not all problems have been addressed. A chance for this region is undoubtedly its active participation in activities of Euroregion Baltic. One of the most important aims of this international organisation is equalisation of members' economic levels. Poland and the EU should continue their efforts to convince Moscow that a prosperous Kaliningrad is also in the interest of Russia, and not a way of wresting the exclave out of Moscow's hands. Increasing economic inequality between Kaliningrad and the surrounding EU is more likely to cause trouble for Moscow. This is why Moscow should facilitate transborder cooperation and cooperation between the Kaliningrad Region and the other countries participating in Euroregion Baltic. If the Russian Federation authorities do not place roadblocks in cooperation between Poland and the Kaliningrad Region, this cooperation can benefit both sides.

One of the most important tasks for the Polish authorities is to create suitable conditions for cross-border activities. However, cooperation at regional level will not be effective without the assistance of the central government. The success of collaboration also depends on European Union institutions, such as the Council and the Commission, because they supervise the activities of all euroregions. EU institutions support activities aimed at bolstering cooperation among partners within the Euroregion.

The new governor of Kaliningrad, Georgij Boos, is charged with implementation of quite difficult tasks. Yet, he still must promote cooperation, if he wants to avoid isolating the region. The Russian side should avail itself of the opportunity that has appeared together with Kaliningrad's participation in Euroregion Baltic. Kaliningrad authorities should use European Union funds and conduct new investments, but Moscow is the first to decide on all Kaliningrad activities. For this reason, the transnational and regional policy depends on the political will of the central government authorities in Russia.

To conclude, neither in the case of regional cooperation can Poland substantially influence Russia. Poland is unlikely to be able to function as a bridge between east and west. Only if Moscow so desires could Kaliningrad play the role of window toward the other states in Euroregion Baltic and the rest of the EU.

## Chapter 7. Poland's and Russia's relations with Belarus and Ukraine

*As long as Russia fails to focus on its own development and as long as Gleb Pawlowski continues to speak of the "rebirth of a global power," we as neighbours will continue to be afraid.*<sup>228</sup>

Stanisław Ciosek, former advisor to the  
President of the Republic of Poland

Belarus and Ukraine lie virtually in the centre of our continent; they share not only a border with Poland and Europe, but also the tradition of a common history and culture. Historic ties are also extremely important with respect to their eastern neighbour Russia, with which since the end of World War II they constituted one state organism.

These countries lie in a territory in which the two civilisations that have shaped today's picture of our continent intertwine – the Western, Latin civilisation and the Eastern, orthodox civilisation. This process has lasted for centuries – up to the end of the 18th Century Latin civilisation in Belarus was represented by the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and then by the First Republic of Poland. Next, this area came under the factual rule of Tsarist Russia. After World War I – concomitant with the rebirth of the Polish state (Second Republic), these territories were partially under the control of Poland and Soviet Russia. After World War II, they became part of the USSR, in which they remained until 1991 when these nations gained independence.

Due to the enlargement of the EU to the east, the western borders of Belarus and Ukraine have doubled in importance, becoming thereby an over 1800 km long border with the EU.<sup>229</sup>

Belarus and Ukraine now have for neighbours the two giant political and socio-economic systems on our continent – on one side the European Union and on the other the Russian Federation. Both neighbours of Belarus shape their own political systems, social life and economic rules governing the economy in a different manner.

In observing the policy of EU countries and Russia in Central and Eastern Europe to date, it is possible to discern differences in objectives, priorities and methods of action.

The European Union – and with it Poland – is guided in its policy towards its neighbour by the principles of respect for democratic values and the rules of the free market. The foundation of European integration is the conviction of the partnership of its nations and the equality of both the individual as well as countries toward one another. The principles that guided European integration after World War II were: dialogue, compromise, partnership and respect for political partners. The American political scientist Jeremy Rifkin captures perfectly the principles of conducting European policy, contending that

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<sup>228</sup> *Europe-Russia Forum*, Krynica Zdrój, Poland, 14-16 April 2005, <http://www.forum-ekonomiczne.pl/page.php?p1=14fa90c13462ca4e2149b0f776f165a4&uid=0a846cf4215beba89f4cf301bad679b8>.

<sup>229</sup> Including the length of the Polish-Belarusian border of 416 km, the Lithuanian-Belarusian border of 654 km, the Latvian-Belarusian border of 167 km, the Ukrainian-Polish border of 535 km, and the Slovakian-Ukrainian border of 90 km. This, the largest EU land border, will increase by an additional 431 km after Romania's accession in 2007. In total, this border will amount to over 2250 km.

*The European Union is the first attempt to create a system in which no one will dominate, in which as a result of continual negotiations a system of mutual interdependence is developed. In this system, no one gains enough to be acknowledged a winner and no one loses enough to be deemed a loser.*<sup>230</sup>

By respecting these fundamental rules, it has been possible for over half a century to create a zone of stability and development in Western Europe and it has endured the post-war difficulties of reconstruction and outlasted the Cold War confrontation. After the collapse of the Cold War world division, it is precisely these principles that Poland and the new member states acceding to the European Union have adopted as determinants of their foreign policy.

In contrast to EU countries, in Russia's policy toward that part of Europe, the avoidance of relations based on partnership and the tendency to underline its superiority is often evident. In this striving to maintain asymmetric relations with countries weaker than itself, the main attributes of Russian policy too often instead of dialogue and understanding are based on emphasising its power and strength. The heretofore close military cooperation and Russian dominance in the defence and energy sectors is one of the most important aspects of the policy of reintegration in the territories of former soviet republics.<sup>231</sup>

Up to the present, the majority of the Russian elite, even those in favour of democracy, has not come to terms with the fall of the Soviet empire and cannot adapt to existence under new geopolitical conditions. Also disturbing is the growing popularity among the elite of the idea of Eurasianism, of which one of the fundamental principles is the moral, spiritual and political superiority of Russia over other countries and what follows from this – supremacy on the continent.<sup>232</sup>

### ***Polish and Russian relations with Belarus***

*Let's not compare today's Belarus with Ukraine. We will not have a swift and beautiful victory here. I continue to compare our country instead with Poland during the time of "Solidarity". We have a long and difficult fight ahead of us.*

*But we are rapidly making the first steps. The Sunday demonstration on October Square was a historic event. It showed that in our country there are thousands of brave people who are ready to defend their human dignity regardless of the fact that the authorities threaten violent retribution. You will see that day by day there will be more and more of us.*<sup>233</sup>

Aleksander Milinkievich

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<sup>230</sup> Dariusz Rosiak, "Ucz dziecko miłości-rozmowa z Jeremy Rifkinem" [Child, learn to love. An interview with Jeremy Rifkin], *Rzeczpospolita*, 10-11 December 2005.

<sup>231</sup> Jakob Hedenskog, „Filling 'the gap': Russian security policy towards Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova under Putin”, [in] Jakob Hedenskog, Vilhelm Konnander, Bertil Nygren, Ingmar Oldberg, Christer Pursiainen (ed.) *Russia as a Great Power – Dimensions of security under Putin*, (Routledge, London and New York, 2005), p. 133.

<sup>232</sup> In today's Russia, the concept of Eurasianism is most fully represented in the political thought of Aleksander Dugin.

<sup>233</sup> Waclaw Radziwinowicz talks with Aleksander Milinkiewicz, "Białoruś czeka długa walka" [Belarus faces a long fight], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 21 March 2006, p. 11.

In recent years, Poland's relations with the official government in Minsk have been very icy and worsened still as the presidential elections there approached (19 March 2006). Poland is increasingly viewed as a neighbour, who because it is governed by democratic and free market rules in civic life, constitutes a threat to the authoritarian rule of Aleksander Lukashenko.

Lacking any substantial leverage over Belarus and wishing to avoid outright confrontation Poland has worked more through the EU in order to influence developments in Belarus. Poland's overall strategy has been and is to isolate the regime and support civic society. Hence direct bilateral Polish-Belarusian contacts are fewer than with Ukraine and considerably more asymmetric.

The poor state of Polish-Russian relations is in part the resultant of Polish efforts to support the development of democracy and civil society in Belarus. To date, the Russian government has viewed these actions as interfering in its sphere of influence.

It may be expected that Russia in its policy towards Belarus will place particular emphasis on integration in the areas of defence and the economy while at the same time postponing political integration for a later time. One of the basic elements of Russian policy will be the use of its dominant economic position and total energy monopoly in Belarus.

The authorities in Minsk have intensified their policy of self-isolation, striving to sever Belarusian society from the disastrous – in their view – influence of western democracies; a policy that is likely to be pursued in the future as well.

As part of preparations for the 2006 presidential elections, pressure was increased on opposition politicians and political parties in order to prevent them from achieving victory in the elections and the consolidation of society in the event of election fraud. Broad-scale repression was also carried out against non-governmental organisations deemed a threat to the Lukashenko regime.

Concurrently with the increasing power of Aleksander Lukashenko's rule in the mid-1990s, Belarus began to move away from democracy and the free market, backing instead the traditions it took from the Soviet Union and set itself the objective of re-establishing state relations with Russia. In 1995, a customs union was formed and in 1996 Boris Yeltsin and Aleksander Lukashenko signed a treaty of association that established the legal grounds for the emergence of the Union of Russia and Belarus a year later, which was to be the prelude to the formation in 1999 of the Belarusian-Russian Union State.

The characteristic trait of this process of unification of the two states is the enormous difference in the economic, political and military potential between Belarus and Russia.

Integration rapidly resulted in Russia's domination of foreign policy and defence. A kind of alliance took shape in Belarusian-Russian relations in which Russia defends the Lukashenko regime on the international scene, treating him as a guarantee of maintaining their influence in the country.

In recent years, in the defence sector a series of agreements have been signed on military cooperation. The Belarusian defence doctrine is strictly connected with that of Russia and all command actions assume that Belarus will conform to the standards of its strong neighbour. Russia invests in the military infrastructure in Belarus (among others, equipping bases in Baranovichi, Vileika and Vitsebsk). For the past few years modernisation of the Belarusian army has been



conducted according to the reform model used in the Russian army.<sup>234</sup> Currently, the Belarusian army may be considered as a part of Russian forces at the strategic level and deemed capable of effectively operating only under material and technical support from Russia. Belarus is a *de facto* part of the Russian defence and security space.<sup>235</sup>

The process of unification also covers the adjustment of both economies; Russian industrial circles are interested in assuming control over strategic sectors of the Belarusian economy. Integration plans for the nearest future include, *inter alia*, introducing a common currency (Russian rouble), establishing a joint currency emission centre in Moscow, privatisation of the most important Belarusian enterprises and their take-over by much stronger Russian companies.<sup>236</sup> It was against this background that the integration process encountered discrepancies and stoppages at the turn of 2001. This slowdown was caused by Minsk's realisation that it could not count on equal treatment in the Union State and by its loss of control over enterprises passing into Russian hands. As a result of intensive pressure from Moscow, threats of raising prices of Russian energy materials and the dependence of Belarusian enterprises on Russian markets for sales and energy carriers, the process of economic integration is continuing. For a number of years prices on energy carriers have not been changed in exchange for guarantees of maintaining Russian influence.<sup>237</sup> However, in late May 2006 Moscow threatened to adjust prices for energy carriers to world market levels (roughly a fivefold increase, which the Belarusian economy cannot bear). This should be seen as an attempt to subjugate Belarus.<sup>238</sup>

From the mid-1990s, a departure from democratic ideals has occurred in Belarus along with a constant strengthening of Aleksander Lukashenko's authoritarian rule. Presidential decrees are successively passed aimed at limiting freedom of speech and the elimination of democratic opposition from the political scene. Authorities hinder the publications and legal activities of opposition political parties and any kind of civic organisation.

A common means of hindering the opposition's activities is to deprive them of offices. In mid-2005, the state set about ultimately depriving them of headquarters located in residential buildings; the opposition's situation is all the more difficult given that the state is the owner of virtually all premises suitable for use as an office.

In the past year, a ban was also introduced on using the words "Belarusian" and "national" in the names of non-state-owned media, organisations and enterprises (with the exception of banks, parties, associations and trade unions). While it then becomes necessary to change such names and to re-register, it is highly probable that these entities will not obtain permission to re-register.

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<sup>234</sup> Cf. for example Adam Eberhardt, *Stosunki Federacji Rosyjskiej i Republiki Białoruś w sferze obronności, Materiały Studialne* [Relations of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus in the defence sphere, Study materials], published by the Polish Institute of International Affairs, Warsaw, July 2005, no. 10.

