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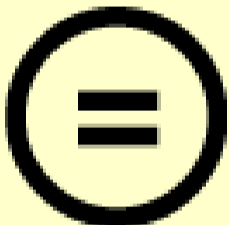
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**Poland and the Common Foreign and
Security Policy of the European Union:
from adaptation to Europeanisation?**

By

Karolina Pomorska

Doctoral Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements

for the award of

Doctor of Philosophy of Loughborough University

21 April 2008

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ABSTRACT

Practitioners and academics clearly established that participation in the EU system of foreign policy-making transforms national foreign policies. Whilst there have been detailed studies of the impact of participation in EU foreign policy on the original fifteen member states there are, as yet, few academic studies that have thoroughly investigated the impact of progressive integration in the area of EU foreign and security policy on the new (i.e. those who joined since 2004) member states. This thesis aims to address this deficit by focusing on the impact of Poland's participation in the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). It examines the processes of 'downloading', as it is argued here that involvement in CFSP has had a direct effect on both the procedures of foreign policy-making in the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and, on the substance of Polish foreign policy as well as the impact of 'uploading' from member states to the EU level and 'crossloading' between EU member states.

The thesis addresses the relevant conceptual issues and provides an outline of the academic debate regarding Europeanisation and foreign policy. It identifies three mechanisms that are responsible for change: conditionality, socialisation and learning. It suggests that a member state first adapts its national foreign policy to bring it in line with the EU's *acquis politique* and introduces basic changes in its institutional procedures in order to effectively participate in the EU's CFSP. Only later, does socialisation and learning result in changes to *how* national foreign policy is made, which then facilitates both changes to the substance of national policy and the uploading of national preferences to the EU level. A two-phase model of change is introduced which identifies April 2003, when Poland first became an active observer within the EU, as the date when Europeanisation began.

The thesis provides a brief explanation of the transformation of Polish foreign policy after 1989, in order to provide contextual background for the four substantive chapters which follow: one procedural on the changes in the Polish MFA and three related to policy substance. The latter three chapters examine the Europeanisation of policy towards Poland's East European neighbours in general and policies towards Ukraine and Belarus in particular. The thesis concludes with a set of methodological and conceptual observations followed by analysis of the empirical findings.

Key words: European Union, Polish foreign policy, Europeanisation, Common Foreign and Security Policy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Neighbourhood Policy

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The thesis was written during my doctoral studies at the Department of Politics, International Relations and European Studies at Loughborough University in the United Kingdom. This was possible thanks to support I received from different organisations and individuals, whom I would like to thank here.

First and foremost, I would like to thank my supervisor, Professor Dave Allen. Dave has not only proved to be an incredibly motivating, inspiring and intellectually stimulating supervisor, but has also helped me throughout my first steps in the academic community. Apart from providing tremendous intellectual input on the thesis, he has always been there for me when I was facing new challenges and needed advice or encouragement on presenting my first conference papers and giving first classes. I hope I can one day be able to supervise and guide my students in a similar manner – allowing them to find ‘their own way’, but at the same time preventing them from getting lost in the academic jungle.

The PhD project was made possible thanks to the departmental scholarship of the Department of Politics, International Relations and European Studies. I am grateful to my Directors of Research