<sup>235</sup> Rafał Sadowski, "Białoruś - Rosja: integracja wschodnioeuropejska" [Belarus-Russia: Eastern European integration] *Punkt Widzenia*, Centre for Eastern Studies, Warsaw, May 2003, [http://www.osw.waw.pl/files/PUNKT\\_WIDZENIA6a.pdf](http://www.osw.waw.pl/files/PUNKT_WIDZENIA6a.pdf).

<sup>236</sup> Cf. for example *Wpływ rosyjskich grup interesów na politykę Rosji wobec Białorusi* [The influence of Russian interest groups on Russian policy toward Belarus], *Materiały Robocze* [Working materials] no. 4 -2004, Carnegie Publishers, Moscow, 2004.

<sup>237</sup> The price of Russian gas in the west remains unchanged and in 2006 stood at 46.68 USD per thousand m<sup>3</sup>. Additionally, Gazprom became the sole owner of the Belarusian section of the Yamal-Europe gas pipeline.

<sup>238</sup> Wacław Radziwinowicz, "Moskwa bierze Mińsk gazem" [Moscow conquers Minsk with gas], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 31 May 2005, p. 10.

A harder line was applied in education and in 2004 the European Humanities University in Minsk was declared illegal (it had existed 10 years and had about 1500 students). This institution was supported financially by American foundations and maintained permanent contacts with scientists from Western Europe and the United States. The rector of the university Anatoli Mikhailov commented on the government's decision by stating that

*Our president quickly understood that the creation (...) in our country of a place of intellectual freedom threatens the state's monopoly over the hearts and minds (...) Lukashenko intuitively sensed the threat that the growing number of students slipping from under his control posed.*<sup>239</sup>

President Lukashenko himself justified the university's closure by saying that

*We cannot tolerate a university that would draw Belarus towards the West.*<sup>240</sup>

One of the most uncomfortable issues for the Minsk regime is the issue of the operations of western non-governmental organisations, which appeared in Belarus at the beginning of the system transformation in the country, conducting a variety of activities, developing Belarusian contacts with the west and assisting in the regime transformation.

The area of activities covered by NGOs is human rights, citizen education, cultural cooperation, economic advice and the environment. The Belarusian authorities, in attempting to defend themselves against the spread of the ideas of democracy and a civil state, introduce ever new obstructions for both Belarusian non-governmental organisations as well as the western NGOs assisting them, at the same time it matters not whether these organisations are engaged in pro-democracy activities or exclusively social, environmental or humanitarian ones.<sup>241</sup>

In order once and for all to isolate Belarusian society from western influences, in August 2005 new rules were introduced for accepting foreign aid (passed in the form of an amendment to the decree of October 2003). Additionally, the possibility of accepting foreign aid by Belarusian organisations and individuals was also rendered more difficult. Worth noting is the similar approach to foreign aid from both Belarusian and Russian state bodies. The Head of the Federal Security Service (former KGB) Nikolai Patrushev, just as the Belarusian authorities, contends that the minimum of 5 million dollars allocated by the International Republican Institute (IRI, a foundation of the Republican Party in the United States) to support democracy in Belarus was merely a "cover for western spies." In his opinion, the institute organises revolutions, including in other former soviet republics.<sup>242</sup>

A conflict occurred in mid-2005 regarding the Union of Poles in Belarus (ZPB) as part of the state's efforts at strengthening its position and its aim to assume control over all kinds of organised activity before the 2006 presidential elections. Using a series of harassments, Lukashenko prevented the election of a new, pro-democracy governing body of the union. Poland recognised Union authorities

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<sup>239</sup> Laure Mandeville, "Lukashenko is afraid of freedom of thought," *Le Figaro*, 13 December 2005.

<sup>240</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>241</sup> The Institute for Strategic Studies (ISS) in Krakow, Poland, is one of the Polish NGOs, which has been very active in training Belarusian NGO representatives in order to strengthen civic society in Belarus. See ISS homepage, Institute for Belarus [Instytut dla Białorusi], <http://www.iss.krakow.pl/IBY/index.html>.

<sup>242</sup> Marie Jégo, "How Russia deals with the proud", *Le Monde*, 22 December 2005.

elected at the organisation's convention, while the regime in Minsk recognises the previous governing body elected under its orders. Union activists that do not fall in line with the government have for several months met with various kinds of restrictions (dismissal from work, arrest, frequent interrogation, searches, and difficulties travelling abroad). At the same time, the Belarusian media began to conduct a broad scale anti-Poland campaign, the aim of which was to discredit Poles in the eyes of Belarusians.<sup>243</sup> The conflict surrounding the Union of Poles can be better understood if one recognizes the fact that the ZPB is the largest NGO in Belarus, or the largest "organized resistance movement", with the potential to attract larger masses of the population. This can of course not be tolerated by the regime.

In mid-2005, one of the aspects of the fight against western influences was also the Warsaw-Minsk diplomatic scandal involving the expulsion of three Polish diplomats from Belarus under the pretext of their having acted to the detriment of the regime. Minsk accused Poland and the diplomats of attempting to interfere in the internal matters of Belarus. This expulsion was a response to the earlier Polish expulsion of the chargé d'affaires at the Belarus Embassy in Warsaw.<sup>244</sup>

As the date for the 2006 presidential elections approached, the Lukashenko camp's preparations intensified. Vadim Popov (member of the Belarusian parliament) asserted that the "example of Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan showed to what support from abroad leads" and stressed that "Belarus is capable of learning from others' mistakes."<sup>245</sup>

During the last two years the regime has gone to considerable length to strengthen its grip on the country. Since October 2004 a pro-Belarusian siloviki clan consisting of the former head of the Presidential Administration Viktor Sheiman, Interior minister Vladimir Naumov, head of the KGB Stepan Sukharenko and the current head of the Presidential Administration Gennadi Nevyglas has outmanouvered a pro-Russian clan consisting of Ural Latypov, earlier head of the Presidential Administration, Viktor Jerin, former head of the KGB and Aleksander Tozik, head of the State control committee. These changes have resulted in a development from an authoritarian rule to dictatorial rule based on a national Belarusian ideology.<sup>246</sup> Internal changes in the KGB and president Lukashenko's body guard service also bear testimony to the fact that the president nurture apprehensions about the KGB's close ties with Moscow.

In late 2005, a series of personnel shake-ups occurred in the administration, the aim of which was to consolidate the regime in order to prevent a situation like that which occurred in Ukraine in December 2004 when the government camp failed to maintain unity in the face of the discovery of election fraud. As part of his tightening of control over the mass media, Lukashenko promoted the loyal President of Radio and Television Vladimir Matviaichuk to Minister of Culture. Equally

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<sup>243</sup> Rafał Sadowski, "Zaostrzenie konfliktu polsko-białoruskiego", [Intensification of the Polish-Belarusian conflict] *Komentarze*, Centre for Eastern Studies, Warsaw, August 2005, <http://www.osw.waw.pl/pub/koment/2005/08/050811.htm>.

<sup>244</sup> "Diplomatic war between Belarus and Poland underway", <http://www.charter97.org/eng/news/2005/07/27/underway> (RIA Novosti), accessed 8 June 2006 and "Minsk & Warsaw Fight", <http://www.charter97.org/eng/news/2005/07/27/fight> (David Ferguson, Euro-Reporters), accessed 8 June 2006.

<sup>245</sup> Agata Wierzbowska-Miazga, "Łukaszenka zamyka Białoruś i opozycjonistów" [Lukashenko locks up Belarus and the opposition], *Komentarze*, Centre for Eastern Studies, Warsaw, August 2005, <http://www.osw.waw.pl/pub/koment/2005/08/050825b.htm>.

<sup>246</sup> Communication with Jakob Hedenskog, FOI, 12 June 2006.

faithful to the regime Aleksander Zimovsky, heretofore the head of STV television, assumed management of the National Radio and Television Company.

The regime, due to fears of increasing pressure from countries from the West, has intensively courted Russia's support, so that just as in past years, Russia will defend it against criticism from democratic countries. The conduct of the meetings between Vladimir Putin and Aleksander Lukashenko in Sochi provide evidence of an intensification of Russian support for the current president of Belarus, regardless of his violating basic civil rights. An additional expression of support in the economic sphere was, *inter alia*, the maintenance of low natural gas prices and providing a 146 million USD loan, whereas in the political arena it has been the defence of the Belarusian regime on the international scene.<sup>247</sup>

In order to ensure Lukashenko's victory, the completely loyal House of Representatives (Lower House of the Belarusian parliament), during a special session in 2005 set the date for the next year's elections for 19 March 2006 despite the fact that July 2006 had initially been suggested (the dates for parliamentary elections and a referendum in 2004 were similarly announced). This step was designed to hinder opposition candidates from conducting an election campaign because the time for preparing one and reaching voters had been shortened; this was especially painful given that these candidates did not have access to the government-controlled mass media. In addition, moving the elections up by a few months rendered more difficult the organisation of a large-scale international observation mission and the opposition's preparation of a local network of independent observers.<sup>248</sup> Another reason for accelerating the elections was also that Ukrainian, Russian and western democratic organisations would be occupied in Ukraine, where one week later parliamentary elections were to take place (26 March 2006). The regime in all probability calculated that the Ukrainian elections would distract attention of international opinion away from the events in Belarus and focus the activities of democratic organisations there.

The Belarusian media – completely controlled by the government – during the election campaign commenced a broad propaganda campaign designed to discredit western countries and their political systems by presenting false information on political and economic events. Opposition candidates (among others, Aleksander Milinkievich) were completely deprived of access to the mass media and discredited by the state propaganda. One line of propaganda portrayed Milinkievich as a Polish lackey.

A few weeks before the elections, the number of visa issued to citizens from western countries was curtailed and the number turned away at the border was increased in order to avoid a repeat of the Ukrainian elections where foreign observers to a large extent contributed to uncovering and divulging election fraud. Observing the conduct of past elections in Belarus under the Lukashenko regime, it is virtually certain that unless the situation changes, future elections will not be conducted democratically.

Regarding Poland's role as regional leader it can be assessed as having been partly successful in the

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<sup>247</sup> Sadowki Rafał, "Przyspieszone wybory prezydenckie - korzystne dla Alaksandra Łukaszenki" [Hastening the presidential elections – beneficial to Aleksander Lukashenko], *Komentarze*, Centre for Eastern Studies, Warsaw, December 2005, <http://www.osw.waw.pl/pub/koment/2005/12/051222b.htm>.

<sup>248</sup> Only a limited number of international observers from the OSCE were invited. Yet, observers from Russia, who traditionally do not notice any election fraud, conducted observations on a large-scale.

sense that Polish efforts to get the EU to act jointly vis-à-vis Minsk bore fruit before the elections in March 2006. Polish governmental and non-governmental support for democracy in Belarus has during the years contributed to an increased awareness of many Belarusians of their rights. However, Poland itself lacks any substantial leverage in order for Warsaw to more fundamentally change the direction of developments in Belarus. The weight of the whole EU is needed. This is unlike Russia, which has the leverage to substantially influence developments in Belarus. And so once again it can be concluded, as is the case in most aspects of Polish-Russian relations, Poland alone cannot function as a regional leader in the future.

### *Prospects for the future*

In the near future, the Lukashenko regime will likely continue its policy of “self-isolation” in its contacts with western countries. The government will continue to work toward the maximum possible closing of Belarus to western influences – both political and cultural. In economics, however, it will strive to maintain its existing commercial ties with western countries (in particular Poland, Lithuania and Ukraine). In 2004, exports to the EU constituted 37% of all exports and to Russia 47%.<sup>249</sup> In 2005, however, exports to the EU occupied first place in Belarusian exports (44%) while Russia was second (36%).<sup>250</sup> The Belarusian re-export of Russian petroleum-based products sold to Minsk at preferential prices holds a special place in trade with the EU. It can be claimed that the EU and Russia indirectly support the Lukashenko regime because the profits from the export of petroleum products are used, *inter alia*, to bail out the Belarusian state budget.<sup>251</sup>

Along with closing itself to the west, Belarus will to an increasingly greater degree draw closer to Russia. The Kremlin – in exchange for supporting the regime against international opinion critical to it – will seek to increase its economic and political influence in Belarus (Russian capital take-over of Belarusian enterprises, deepening integration under the Union State). These aims, however, are dangerous for the Lukashenko regime itself, as they significantly contract his power and control over the economy and internal life in Belarus. In the future, the Lukashenko regime’s situation may resemble rolling down “an inclined plane,” since seeking protection from Russia will make Belarus increasingly dependent on it.

Belarus under the Lukashenko regime after the 2006 presidential elections remains a challenge for the European Union. Yet, the economic dependence of Belarus on the EU and Lukashenko’s desire to guard Belarusian economic independence affords the EU certain possibilities of exerting its influence. According to forecasts of both the International Monetary Fund and leading dissenting economists, sustainable economic development will not be possible without broad structural reforms.<sup>252</sup> Economic sanctions may be an effective means of exerting an influence. At the moment

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<sup>249</sup> Grzegorz Gromadzki and Luboš Veselý, *Aktywnie i wspólnie: UE wobec Białorusi* [Actively and jointly: The EU towards Belarus], Stefan Batory Foundation, Warsaw, 2006, p. 13.

<sup>250</sup> According to data from the Belarusian opposition presented in Warsaw on 28 January 2006 during the conference “Prospects for Democracy in Belarus” organised by the German Marshall Fund, the Heinrich Böll Foundation and the Institute of Public Affairs. Data include 11 months of 2005. Sixty-one percent of Belarusian imports come from Russian while 21% from the EU.

<sup>251</sup> Grzegorz Gromadzki and Luboš Veselý, *Aktywnie i wspólnie: UE wobec Białorusi* [Actively and jointly: The EU towards Belarus], Stefan Batory Foundation, Warsaw, 2006, p. 14.

<sup>252</sup> Grzegorz Gromadzki and Luboš Veselý, *Aktywnie i wspólnie: UE wobec Białorusi* [Actively and jointly: The EU towards Belarus], Stefan Batory Foundation, Warsaw, p. 13 and data from the Belarusian opposition presented in Warsaw on 28 January 2006 during the conference “Prospects for Democracy in Belarus” organised by the German

of finalising the current publication (May 2006), opinions in the EU were divided on the need to impose sanctions. While some thought it virtually certain that the EU would decide to impose sanctions,<sup>253</sup> others felt that the EU should apply sanctions on the Lukashenko regime only when its persecution of the opposition intensifies.<sup>254</sup>

There is no shortage of ideas for new strategies, actions and tools for the EU to apply towards Belarus.<sup>255</sup> In one recent publication on this subject, Grzegorz Gromadzki and Luboš Veselý propose a series of elements of a new EU policy toward the Lukashenko regime. Because the current EU policy is not cohesive, the authors propose to create a list of principles for defining EU policy toward Belarus. Gromadzki and Veselý propose that EU policy should be active and not reactive as in the past; it should consist of negative actions toward the Lukashenko regime and positive actions toward Belarusian society. They further stress the importance of the opening of an EU diplomatic post in Minsk (this decision was reached in November 2005) and propose that an EU Special Representative to Belarus be nominated. In their opinion the EU should seek unconventional methods of providing aid to the opposition and supporting civil society (given that a portion of the non-governmental and opposition organisations formally operate illegally) and this aid should be broadened. Coordination of EU actions should be improved, cooperation with the United States closer and dialogue with Russia (including the democratic Russian opposition) initiated, according to Gromadzki and Veselý. Broadening media support is essential (European Radio for Belarus, printing and distributing independent press, etc.). Special assistance (*inter alia*, financial) for persons experiencing persecution should exist and the EU should definitely support repressed politicians and opposition activists (and their families). Gromadzki and Veselý also propose that the EU should prepare a unilateral proposal for an EU-Belarusian Action Plan in order to negotiate with a democratic government after the fall of the Lukashenko regime. Deposited assets belonging to officials of the regime should be frozen. Further, the authors propose that a clear declaration should be directed to Presidents Putin and Lukashenko that in the event that a possible referendum on the creation of a union state of Russia and Belarus is not conducted in a democratic manner, it will be deemed invalid and illegal. Visa procedures for normal Belarusians should be facilitated and scholarships that are independent from the government should be awarded to Belarusian students.<sup>256</sup> Unfortunately, the risk does exist that some of these proposals (e.g., sanctions) may have negative side effects on Belarusian society. This is why it is essential to conduct an effective information campaign concurrently with the implementation of certain sanctions, etc. in order to hold the regime responsible for any possible unforeseeable effects in the eyes of ordinary Belarusians.

Three days after the elections in Belarus, the Polish Prime Minister declared that students faced with expulsion from college for their participation in protests against the fraudulent presidential

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Marshall Fund, the Heinrich Böll Foundation and the Institute of Public Affairs.

<sup>253</sup> Bartosz T. Wieliński talks with Markus Meckel, “Łukaszenko nie uniknie sankcji Europy” [Lukashenko will not avoid European sanctions], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 23 March 2006, p. 10.

<sup>254</sup> Konrad Niklewicz and Jacek Pawlicki, “Co Unia zrobi z Łukaszenką?” [What will the EU do about Lukashenko?], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 24 March 2006, p. 11.

<sup>255</sup> The importance of the EU being pro-active was stressed by, for example, Jakob Hedenskog and Wilhelm Unge, “Höjd beredskap inför vitryska valet” [Heightened preparedness before the Belarusian elections], *Upsala Nya Tidning*, 14 March 2006, p. 4.

<sup>256</sup> Grzegorz Gromadzki and Lubos Vesely, *Aktywnie i wspólnie: UE wobec Białorusi* [Actively and jointly: The EU towards Belarus], Stefan Batory Foundation, Warsaw, 2006, pp. 29-40.

elections would be able to continue their studies in Poland.<sup>257</sup> Temporary residency cards, issued free of charge, are another of the new government's ideas.<sup>258</sup>

In essence, the future developments in Belarus depend on the timeframe as well as the perspective and to a large degree on the actions and reactions of Russia and the EU. In a nutshell, the EU (and the transatlantic community as a whole) is faced with the choice between democracy and geopolitics. If immediate democratization of Belarus is EU's choice then it can be assumed that Lukashenko will seek Russia's support in order to counteract EU's pro-democracy efforts. Thus, in a short and mid-term timeframe working for democracy would likely push Belarus into the hands of Moscow. At the same time Moscow is likely to try to subjugate Lukashenko and Belarus. If, on the other hand, the EU chooses a geopolitical approach with the more long-term goal of getting Belarus out of Russia's sphere of influence and at the same time democratize Belarus, remaining Belarusian independence will be key.

A number of scenarios of future developments can be envisioned. One is of course a continuation of the current state for many years to come. Another is that Lukashenko give in to Russian demands and Belarus become even more dependent on Russia and joins the Russia-Belarus Union. A more thought-provoking scenario is one where the democratic opposition lead by Milinkievich joins forces with Lukashenko to defend Belarus independence. Such a deal would likely entail Lukashenko's staying in power in return for increased chances of transformation toward a market economy, increased welfare and in the end democratization. Although the regime has portrayed the democratic opposition as the greatest threat to Belarusian independence and as terrorists, which makes such joint action hard, it cannot be ruled out once the Kremlin's pressure increases.

### ***Polish and Russian relations with Ukraine***

*[...] Ukraine will have to choose between a coalition that will shape its future, or a coalition that will continue the past.*<sup>259</sup>

Zbigniew Brzeziński, President Jimmy Carter's  
national security advisor 1977-1981

From the perspective of 15 years, the difference in the priorities and objectives of Russian and Polish policy toward Ukraine is readily evident. Poland's policy essentially has involved exporting to Ukraine European values and standards, with full respect – and even support – of the independence and sovereignty of Ukraine. The Russian Federation's policy to date lies in sharp contrast and too often aims toward domination and dependence of Ukraine, creating many tensions in mutual relations between both countries.

The differences in the priorities and methods of action of Polish and Russian diplomacy toward Ukraine have unfortunately led to new tensions and misunderstandings in bilateral relations

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<sup>257</sup> "Premier zaprasza białoruskich studentów" [The Prime Minister invites Belarusian students], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 23 March 2006, p. 5.

<sup>258</sup> "Restrykcje za represje na Białorusi" [Restrictions for repression in Belarus], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 28 March 2006, p. 6.

<sup>259</sup> "Zbigniew Brzeziński: Russians don't like weak people", *Informatsionnoe agenstvo UNIAN*, <http://www.unian.net/eng/news/print-92917.html>.

between Warsaw and Moscow. To past historic events have been added a conflict of interests in this part of Europe, which has been additionally inflamed due to Polish diplomatic engagement during the pro-democracy Orange Revolution.

Ukraine is Poland's closest neighbour to the East and since the collapse of the Soviet Union, friendly and neighbourly relations with Ukraine constitute one of the most important priorities of Poland's eastern policy.

One of the true expressions of the strategic partnership between Poland and Ukraine initiated at the beginning of the 1990s is Poland's efforts at exporting soft security to its eastern neighbour intended to ensure stability and security in this region of Europe. At the beginning of the 1990s, Poland's relations with the emerging structures of the authorities regaining Ukraine's independence were very animated. Of great importance to Ukraine was the fact that during this time Poland – of all European countries – most strongly supported Ukraine's aspirations for independence and it was the first country to recognise this independence. In later years, activity on the Warsaw-Kiev front lessened a bit, mainly due to Warsaw's greater focus on the "return to Europe" policy, which was meant to lead it to accession to NATO and the European Union. Already in 1992, A good neighbourhood agreement was signed and in 1994 a declaration was announced on the establishment of principles for Polish-Ukrainian partnership. Poland strove to include Ukraine into the CEI (Central European Initiative) and the Weimar Triangle. The Consultative Committee operates (since 1993) under the presidents of both countries (in Poland the head of this body is the Head of the National Security Bureau and in Ukraine it is the Chief Secretary of the Council of National Security and Defence). In the area of military cooperation, a Polish-Ukrainian battalion was formed (POLUKRBAT), prepared for peace missions (it is on a peace-keeping mission in Kosovo<sup>260</sup>).

Since the emergence of an independent Ukraine in 1991, among the main policy priorities of Poland toward this country has been to support the development of democracy, civil society and a free market. Polish non-governmental organisations operating for years in Ukraine exhibited large amounts of activity.<sup>261</sup> Polish non-governmental organisations' projects, which to a large extent were and are financed from Western funds, covered a broad range of activities, from supporting the development of civil society and education to the environment and strictly humanitarian actions.<sup>262</sup>

Despite this, it has not been possible to completely eliminate misunderstandings (mostly historical in context) in Polish-Ukrainian relations in recent years. But on the other hand, they never developed into such huge disputes as in Ukrainian-Russian or Polish-Russian relations.

At the very beginning, Moscow's relations with a Ukraine that was regaining its independence were very difficult. Neither Russian society nor its political elite could come to terms with the "loss" of

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<sup>260</sup> POLUKRBAT soldiers have served on the mission in Kosovo since 2000. Until then Polish and Ukrainian soldiers had met only during joint exercises. The deployment to the mission in Kosovo was their first combat assignment. The battalion carrying out duties in Kosovo comprises 545 Polish and 267 Ukrainian soldiers. POLUKRBAT's duties include providing security for the population living in the unit's zone of responsibility as well as for humanitarian organisations, cooperating with the High Commissioner for Refugees, protecting the most important buildings, border crossings, roads, bridges and viaducts and constantly patrolling its zone of responsibility. Source: [http://www.wojsko.pl/obrona\\_cgi/dzial.cgi?nd=1367&o=1&i=0&j=pl](http://www.wojsko.pl/obrona_cgi/dzial.cgi?nd=1367&o=1&i=0&j=pl).

<sup>261</sup> Cf. e.g., Grażyna Czubek (ed.) *Międzynarodowa działalność polskich organizacji pozarządowych* [International activities of Polish NGOs], Stefan Batory Foundation, Warsaw, 2002, [www.zagranica.ngo.pl](http://www.zagranica.ngo.pl).

<sup>262</sup> The Institute for Strategic Studies (ISS) in Krakow, Poland, is one of the Polish NGOs, which has been very active in training Ukrainian NGO representatives in order to strengthen civic society in Ukraine. ISS also trains representatives from local Ukrainian self-governments including their relations to Ukrainian NGOs.



Ukraine, which for centuries had been treated as an integral part of Russia. Ukraine, lying on the historic territory of Kievan Rus, was perceived as the cradle of the common state of Russians and Ukrainians. Even democratic and dissident circles did not understand the Ukrainian nation's aspirations of independence.<sup>263</sup>

From the middle of 1992, it was possible to observe the regeneration of Russia's neo-imperial postures toward Ukraine, which was treated as one of the countries of the so-called near abroad. On the international arena, Russia demanded that it be recognised as the guarantor of peace and stability in the "near abroad" area and therefore that it be granted special rights to pursue its interests. The area of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), including Ukraine, was treated as an area of vital interest to the Russian Federation and it was believed that maintaining hegemony over this territory was the basis of Russia's position as a superpower.<sup>264</sup>

In the following years, one of the most important tasks of Russian diplomacy was regarded as hindering "near abroad" countries from entering into alliance blocks or alliances aimed against the CIS and its members as well as creating a system to coordinate their foreign policy.<sup>265</sup> This period was rife with many conflicts between both countries. Talks on the final land and maritime borders between the countries lasted many years and conflict arose over the division of the Black Sea fleet and the status of Sevastopol and the Crimea. Neither side could come to an agreement on the issue of signing a Good neighbourhood agreement, which finally occurred in 1997.

During the presidency of Vladimir Putin, Russian policy has become more pragmatic. Moscow understands that recognising Ukraine's independence as a permanent fact brings more benefits than treating it as a "seasonal" or "off-the-grid" country.<sup>266</sup>

This coincided with the Kremlin's departure from the previous policy of treating the CIS as a basic tool of reintegration of the post-Soviet space. Russia abandoned its heretofore aggressive policy toward Ukraine and instead focused on economic expansion and increasing its economic influence. At the turn of the year 1999 and 2000, the Kremlin began to exact from Kiev amounts due for energy resources, using it as a "resource weapon".<sup>267</sup> The expansion of Russian capital and enterprises intensified, led by the flagships of the Russian economy – Gazprom and Lukoil.

The opposing priorities of Poland's and Russia's policies toward Ukraine came into sharp relief during the fervent weeks of the Orange Revolution at the end of 2004. During the presidential elections, Ukraine saw not only a clash of opposing political forces but also a clash of different visions for Ukraine's development. The mass elections fraud committed by the presidential camp, which was actively supported by Russia, led to a demonstration of hundreds of thousands of people, in which Ukrainian society demonstrated that their vision for the future of the country is based on western principles of rule of law, democracy and civic freedoms.

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<sup>263</sup> Even Aleksander Solzhenitsyn, in his vision of a "Great Russia," gathering under its leadership Ukraine and Belarus as well, precluded the possibility of Ukraine's full sovereignty as an independent legal and international entity.

<sup>264</sup> This doctrine was reflected in official documents from 1993 – *Fundamental theses of the concept of Russian Federation foreign policy* and *Fundamental theses of Russian Federation military doctrine*.

<sup>265</sup> Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of 1995 on "Approving the strategic course of Russian Federation policy toward the CIS".

<sup>266</sup> Tadeusz A. Olszański, *Trud niepodległości- Ukraina na przełomie tysiącleci*, [The toil of independence – Ukraine on the threshold of the millenium] Institute for Strategic Studies, Kraków 2003, p. 125.

<sup>267</sup> Paweł Turczyński, "Polityka Unii Europejskiej wobec Ukrainy" [EU policy toward Ukraine], *Sprawy Międzynarodowe* [International Affairs], Polish Institute of International Affairs, Warsaw, no. 2, 2005, p. 58.

Polish, Lithuanian and Russian diplomacy was actively engaged in those events. Key differences, however, occurred in this involvement. Russia sent its public relations specialists and advisors and through Russian television channels actively backed one of the candidates. Russian government representatives openly backed Victor Yanukovich. The telephone calls by Vladimir Putin to President Leonid Kuchma at the peak moment in the crisis will most certainly go down in history. While it is certain that we will not know the details of these conversations any time soon, the fact is that after each call Kuchma was increasingly less willing to compromise on the repeat of the elections.

Polish diplomacy “entered the game” late, only after the mass election fraud was revealed. Representatives of the Polish elite engaged in Ukraine in most cases avoided any associations that they identified with one side or that their intervention was anti-Russian in nature; assurances of pro-democratic aims dominated.<sup>268</sup>

Polish and Union diplomacy attempted to support in the best possible manner the democratic process in Ukraine. Whereas the official statements of politicians were very restrained regarding their fondness for the presidential candidates, Polish public opinion decidedly supported the Victor Yushchenko camp. The large social involvement and spontaneously expressed aid to the Yushchenko camp was strictly linked to the negative view most of Polish society had toward the manner of conduct of Russian policy in Ukraine.<sup>269</sup>

In the public’s view, Ukraine is treated as a foreground; a buffer separating Poland from Russia, a security zone and a zone of democracy providing stability according to the rule of “there cannot be a free Poland without a free Ukraine.” In December 2004, 81% of the Polish public believed that lasting reconciliation between the Polish and Ukrainian nations and surmounting past historical conflicts were possible.<sup>270</sup>

Initially alone in their actions, Polish and Lithuanian diplomats strove to interest the EU in events in Ukraine and attempted to make their efforts grow into a Europe-wide initiative. Ultimately, during the crisis in Ukraine, the Union exhibited determination and previously unobserved resolve. This was one of the first cases in which the EU managed to intervene quickly and to affect the successful resolution of a problem, in this case conducting honest elections. Poland’s successfully completed attempts at drawing attention to the threat to democracy in Ukraine are part of the general doctrine of Poland of the active support of the development of a common security foreign policy.<sup>271</sup> In the opinion of the Polish government, one of the most prospective directions for the development of EU foreign policy is that of Eastern Europe.<sup>272</sup>

Due to the involvement of Polish society and its elite in the events of the Orange Revolution, Polish-Ukrainian relations have warmed considerably. In April 2005, President Victor Yushchenko was very warmly received in Poland; Poland and Poles currently are very well regarded by

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<sup>268</sup> Piotr Zychowicz, “Bezkrwawa Rewolucja” [Bloodless Revolution] – interview with Stanisław Ciosek, *Rzeczpospolita*, 2 December 2004.

<sup>269</sup> Paweł Turczyński, “Polityka Unii Europejskiej wobec Ukrainy” [EU policy toward Ukraine], *Sprawy Międzynarodowe*, Polish Institute of International Affairs, Warsaw, no. 2, 2005, p. 82.

<sup>270</sup> Public opinion poll of the Public Opinion Research Centre, *Wpływ ostatnich wydarzeń na Ukrainie na stosunek Polaków do Ukraińców* [The impact of recent events in Ukraine on the attitude of Poles toward Ukrainians] (no. 190), Warsaw, December 2004, [www.cbos.pl/PL/Raporty/r2004.htm](http://www.cbos.pl/PL/Raporty/r2004.htm).

<sup>271</sup> According to the principles outlined in the National Security Strategy approved by the President of the Republic of Poland on 8 September 2003.

<sup>272</sup> Information from the government on Polish foreign policy in 2006. Internet publication; <http://www.ms.gov.pl/Informacja,Rzadu,na,temat,polskiej,polityki,zagranicznej,w,2006,roku.,4590.html>.

Ukrainian society. The warming of the political climate is conducive to the process of explaining historical events that have divided the two nations for years. Guided by the principles of understanding and mutual respect for traditions and national history, the disputed issue of the Young Eagles Cemetery in Lvov was resolved. The cemetery, heretofore the main focus of Polish-Ukrainian discord, was ultimately opened in the presence of the presidents of both countries in June 2005. A further step along the road of reconciliation was the meeting in Pawlokoma in May 2006 between Presidents Kaczyński and Yushchenko where a monument to commemorate Ukrainians and Poles murdered in March 1945 was erected.<sup>273</sup>

Both the majority of Polish society<sup>274</sup> and the political elite support drawing Ukraine into the process of European integration; support in Poland for Ukraine's future membership in the EU is also significantly higher than in the EU15 states.<sup>275</sup>

President Aleksander Kwaśniewski expressed Poland's support for Ukrainian aspirations to join the EU during a meeting with President Yushchenko on 11 April 2005. President Lech Kaczyński confirmed the desire to play the role of "Ukraine's advocate" in its contacts with the EU during his visit to Kiev in February 2006. Meetings during this visit were also held between the Ministers of Defence of Poland and Ukraine, at which plans for cooperation and joint involvement of militaries in multinational missions were discussed.

### ***Prospects for the future***

Poland – due to its difference in political, economic and military potential compared to Russia – is not capable of independently counterbalancing Russia's neo-imperial aims in Ukraine. Support from every EU country and the EU as a whole is essential for Poland's policy of expansion of European political and economic standards in Ukraine. The events of the Orange Revolution vividly demonstrated the necessity of joint action in Ukraine; the EU, in speaking in a resolute and concerted voice during this crisis, exhibited a heretofore unseen effectiveness in counteracting internal conflict and bolstering democracy in Ukraine.

Polish efforts at developing a common EU policy toward Russia and supporting the transformation in Ukraine under the Common Foreign and Security Policy serve to deepen cooperation in these as yet most poorly developed areas of European integration. These areas may in the future be unusually important for EU countries, especially on the global and geopolitical level.

Poland, due to its geographic, cultural, lingual and historical proximity, can and should play the role of advocate for Ukraine in its pro-European aspirations – by actively striving to develop a long-term programme of strengthening civil society and free-market economic transformations in this country, which is one of the EU's largest eastern neighbours. Polish political circles understand that Ukraine, with its population and economic potential, may have a large role to play in determining the power

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<sup>273</sup> "Pojednanie w Pawłokomie - raport" [Reconciliation in Pawlokoma - report], <http://serwisy.gazeta.pl/kraj/8,34308,3343355.html>, accessed 15 June 2006.

<sup>274</sup> Sixty-seven percent of the public feels that closer cooperation between Ukraine and the EU would be beneficial. Public opinion survey of the Public Opinion Research Centre, *Reakcje na wydarzeniach na Ukrainie* [Reactions to the events in Ukraine] (no. 191), Warsaw, December 2004, [www.cbos.pl/PL/Raporty/r2004.htm](http://www.cbos.pl/PL/Raporty/r2004.htm).

<sup>275</sup> This support reaches 77 % - public opinion survey, TNS Sofres, *Les Européens et l'adhésion de l'Ukraine à l'Union européenne* [Europeans and Ukraine's accession to the European Union], 25 March 2005, [http://www.tns-sofres.com/etudes/pol/250305\\_ukraine\\_n.htm](http://www.tns-sofres.com/etudes/pol/250305_ukraine_n.htm).

position of Russia in the region and, what is most important, influence its position in relations with the EU.

It would also be advisable to approach relations with Ukraine with greater attention and to treat this country as a direct partner of great importance in this part of the continent that is, conducting political dialogue in the strict sense without the Moscow intermediary. In the future, the EU, for its own security, should create in its relations with Ukraine conditions similar to those that exist in relations with Russia; this means abandoning once and for all the heretofore ineffective conception of policy towards its eastern neighbours known as „Russia First.”<sup>276</sup>

Active support for the pro-democracy and free market aspirations of the nation and Ukrainian authorities – an example of which is the recent engagement of Polish and EU diplomats during the Orange Revolution – in the future will serve the interests of the entire EU in this part of the continent, contributing significantly to the export of security to the EU’s eastern flank. Ukraine’s declared pro-European stance in its foreign policy is conducive to the security and stability of the eastern borders of the European Union.

Both the Ukrainian government as well as its European partners will need to be prepared for Russia’s active steps aimed at maintaining its dominance and hindering Ukraine’s exit from its sphere of influence established since the collapse of the USSR.

It is not advisable to speak of entry of Ukraine to the EU as fast as possible; this undoubtedly would evoke the unequivocal objection of many EU members. In the short-term, it would be more effective to focus on the concept of a kind of “soft support,” involving increased technical and economic assistance to Ukraine. A programme of support for the development of Ukrainian civil society and the free market – broadly framed and conceived – would in the future enable the strengthening of the area of stability and growth on EU borders; in the more distant future, this process could culminate in Ukraine’s accession to the EU. This is how the concept of a “European perspective” for Ukraine, promoted by the European Parliament, should be understood.<sup>277</sup> A resolute “lending a hand” to Ukrainian democracy is especially important given the intensifying political turbulence in Ukraine after the March 2006 elections.

In sum, Poland’s role as regional leader passed the test when Polish efforts to get the EU to act jointly vis-à-vis the election fraud in Ukraine in late 2004 bore fruit and the elections were repeated in a fair and free way. However, as is the case with Belarus, Poland itself lacks any substantial leverage in order for Warsaw to more fundamentally change the direction of developments in Ukraine. The weight of the whole EU is needed. This is unlike Russia, which has a leverage to

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<sup>276</sup> For a background on the “Russia first” policy see for example Tor Bukkvoll and Anders Kjolberg, *Liaisons Dangereuses: Political Relationship in the NATO, Russia and Ukraine Triangle*, (Norwegian Defence Research Establishment, Kjeller, 2001). “In the first years of Ukrainian independence, the relations with the West, as well as to Russia, were severely obstructed by Ukraine’s refusal to give up its share of the Soviet strategic nuclear arsenal. Ukraine’s first president, Leonid Kravchuk, tried to use the strategic nuclear weapons as a deterrence factor against Russia and a tool to put pressure on the West for economic help to Ukraine. However, this policy completely failed. Instead of being seen as a serious applicant for membership in the institutions of the Western world, Ukraine was seen as a threat to European stability. Consequently, the West supported Russia’s policy to recover the strategic weapons from Ukraine. Ukraine’s stand on the nuclear issue, therefore, strengthened a policy developed by NATO and the US during the administration of President Bush, where the relationship with Russia was prioritised above relations with other former Soviet republics. According to this “Russia first” policy, Ukraine was seen as a potential source of instability on the Russian backyard, not a constructive partner suitable for integration into Europe.” Quotation from Jakob Hedenskog, *The Ukrainian Dilemma: Relations with Russia and the West in the Context of the 2004 Presidential Elections*, FOI-R—1199—SE, March 2004, p. 31.

<sup>277</sup> Private communication with Bogdan Klich, Member of the European Parliament, 11 May 2005.

substantially influence developments also in Ukraine. And so once again it can be concluded, as is the case with most other aspects of Polish-Russian relations, that Poland to function as a regional leader in the future needs the support of its partners.

## Chapter 8. The New Polish Government – Losing Sight of Grand Strategy

*This argument is ruining your country's reputation and preserving the myths of Polish anarchy and chaos.*<sup>278</sup>

Norman Davies, historian and Poland's greatest friend abroad

*I was hoping that the awareness of the historic opportunity that the Kaczynski brothers obtained as a result of the elections, would become for them a starting point for a policy other than the policy of continuous spectacles and starting wars of everyone against everyone.*<sup>279</sup>

Tadeusz Mazowiecki, Former Prime Minister

*Foreign policy must be above the party, national. It should derive strength from internal policy, but when it is conducted in order to score points in the country, the results may be very bad – a worsening of foreign relations and marginalisation in the European Union and NATO. The losses on these arenas may be very hard to make up.*<sup>280</sup>

Adam D. Rotfeld, former Minister of Foreign Affairs

As always when analysing foreign policy, domestic politics cannot be disregarded. However, the degree to which the internal state of affairs affects the foreign policy of a particular state may vary considerably. The brief treatment below is not exhaustive; instead it merely highlights some of the overall trends visible at the time of this report's writing (May 2006) and their implications for Polish foreign policy.

Polish foreign and security policy has been very constant since 1989 despite recurring shifts in governments and presidents of different hues. This statement holds true at least until Poland gained membership in both NATO (1999) and the EU (2004). Having achieved the first two overall objectives, today there is now more room for debate on how to manoeuvre within the framework of these two organisations. A third, and still outstanding, major security and foreign policy goal is to secure Poland's eastern flank once and for all. A fourth major objective is energy security.

In September 2005, the Poles elected a new government and in October a new president. The victorious party Law and Justice (PiS) party also got "its president" elected. Their programme has a

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<sup>278</sup> Norman Davies, "Polska droga do piekła" [Polish road to hell], *Newsweek Polska*, no 14, 9 April 2006, p. 16-17.

<sup>279</sup> Tadeusz Mazowiecki, "IV Rzeczpospolita pod kreską" [IV Republic below the line], *Tygodnik Powszechny*, 26 March 2006, p. 4.

<sup>280</sup> Adam D. Rotfeld, "Rotfeld: PiS ma problem z zaufaniem do szefa MSZ" [PiS has a problem of trust with the head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 5 April 2006, p. 6.

distinct nationalistic-patriotic character. President Lech Kaczyński has made it clear that he will work for a Europe of strong nation-states.<sup>281</sup>

He has stated:

*I do not deny the need to create a new EU treaty. Yet, this process should not lead to the creation of just some half-federation. Currently, Europe is a confederation – and let it remain so.*<sup>282</sup>

President Kaczyński's doctrine can be described as soft euroskepticism. European integration and cooperation is perceived as a tool to increase living standards in Poland, but the integration must not be allowed to threaten Polish national interests. Poland should staunchly make its voice heard, guard its interests, take as much as possible, and give as much as necessary. The trouble is that the president has not defined the demarcation between EU and national interests. Further, it is clear that the centre of gravity lies on national rather than European interests. But, the president is, for political reasons of solidarity, an adherent of continued EU enlargement (especially to include the post-Communist states in the East) and a common EU energy policy. At the same time, he for ideological reasons has declared himself an opponent of the EU constitution (in its current form) and deepened integration including a common foreign and security policy.<sup>283</sup> It is easy to observe that this policy is not coherent, with contradictory goals and ambitions.

This worldview seems rather void of real understanding of the state of affairs in the Republic of Poland and the geopolitical environment in which Warsaw is doomed to operate. Many experts have observed that three Polish features should incline Warsaw to strive for a more federative Union. Poland is economically a weak country. Poland is not a major actor in foreign and security policy (although it aspires to be one) and lastly, Poland is a large country. A federative Union, which means more responsibility, would be beneficial for the economically weaker Poland.<sup>284</sup> The same argument is true for foreign and security policy. A common EU foreign and security policy would be of great importance to Poland, which in the East borders countries where internal developments remain uncertain. Thirdly, given the current EU decision-making mechanisms, a federative framework is more conducive to larger countries than a confederative one, where the states retain a larger portion of their decision-making rights.<sup>285</sup>

As the analysis in earlier chapters has shown, Poland has virtually no leverage on its own over Russia. Warsaw's only way of increasing its weight vis-à-vis Moscow, and in the end creating necessary conditions for a possible realisation of its main security policy goal according to the Giedroyc-Mieroszewski doctrine, is to gain full support from the EU and NATO. To this end, earlier Polish governments have been adherents of a common foreign and security policy for the Union. Such a CFSP is a prerequisite for a common eastern policy or Eastern Dimension, which

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<sup>281</sup> Jacek Pawlicki, "Kaczyński euronarodowiec" [Kaczyński euronationalist], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 24 March 2006, p. 20.

<sup>282</sup> Aleksander Smolar, "Świat i Polska według braci Kaczyńskich" [The world and Poland according to the Kaczyński brothers], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 1-2 April 2006, p. 20.

<sup>283</sup> See for example Jacek Pawlicki, "Kaczyński euronarodowiec" [Kaczyński euronationalist], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 24 March 2006, p. 20-21.

<sup>284</sup> At the time of this writing (May 2006), the EU budget for the period 2007-2013 has been adopted. Poland stands to receive some 60 billion EUR. Warsaw is the largest net recipient thanks in large part to the support in negotiations by its most important neighbour, Germany.

<sup>285</sup> See for example Dariusz Rosati at a conference in June 2003 organised by the Stefan Batory Foundation. "Poland in the World – Challenges, Achievements, Threats" in the series *On the Future of Europe*, p. 24-25 ([www.batory.org.pl](http://www.batory.org.pl)).

Poland has been pursuing since 1998, when, before starting EU membership negotiations Warsaw made a proposal on the creation of an Eastern Dimension, a call, which Warsaw repeated in 2003. A matured CFSP is also a prerequisite for a common energy policy, something Poland has been pushing hard for, especially during the winter 2005-2006 in light of the Russian-Ukrainian gas conflict.

Yet, the current Polish government's policy of a Union of strong nation-states (confederative approach) stands at odds with Warsaw's two major foreign and security policy goals (the Eastern Dimension and a common EU energy policy). Russia will be able relatively easily to divide and rule within the EU. Poland will be portrayed as hostile towards Russia and as long as Warsaw cannot cooperate in a "federation" mode, EU support for its initiatives in the East is likely to be limited.

At the same time, the new president and the new government seem to have made slight progress in substance regarding bilateral relations, thereby possibly compensating somewhat for the multilateral losses.<sup>286</sup> Anonymous Polish diplomatic sources claim that there is a deluge of irritated comments streaming in from around Europe.<sup>287</sup> The president and some of his ministers have also made several diplomatic blunders during their short term in office.<sup>288</sup>

Polish foreign policy is formulated by three bodies: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the President and the Prime Minister. One can observe signs of structural problems in this foreign policy decision-making process. The former foreign minister, Stefan Meller, repeatedly threatened to resign and the advisors attached to the Prime Minister's and President's offices do not seem to share the same worldview as the MFA.<sup>289, 290</sup> Competing and/or contradictory policies emanating from these bodies are likely to trigger a restrictive and cautious response from partner states in the EU and NATO (and elsewhere), who will have a problem deciphering Polish intentions and "true" policies.<sup>291</sup> As far as Polish-Russian relations are concerned, all three bodies of foreign policy formulation seem to agree on the importance of improving relations with Russia. However, the means to achieve this goal varies. After the nomination of Mrs. Anna Fotyga as minister of foreign affairs this structural problem seems to have been removed, and the MFA has, in reality, become an executive secretariat of the President's Chancellery.<sup>292</sup>

In addition to affecting the external environment, the policies of the current government risk dividing Polish society even further, rather than uniting it. Despite the national-patriotic rhetoric, which aims at strengthening Polish society, PiS policies are more likely to weaken it, i.e. internal cohesion will diminish. The Catholic Church is warning against such policies and urges

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<sup>286</sup> Marek Ostrowski, "Choroba dyplomatyczna" [Diplomatic illness], *Polityka*, 18 February 2006, p. 20-22; Jacek Pawlicki, "Kaczyński euronarodowiec" [Kaczyński euronationalist], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 24 March 2006, p. 20; and Aleksander Smolar, "Świat i Polska według braci Kaczyńskich" [The world and Poland according to the Kaczyński brothers], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 1-2 April 2006, p. 21-22.

<sup>287</sup> Private communication with anonymous source, 4 April 2006.

<sup>288</sup> Private communication with anonymous source, 4 April 2006; Marek Ostrowski, "Choroba dyplomatyczna" [Diplomatic illness], *Polityka*, 18 February 2006, p. 21 and Jacek Pawlicki, "Kaczyński euronarodowiec" [Kaczyński euronationalist], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 24 March 2006, p. 20.

<sup>289</sup> Marek Ostrowski, "Choroba dyplomatyczna" [Diplomatic illness], *Polityka*, 18 February 2006, p. 22; Adam D. Rotfeld, "Rotfeld: PiS ma problem z zaufaniem do szefa MSZ" [Rotfeld: PiS does not trust the foreign minister], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 5 April 2006: 6; and Antoni Podolski, "Euroentuzjaści i kontestatorzy" [Euroenthusiasts and contestants], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 5 April 2006, p. 19.

<sup>290</sup> „Minister Meller krytykuje polską politykę zagraniczną” [Minister Meller criticizes Polish foreign policy], *Wirtualna Polska*, <http://wiadomosci.wp.pl/kat,9911,wid,8254160,prasaWiadomosc.html>, 12 kwietnia 2006.

<sup>291</sup> Jacek Pawlicki, "Kaczyński euronarodowiec" [Kaczyński euronationalist], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 24 March 2006, p. 20.

<sup>292</sup> Jacek Pawlicki, „MSZ pod Kaczyńskim” [MFA under Kaczyński], <http://serwisy.gazeta.pl/kraj/1,34314,3334588.html>, 10 May 2006.



reconciliation, but these calls do not seem to affect the ruling politicians.<sup>293</sup> On the other hand, fearing a deeper division in the church itself, it has so far refrained from taking decisive action against Father Rydzyk, the “Tele-priest” operating the radio station *Radio Maryja* and the TV station *Trwam*, which the government uses as one of its main channels of communication with its electorate and through them the general public, despite the fact that an overwhelming majority is against the politicisation of *Radio Maryja*.<sup>294</sup> The Vatican has supported the Polish Episcopate in dealing with this problem.<sup>295</sup> However, the internally divided church has been unable to make bold but necessary decisions to really come to terms with the problem.

The new Polish government supported by the president has embarked on a path of moral reconstruction of the state of highly dubious content.<sup>296</sup> Domestic politics have become very confrontational under PiS and the political language foul.<sup>297</sup> Cooperation by intimidation of coalition partners to achieve party goals is the main approach, not political compromise for the benefit of Poland. Bills are being prepared or have been adopted to increase the state's control over a large number of sectors of public life. These policies are not compatible with the true spirit of the democratic division of power and in a sense violate the standards prevailing in most EU member states. Media are to be controlled as is the banking sector and education. The NGO sector has, very unjustly, come under critique.<sup>298</sup> Tolerance towards various kinds of minorities is decreasing etc.<sup>299</sup> Only public and societal activities within the right ideological PiS framework seem to be accepted. Although public support for the current government is not diminishing substantially (yet), an increasing number of critical voices are being heard (from various communities) in Poland, and the EU is attentively monitoring Polish politics and has already filed complaints.<sup>300</sup>

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<sup>293</sup> See for example: Małgorzata Skowrońska, “Kardynał Dziwisz wzywa do pojednania” [Cardinal Dziwisz calls for unity], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 3 April 2006, p. 4 and Maciej Sandecki talks with Archbishop Tadeusz Gocłowski, “Abp Gocłowski: koalicja PO i PiS realna mimo sporów” [Archbishop Gocłowski: PO and PiS coalition is realistic despite disputes], *Gazeta Wyborcza* 4 April 2006, p. 5.

<sup>294</sup> “Niechciane Radio Maryja” [Unwanted Radio Maryja], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 8-9 April 2006, p. 2. According to a poll conducted by *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 89% of Poles think that *Radio Maryja* should not engage in politics. At the same time, 62% believe that Poland needs a Catholic radio.

<sup>295</sup> “Watykan interweniuje w sprawie Radia Maryja” [The Vatican intervenes in the Radio Maryja case], <http://wiadomosci.gazeta.pl/wiadomosci/1,53600,3264148.html>, 6 April 2006. “The Permanent Council of the Conference of the Episcopate of Poland has already reprimanded in the letter of 7 February 2006 directed to the Redemptorist provincial for the activities of *Radio Maryja* and *Trwam* TV Station, the result of which is that “the Church is perceived as explicitly supporting one political party.” See also Katarzyna Wiśniewska, “Stop Radiu Maryja!” [Stop Radio Maryja!], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 7 April 2006, p. 1. “Vatican calls the Polish Episcopate to suppress political endeavours of *Radio Maryja*. – Please treat it as a serious warning – wrote the apostolic nuncio to the Redemptorist provincial.”

<sup>296</sup> Ewa Siedlecka, “Marek Saffjan do PiS: Niszczycie państwo prawa” [Marek Saffjan to PiS: you are destroying the rule of law], *Gazeta Wyborcza* 25 April 2006, p. 1 and 16; Marek Suski, “Genetyczni patrioci, startujcie do samorządu z list PiS” [Genetic patriots, sign up for the Self-defence party from the PiS lists], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 22 March 2006, p. 7. “If your grandfather and father had diplomas, you don’t need to show one. But if you took part in a fight over a woman, you have no chance of becoming a PiS candidate for city council member.”

<sup>297</sup> “Sejmowa komisja etyki ukarała Kaczyńskiego” [Sejm ethics committee penalised Kaczyński], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 5 April 2006, <http://wiadomosci.gazeta.pl/wiadomosci/1,53600,3261820.html>.

<sup>298</sup> For example “Organizacje pozarządowe bronią swojego dobrego imienia” [NGOs defend their good name], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 3 April 2006, p. 9.

<sup>299</sup> For example Dominik Wójcicki, “Radio Maryja upomniane za antysemityzm” [Radio Maryja reprimanded for anti-Semitism], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 3 April 2006, p. 8 and Magdalena Kula, Paulina Łątka and Renata Czeladko, “Homoseksualiści jedzą fekalia” [Homosexuals eat faeces], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 4 April 2006, p. 7.

<sup>300</sup> See for example the statements made during the V Tischner Debate. “Czy liberalizm umarł?” [Is liberalism dead?] *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 21 April 2006, p. 20-21. See also Paweł Świeboda, (Head of the EU Department in the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs) “Nie szukajmy w Unii trzeciej drogi” [Let us not look for a third way in the EU] *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 20 April 2006, p. 22.



The underlying fabric seems to be that the current government wants to fight a losing battle against pluralism, liberalisation and increased tolerance, which are the cornerstones of a majority of the wealthy EU15 states' policies.<sup>301</sup> The key question is whether such a battle can be won?

According to Professor Norman Davies, Poland's best friend abroad, the main argument that is currently dividing Poland is the attitude towards the idea of liberal freedom. Professor Davies argues:<sup>302</sup>

*For many people the word "liberal" sounds like an insult. Yet, I myself was brought up in the tradition that associates liberalism with the highest prestige. Obviously, we can narrow the meaning of this word, we can speak about economic or moral liberalism. Yet, this term in fact describes the very core of the democratic order of the world in which we live.*

*However, Poles do not know much about liberalism. The majority of them have not even heard the name of the XIX century British philosopher, John Stuart Mill. It was Mill that formulated the principles and values of political liberalism, on which the functioning of western societies, at least the Anglo-Saxon ones, is based. The Poles most commonly confuse liberalism with libertinism and they think that its core is pornography and sex-shops. Or they think that liberalism is the idea of unlimited freedom, which allows one to harm other people, deceive, rob and abuse them.*

*Yet, in reality it is just the opposite; liberalism is a politics of harmony and compromise - the politics of consent. At the same time it is the politics of responsible freedom. [...] Because we are all free people, we must together agree upon the borders of our freedom. This agreement is a foundation of the democratic world, in which we are living and it concerns both individuals and whole countries.*

Professor Davies' reply to the question of how liberalism describes the relationship between a country and its citizen is the following:

*Liberalism is the ideology of freedom, not only of individuals, but also of nations. I cannot understand how a Polish patriot can be against liberalism. After all, the Polish national freedom movement of the XIX century, opposing authoritarian occupation powers, had a liberal character and was approved by liberals throughout the whole of Europe.*

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<sup>301</sup> Zdzisław Mach, "Polskie społeczeństwo obywatelskie i tożsamość w Unii Europejskiej" [Polish civic society and identity in the European Union] in Paulina Gas (ed.) *Ocena pierwszych miesięcy członkostwa Polski w UE* [Assessment of the first months of Poland's membership in the EU], Institute of Strategic Studies, Kraków, 2005, p. 20. Professor Mach writes: "Activeness, entrepreneurship, individualism, initiative, critical but constructive attitude towards the world, will and ability to participate in public life, trust towards other citizens and institutions, tolerance and respect for distinctiveness and for opponents, respect for the law, responsibility for one's choices and decisions – these and similar qualities characterise citizens, who fulfil them through participation in public life, in various forms of organised collective public life. The Opposite qualities, which unfortunately are still present in Polish society, are e.g. passivity, apathy, lack of trust of public institutions, superiority of collectiveness over individualism, fear, dogmatism, intolerance, demanding attitude towards the world and perceiving political authorities as alien domination instead of a social representation. A contemporary society of citizens possesses the qualities of an "open society" [...], free from authoritarianism and the domain of individual freedom and responsibility. There is no doubt that the success in the western world of liberal democracy and the market economy depends to a large degree on the development of an individual's qualities listed above."

<sup>302</sup> The quotations come from the interview by Wojciech Maziarski with Professor Norman Davies. "Polska droga do piekła" [Polish road to hell], *Newsweek Polska*, no 14, 9 April 2006, p. 17.

According to many experts the inability of Civil Platform (PO) to explain to the voters the essence of liberalism pushed many indecisive voters into the PiS camp, which has resulted in the creation of a radical right-wing coalition government. PiS can run the government only with the help of the populist party Self-defence (Samoobrona<sup>303</sup>) and the hardcore national-democratic Catholic League of Polish Families (LPR<sup>304</sup>). It is not unlikely that this coalition will last until 2009 despite internal disputes that will most likely plague it internally.

A key factor in being an influential foreign policy actor is having a strong national economy. The current politics *a la* PiS will not serve Poland well in the twenty-first century in this respect. In economic matters, the current government represents the typical European welfare state. A welfare state in the PiS version is highly unlikely to generate sufficient economic power to radically change Poland's status as a minor actor. Poland's first ex-Communist Prime Minister, Tadeusz Mazowiecki, expressed this Polish dilemma already in 2003 (when debating whether Poland should take part in the military intervention in Iraq):

*I think that we should be active in many ways, but we must think things through. We must bear in mind that our domestic situation is our biggest weakness and that it hurts our international position. Only countries with well-structured and developing domestic conditions matter in foreign policy; this is not what Poland can offer. Therefore, I'm afraid that our importance is illusory, a bubble inflated by our special transatlantic relations.*<sup>305</sup>

This statement remains valid. Yet, a liberal, free-enterprise economy could make the difference and enable Poland to regain its position as a Central European tiger economy, which it enjoyed during the 1990s.

Another issue, which plays a central role in PiS policies and which was heatedly debated before Poland's EU accession, is national identity and the risk of its loss when joining the Union. Professor Zdzisław Mach observes that two competing dimensions of national identity exist: the first can be called "ethnic" and the second one "civic" identity. Professor Mach writes:

*The Union will not threaten national identity, provided it is understood in an inclusive, open and civic manner. National identity will not be the only or utterly dominating dimension of European identity anymore, but it will remain one of the most important collective identities, next to local or regional as*

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<sup>303</sup> Samoobrona is against excessive foreign investment in Poland, it was also sceptical about Poland's accession to the EU. The party is against: legalisation of euthanasia and abortion, introducing a flat line tax, privatisation of national wealth, legalisation of "soft" drugs and separation of church and state. It postulates: restoration of the death penalty, immediate withdrawal of Polish troops from Iraq, introducing a professional army, maintaining free education and health service, making public all files of past security services. Samoobrona opposes the pro-American policy of the Polish government, and Andrzej Lepper in particular is a supporter of close relations with Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and China. Quotation from Wikipedia, [http://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samoobrona\\_Rzeczpospolitej\\_Polskiej](http://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samoobrona_Rzeczpospolitej_Polskiej).

<sup>304</sup> LPR in its programme, harkens back to the thinking of the pre-war nationalist-democracy camp and its most recognized representative, Polish statesman Roman Dmowski. In foreign policy, the party postulates to extend cooperation with the United States, Russia and European Union countries. After Poland's accession to the European Union (which the party opposed), it postulated cooperation within the framework, but on equal terms and conditions. The party is opposed to further integration of Europe and ideas of federation, which, according to Samoobrona, limit the sovereignty of particular countries. For this reason, the party rejects the adoption of a common currency EUR and any European constitution. Quotation from Wikipedia, [http://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liga\\_Polskich\\_Rodzin](http://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liga_Polskich_Rodzin).

<sup>305</sup> Tadeusz Mazowiecki at a conference in June 2003 organized by the Stefan Batory Foundation. "Poland in the World – Challenges, Achievements, Threats" in the series *On the Future of Europe*, p. 24-25 ([www.batory.org.pl](http://www.batory.org.pl)).

*well as common European identity. Yet, the development of the Union may be a threat to national identity understood in an ethnic, exclusive and closed manner. Such an identity is difficult to reconcile with fundamental values and European freedoms...*<sup>306</sup>

As is the case with political and economic anti-liberalism, national-patriotism is unlikely to be conducive to the foreign policy Poland needs to promote if it wants to achieve its main policy goals on the international arena.

Professor Aleksander Smolar, head of the Stefan Batory Foundation, recently summarised Poland's current foreign policy dilemma given the current domestic politics in a very condensed way:

*National megalomania, strongly present in the Right, as well as lack of a coherent vision of Poland's affairs in the world of global processes and threats may lead to the marginalisation and provincialisation of Poland in Europe. A nation-state country will certainly remain the fundamental place of shaping identity, feeling a sense of historical and cultural community among Poles, and a privileged place for showing practical solidarity, but it will not provide security, development or influence in Europe and in the world's future.*<sup>307</sup>

In essence, this means that whereas Russia under Putin is strengthening its internal cohesion, its economy and its standing in international relations, Poland is doing the opposite. The asymmetrical Polish-Russian relationship in which Warsaw has little leverage will become even more asymmetrical and Poland's chances of realising the Eastern Dimension (in the spirit of Giedroyc-Mieroszewski) will diminish, despite the current government's and president's intention to the contrary.

A number of scenarios offering a way out of this grand strategy dilemma can be envisaged. In the first, changes come from within. The PiS, LPR and Samoobrona government and President Kaczyński become more pragmatic and distance themselves from their ideological approach and start acting in a "federative" mode, thereby shifting the centre of gravity from national patriotism to European integration and cooperation. As Prof. Aleksander Smolar has pointed out, President Kaczyński's visit to Berlin in March 2006 was a positive signal in that respect. The President said the Union was a huge success, something hitherto unheard of in PiS rhetoric. He also said that the EU needs some kind of constitution, something he opposed earlier. And most remarkably of all, he said he could envision a transformation of the Union into a 'quasi-state' in 20-25 years time.<sup>308</sup> Regardless of whether these statements were intended only for German/European, and not Polish, consumption, it would seem that despite the pre-election rhetoric, there is some room for the evolution of opinions and policies in the realm of foreign policy. And as some experts have pointed out – six months may be not enough time to unequivocally assess actions on the international arena.<sup>309</sup>

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<sup>306</sup> Zdzisław Mach, "Polskie społeczeństwo obywatelskie i tożsamość w Unii Europejskiej" [Polish civic society and identity in the European Union] in Paulina Gas (ed.) *Ocena pierwszych miesięcy członkostwa Polski w UE* [Assessment of the first months of Poland's membership in the EU], Institute of Strategic Studies, Kraków, 2005, p. 23 and 25.

<sup>307</sup> Aleksander Smolar, "Świat i Polska według braci Kaczyńskich" [The world and Poland according to the Kaczyński brothers], *Gazeta Wyborcza* 1-2 April 2006, p. 22.

<sup>308</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.

<sup>309</sup> Dr. Leszek Jesień, advisor to the Polish Prime Minister, acting as a private person in the public debate "What is and what will Poland be in the European Union – What about the Euro-constitution now?", organized by the ISS in

Another scenario envisages external changes. This scenario assumes that Moscow will provoke negative reactions in the EU and the USA, which will result in their moving toward closer conformity with Warsaw's stance. The Russian-Ukrainian gas conflict at the beginning of 2006 was an example, which to a limited degree forced the EU to adopt a more joint approach regarding energy security. From this perspective, the issue of energy in EU-Russian relations may generate conflict.<sup>310</sup> "The fight" for the future of Ukraine and Belarus may also evolve into a deeper split. The continuation of the authoritarian course in Russia, the violation of human rights and the reluctance or inability of the Russian economy to adjust to functioning according to the rule of law and the norms of the global economy (including adjustment to the requirements of membership in the World Trade Organisation) may result in a deeper revision of the current policy of the EU towards Russia. The first symptom of this was the report of the European Parliament of May 2005 on EU relations with Russia which, in contrast to past reports, was much sharper in its tone. Additionally, if American-Russian relations worsened considerably, e.g. due to increasing differences of opinion in the fight against international terrorism or due to divergent interests in the struggle to secure future energy sources, Poland's chances of influencing the EU's Eastern policy would certainly increase. Russian efforts at improving its relations with Poland in the beginning of 2006 may stem from Russian fears that Poland's voice is becoming increasingly influential in the structures of the EU and NATO.

One can also envisage various combinations of the above mentioned scenarios. It is for example possible that both internal and external changes take place. Such a development would likely be conducive to Polish efforts to formulate a joint EU Eastern policy. Unfortunately, the opposite combination must also be considered, i.e. neither internal nor external changes. This would be the worst scenario from a Polish perspective. Such a development would likely lead to Poland's isolation within the EU and NATO, and Poland's chances of gaining support from its allies for its efforts in the Eastern Dimension would be very limited.

Finally, one must not exclude the possibility that new elections take place before 2009, resulting in another constellation of parties coming to power, and with a subsequent return to emphasis on further European integration. Such a development would increase the chances of realizing Poland's eastern policy in the spirit of Giedroyc and Mieroszewski. However, this scenario is not very likely in the short run. Hence, the Poles are left with the option to put their faith in a positive development of the first two scenarios.

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Krakow, 7 April, 2006. See also Anna Wolff-Powęska, "Polityka zagraniczna w obleżonej twierdzy" [Foreign policy in a beleaguered fortress], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 22-23 April 2006, p. 21.

<sup>310</sup> Cf., for example, Robert Larsson, *Russia's Energy Policy: Security Dimensions and Russia's Reliability as an Energy Supplier*, FOI-R—1934—SE, March 2006, p. 3-7. A current example is Andrzej Kublik, "Rosja chce przykręcić Europie kurek z ropą" [Russia wants to cut-off gas to Europe], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 25 April 2006, p. 25. "Russia wants to move some of the fuel oil exports to Asia in order to increase the price of the resource in Europe. Several days ago it announced that it would do the same with gas."

## Chapter 9. Summary, Conclusions and Prospects for the Future

*Look forward!*<sup>311</sup>

Benedict XVI to the Poles

During the last couple of years, Polish-Russian relations have been more or less deep-frozen. The year 2005 saw numerous “clashes” between Poland and Russia of a political, diplomatic, economic, military and historical character. Only in early 2006 have there been signs of improvement in the bilateral climate.

The dialogue between Warsaw and Moscow is very much dominated by the discussion on divergent views of Russian-Polish history, especially the period 1939-1989. A first major step towards more lasting and friendly neighbourly relations between Poland and Russia would be to solve the Gordian knot of historical ties. The dilemma is that Russia currently is strengthening its national identity and patriotism by referring to the glorious times of the past (Tsarist and Soviet). Often this approach clashes with the perception of the Central and Eastern Europeans, not least the Poles. The latter argue that Moscow must admit past wrong-doings and make this a condition for improved relations. Moscow under Putin, on the other hand, clearly states that Russia has made these admissions in the early 1990s and that this has closed the issue.

The only reasonable way out of this dilemma would be for both parties to agree to de-politicise the historical dimension. This could be achieved if both sides made an obligation not to use the historical card for current and future political reasons and at the same time establish a common commission of Polish and Russian historians with a suitable mandate. So far, the Russian side has blocked such Polish attempts. A joint history commission of this kind has proven successful in Poland's relations with, for example, Ukraine. A meeting between the Polish and Russian presidents would present an opportunity to take such an initiative.

Polish-Russian cultural relations, in contrast to the current political and economic relations, appear more profound and active, although a heavy burden of historical baggage and a suite of often negative stereotypes and mutual prejudices greatly encumber these relations. For centuries, Poland and Russia struggled for dominance over the lands inhabited by other Slavic nations, the so-called Borderlands (*Kresy*). It is possible here to discern a kind of battle of civilisations between the western Catholic part of Europe and the eastern Orthodox part.

In the communist period, Polish-Russian contacts were quite well-developed, although often falsified, regardless of their differences in worldviews. Cultural activity was intensive. After 1989, however, these contacts underwent significant reduction. Both nations opened completely to the enormous influence of western mass culture, for which there was a great demand and which was much more attractive and digestible to them than the culture of their close neighbour.

Various surveys on how both nations perceive one another show a generally positive attitude of the average Russian citizen toward Poles and that the majority of Russian respondents express the conviction that Poles by and large feel affinity towards Russian. On the other hand, the political elite of Russian society have significantly less trust of Poles. Poles generally view Western and Central European nations favourably, but have a decidedly worse opinion of their eastern

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<sup>311</sup> *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 4 April 2006, p. 1.

neighbours. It is important, however, to differentiate between opinions on the Russian government and those toward the Russian nation.

Considering the aforementioned factors and difficulties, however, Polish-Russian cultural relations currently seem to be heading in the right direction. Despite icy political relations, cultural activity has recently increased and Russia is perceived in Poland as an important neighbour and potential partner. Both nations, despite historical burdens and the transfer of their affinity to western countries, should seek mutual contacts and attempt to find common ground for agreement. It seems that the cultural sphere, next to trade, is well suited for pursuit of this objective and it should constitute the basis for mutual acceptance, agreement and profound understanding.

Poland's geopolitical position between two large powers (Germany and Russia) has dictated the boundary conditions for Poland's foreign and security policy for a thousand years. Since 1999/2004 when Poland gained membership in NATO/EU, the situation has changed fundamentally. Germany is a strategic partner and Warsaw can direct its main attention towards the East.

The so-called Giedroyc-Mieroszewski doctrine from the 1960s states that the only viable, long-term strategy for Poland is a strategy of constructive engagement with its Eastern neighbours.<sup>312</sup> In today's interpretation of the Giedroyc-Mieroszewski doctrine, good Polish-Russian relations can be achieved on condition that

- they are not achieved at the expense of independence and vital interests of Poland's and Russia's common neighbours (Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova),
- Russia is engaged politically, economically etc. in European cooperation and
- with the conscious cooperation of the Russians.

Poland in turn, has (long ago) given up all claims on Belarus and Ukraine including the historically important towns of Vilnius, Lvov and Grodno, and supports their full independence. An important element of this strategy is also to uphold a dialogue with true Russian democrats and the intelligentsia.

Since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century Poland has also taken on the role as regional leader in Central Europe and as a bridge between east and west with a special responsibility for the Eastern Dimension. Washington confirmed this role as late as in February 2006 during president Kaczynski's visit to the United States.

The overall objective of Polish Eastern policy is that only stability and prosperity in the East can bring long-term security to Poland. For this reason Poland has pursued a strategy of constructive engagement towards Russia, Belarus and Ukraine throughout the 1990s and into the 2000s. Because of a general lack of substantial Polish leverage and suitable instruments this strategy has to a large extent been dependent on the behaviour of the objects of this strategy. But, there exists domestic opposition in Belarus, Russia and Ukraine to too close cooperation with the EU and NATO, which complicates the matter. Overall, both successes and failures have been recorded. To increase its leverage there are few options open to Warsaw but to work via the EU and NATO. Yet, some major EU member states are still stuck in their "Russia First" policy, adopted during the 1990s.

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<sup>312</sup> At the time of its elaboration it was a doctrine for freeing Poland from Soviet domination. Among other things Giedroyc and Mieroszewski saw the dissolution of the Soviet Union as inevitable.

Working actively in the European institutions Poland has achieved some substantial successes during the last year. The firm stance on Ukraine persuading the European Parliament and in the end the Commission to act and to mediate during the election crisis in Ukraine in late 2004 was in many respects the work of Polish and Lithuanian efforts. Poland's role in the resolution of the Ukrainian crisis was noted with great irritation in Moscow and great approval in Washington. And Polish, Lithuanian and Slovak members of the European Parliament have recorded substantial successes in forging a relatively firm stance of the EU on Belarus in connection with the presidential elections in March 2006. The European Parliament has adopted more resolutions on Belarus than on any other state during the last years (twice as many as Iran for example).<sup>313</sup>

As the analysis in this report has shown the Polish-Russian relation is one of great asymmetry. Russia is or pretends to be a great power, whereas Poland rhetorically is a country of minor importance to Moscow. However, because of their common and often contentious history Russia is very sensitive to Polish behaviour, which is perceived as anti-Russian. Poland's dilemma when playing the role of regional leader or east-west bridge is that it lacks substantial leverage over Russia on a bilateral basis. But, Poland's political leverage in a multilateral context should not be underestimated. What Moscow probably fears the most is increased Polish influence over the EU's and NATO's policies toward Russia.

For Russia, trade with Poland is not vital. Poland is more dependent on trade with Russia; this is particularly true for the eastern parts of the country and with respect to energy supplies. The volume of Polish-Russian trade has varied since 1991. Despite some setbacks, however, trade is on average increasing. Trade is also one of the few sectors in which Poland can potentially exert an influence over Russia in the spirit of constructive engagement along the lines of the Giedroyc-Mieroszewski doctrine. Polish-Russian trade is, however, a more politicised issue than trade relations usually are. Some asymmetrical characteristics can also be observed. Because of the difference in size of the markets and the structure of the trade (Poland exports foodstuffs and consumer goods, whereas it imports mainly raw materials, especially energy carriers) Poland can hardly exert any leverage over Russia today.

A number of technical problems (customs tariffs, taxes, legislation, certification of products etc.) will have to be overcome if Poland and Russia are to develop their trade. The interoperability of the banking systems is poor. A majority of the Polish companies engaged in trade in Russia are small or medium-sized enterprises with small resources for direct investments and lacking joint venture risk capital. On top of that, the Polish state budget lacks funds as well as a long-term plan to promote Polish foreign trade. Russian companies, on the other hand, complain that they are subject to discrimination on the Polish market, the underlying reason being a fear in Poland that Russian companies want to take control of key sectors of the economy, as is the case in the energy sector. The authors of this report have found no other sector of the Polish economy that would be controlled overtly or covertly by Russian interests. The Polish banking system, for example, is rather in West European hands. Even though politics may continue to influence Polish-Russian trade negatively in the short-term, a positive trend could be envisioned in a longer term. However, its success depends more on multilateral developments than on bilateral. Polish accession to the EU and Russian adjustment to the demands of WTO should pave the way for further liberalization of foreign trade and thereby remove technical, administrative, legal and other barriers.

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<sup>313</sup> Private communication with Janusz Onyszkiewicz, Deputy Chairman of the European Parliament, 28 January 2006.

An example of Polish-Russian cooperation on the regional level is the work with the *Euroregion Baltic*. The full potential of this cooperation, which includes the Kaliningrad oblast and regions of Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Sweden and Denmark, has not been exploited. On the Polish side, there have been problems of coordination between different subjects (participating communes and voivodships), lack of continuity of activities between elections, misuse of EU funds and a lack of a regional leadership (voivodship). Problems on the Russian side are connected with complicated cross-border proceedings, weak development of self-governments in the Kaliningrad oblast and their dependence on Moscow (the strategy of political centralization has often had a negative influence on the relations between Russian regions and another states), lack or deficit of information about the partners within the Euroregion, differences in administrative structures between Poland and Kaliningrad and ineffective legislation and finally budget problems in Poland as well as in the Kaliningrad oblast.

Numerous analyses, including the one in this report, have concluded that the main problem of region cooperation with Russia is the central government's reluctance to decentralize powers to the federation subjects. The underlying fear in Moscow is that the regions may become more dependent on regions in other states thereby decreasing Moscow's influence. Hampering economic development and thereby keeping Kaliningrad more dependent on Moscow than on regions in surrounding states is the safest way to maintain subordination.

The behaviour of Moscow as regards regional cooperation fits very well with the description given by Andrei Kokoshin, who states that the Russian way of thinking is deductive (i.e., from the general to the specific), whereas the American (Western) way of thinking is inductive (i.e., from the specific to the general). In a way these inverse approaches coincide with the decision-making process on these two countries.<sup>314</sup> The main conclusion from this fact is that contrary to the intention of the euroregions, regional cooperation will not be a way towards improved relations on the state level unless the Russian Federation substantially changes its attitude towards such kind of "inductive" activities. Poland and the EU, however, should continue efforts to convince Moscow that a prosperous Kaliningrad is also in the interest of Russia, and not a way of wresting the exclave out of Moscow's hands. Increasing economic inequality between Kaliningrad and the surrounding EU is more likely to cause trouble for Moscow.

Poland is, like all other former satellite states or Soviet Republics, highly dependent on Russian energy carriers, especially natural gas. Apart from a few important states, the dependence of Western Europe is substantially smaller. This explains why states in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) have held distinctly different opinions from their Western European allies (EU15) regarding Moscow's energy policy. Whereas a common EU energy policy would be beneficial to CEE states, it is by many Western European member states regarded as a handcuffing of their national sovereignty. But, apart from being dependent, a number of former Soviet satellites or republics are also transit countries upon which Russia is dependent. The only way Poland can exert any leverage over Russia is by remaining a transit country and being able to control the pipelines running over its territory. Moscow on the other hand is aware of this delivery vulnerability and acts to minimise its dependence on transit countries. The North European Gas Pipeline (NEGP) agreed upon with Germany is an example of this. Whereas the pipeline suits Germany's long-term interests, it is not conducive to the principal of EU solidarity and affects Poland's energy security negatively. However, a German-Polish commission is working on the issue and there have been signals from

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<sup>314</sup> Andrei Kokoshin, *Soviet Strategic Thought*, (MIT Press, 1998), p. 192.



both the German and Russian side that a pipeline to Poland could be envisioned (either connecting with the NEGP or connecting Polish and German pipeline infrastructures on land). In May 2006 the Polish government rejected the idea of connecting Poland to the NEGP, but this may not be the last word on this issue.

The Russian-Ukrainian gas conflict during the first days of January 2006 was a wake-up call for countries in Western Europe like Germany, which is highly dependent on Russian gas. Although the EU did not respond formally to the crisis for fear that it may have to bear the burden of solving the conflict, Germany and some other EU member states reacted strongly. Members of the European Parliament (MEP), especially from CEE including Poland, started debating whether to adopt a resolution on EU energy security and lobbying for a common energy policy. Only by having a common energy policy, meaning a strong client at the receiving end of the Russian supply line, will the Union be able to negotiate with Moscow on equal footing. In March 2006, the European Commission adopted a Green Book on energy. It contains many of the proposals brought into the process by Polish MEPs. In addition to this Warsaw also proposed an “Energy-NATO” in which Member states would solidarily help any other member state experiencing a shortage of energy. This endeavour was poorly timed and too far-reaching, going outside the current legal regulations of the European Community. As a result, it was ignored by the other member states.

On a national level, Poland’s energy policy up to the year 2025 foresees the further development of traditional sources of energy (oil, gas, and coal). A feasibility study on a liquefied natural gas (LNG) port on the Baltic coast is in progress. Discussions on extending the Odessa-Brody oil pipeline to Płock and Gdańsk are likely to be resumed. Exploitation of Poland's large coal resources is also likely. The energy strategy 2025 also emphasises development of new sources (renewable energy sources and nuclear power) as well as investments in energy-saving technologies. This also offers new business opportunities for EU member states and other countries, which have already put some of these technologies to work. A particular point is that Poland will go nuclear around 2021-2022. From a Swedish perspective, assisting Poland to develop nuclear power would seem an attractive business and employment opportunity despite the current political sensitivity of the issue in both countries.

As for the Polish-Russian century-long tug-of-war over the Borderland (ULB<sup>315</sup>), the score after the presidential elections in Belarus in March 2006 is still 2-1 in Poland's favour (UL-B). The election campaign showed that the Belarusian opposition is uniting and there is a growing belief that in unity lays strength. The manifestations during and demonstration after the elections showed that many people have overcome the fear factor. Tens of thousands of people went out into the streets despite the authorities' warnings that demonstrators would be treated like terrorists, with the death penalty as ultimate consequence. But, fear remains as a factor hampering the democratic opposition. Even though the Belarusian economy and administration is maturing to structural reforms, stronger popular support is needed in order to free Belarus from the Lukashenko regime. Aleksander Milinkievich's words after the elections are wise: “We should not compare Belarus with Ukraine. We will not see a beautiful and swift victory here. I always compare our country with Poland under Solidarity. We have a long and hard struggle ahead of us.”

In the future, the Lukashenko regime will continue its policy of “self-isolation” in its contacts with western countries. The government will continue to work toward the maximum possible closing of Belarus to western influences – both political and cultural. In economics, however, it will strive to maintain its existing commercial ties with western countries that have been so important to it in the

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<sup>315</sup> Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus.

past. Along with closing itself “to the west,” Belarus will to an increasingly greater degree draw close to Russia. The Kremlin – in exchange for “protecting” the regime – will seek to increase its economic and political influence in Belarus. These designs, however, are dangerous for the Lukashenko regime itself, as they significantly contract his power and control over the economy and society in Belarus. In the future, the Lukashenko regime’s situation may resemble rolling down “an inclined plane,” since seeking protection from Russia will make Belarus increasingly dependent on it. Belarus under the Lukashenko regime after the 2006 presidential elections remains a challenge for the European Union. Yet, the will to maintain economic ties with the west and Lukashenko’s desire to guard Belarusian economic independence affords the EU certain possibilities of exerting its influence on the regime. However, in the short-term the effects are not guaranteed.

A number of scenarios of future developments in Belarus can be envisioned. One is of course a continuation of the current state for many years to come. Another is that Lukashenko give in to Russian demands and Belarus become even more dependent on Russia and joins the Russia-Belarus Union. A more thought-provoking scenario is one where the democratic opposition led by Milinkievich joins forces with Lukashenko to defend Belarus independence. Such a deal would likely entail Lukashenko’s staying in power in return for increased chances of transformation toward a market economy, increased welfare and in the end democratization. Although the regime has portrayed the democratic opposition as the greatest threat to Belarusian independence and as terrorists, which makes such joint action hard, it cannot be ruled out once the Kremlin’s pressure increases.

Ukraine partly left the sphere of Russian influence in 2004. But, an effective policy towards Ukraine will need a long-term engagement of a strategic nature and substantial resources (Polish, EU, NATO and other). The outcome of the parliamentary elections in late March 2006 was not optimally conducive to a continued and clearly defined pro-western course. However, many experts believe that even ideologically pro-Russian oriented groups will for reasons of business opportunities have strong interests in western markets rather than the eastern. This is the reason for the active support for pro-democracy and free markets aspirations of the nation and the Ukrainian government. Ukraine’s declarations of a pro-European direction in its foreign policy are conducive to security and stability on the eastern borders of the European Union. Still, both the Ukrainian authorities and their European partners will need to count on active engagement from Russia aimed at maintaining its dominance and hindering Ukraine’s exit from its sphere of influence established since the collapse of the USSR.

It is not advisable to speak of Ukraine’s entry into the EU as fast as possible; this undoubtedly would evoke the unequivocal objection of many EU members. In the short-term, it would be more effective to focus on the concept of a kind of “soft support,” involving increased technical and economic assistance to Ukraine. A programme of support for the development of Ukrainian civil society and the free market – broadly framed and conceived – would in the future enable the strengthening of the area of stability and growth on EU borders; in the more distant future, this process could culminate in Ukraine’s accession to the EU. This is how the concept of a “European perspective” for Ukraine, promoted by the European Parliament, should be understood.<sup>316</sup>

Despite recurring shifts of governments and presidents of different hues, Polish foreign and security policy has been very constant since 1989 and up till 2005. Having achieved its two overall

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<sup>316</sup> Private communication with Bogdan Klich, Member of the European Parliament, 11 May 2005.

objectives (NATO and EU membership), there is today more room for debate on how to manoeuvre within the framework of these two organisations.

In the autumn 2005, a new government came to power and a new president was elected. The largest party (PiS) has a distinct nationalistic-patriotic programme. EU cooperation is seen as a tool to gain national advantages and give only as much as is required. PiS anti-liberal economic and political policies as well as emphasis on ethnic national identity is already leading to diminished internal Polish cohesion and a deepening division of Polish society. Such policies are detrimental to Poland's standing in the EU and NATO. During the pre-election campaign and up to the time of writing this report (May 2006), the president and the government are against an EU constitution (in its current form) and a common Union foreign and security policy. At the same time, they are seeking support for Warsaw's Eastern policy and a common EU energy policy, which require the two former ideas as a foundation. A lack of coordination between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Prime Minister and the President can be observed, as can great consternation, irritation and apprehension to current Polish policies among transatlantic partners.

The words of Ambassador Krzysztof Mroziewicz summarize the situation better today than when they were uttered in May 2005: "We are not the bridge between the West and East, we are under the bridge."<sup>317</sup> In essence, this means that whereas Russia under Putin is strengthening its internal cohesion, its economy and its standing in international relations, Poland is doing the opposite. The asymmetrical Polish-Russian relationship in which Warsaw has little leverage will become even more asymmetrical and Poland's chances of realising the Eastern Dimension (in the spirit of Giedroyc-Mieroszewski) will diminish, despite the current government's and president's declarations to the contrary. However, lately there have been small signs that the political leadership may be able to overcome its highly ideological stance and become more pragmatic. Otherwise Poland stands small chances of playing the role of regional leader and gaining any support for its eastern policies, including its relations with Russia, and energy policies.

Looking further into the future, Warsaw needs to build alliances within the transatlantic structures to further strengthen its position and increase its leverage. Poland has a lot to offer in the form of hands-on-knowledge and experience in contacts with Russia, Belarus and Ukraine. But, the inherent dilemma of using Poland as a regional leader or an East-West bridge is that this has some bad connotations in the East for historical reasons. Hence, careful management and "team-building" will be necessary in order for any measures in the Eastern Dimension to be effective.

The Eastern dimension is clearly an area of EU affairs in which Poland has many possible allies in Northern Europe. States like Sweden, Finland, Norway and Denmark share more or less a common view with the states in Central and Eastern Europe on developments of and the desired future in EU's closest eastern neighbours (Belarus, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine). Apart from common interests regarding the Eastern dimension, they are also all transatlantically oriented and strong believers in the necessity of EU-US cooperation on matters of foreign and security policy.

However, as Janusz Reiter, the former head of the Centre for International Relations (CSM) in Warsaw and currently Poland's ambassador to Washington, pointed out during the Ukrainian "revolution" in late 2004, Poland has been very slow in alliance-building with these countries.<sup>318</sup> To

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<sup>317</sup> Conference entitled "NATO's Eastern Policy" organised by the Institute for Strategic Studies in cooperation with NATO HQ, Kraków, 13 May 2005.

□ Janusz Reiter, „Wykorzystać sukces” [Exploit the Success], *Rzeczpospolita*, 6 December 2004.

gain support in its Eastern Dimension efforts, Poland has traditionally turned to the United States, Brussels and the major Western European powers, in other words the classical East-West outlook, which has traditionally characterised Polish security and foreign policy thinking. Because of an unwillingness to risk their relations with Moscow, the support for its eastern policy that Warsaw has been able to rally has been limited. Although the resources and political weight of potential partners in Northern, Central and Eastern Europe are more limited, north-south alliance-building could comprise a larger number of states, thereby becoming more influential within the EU and NATO with regards to the Eastern Dimension.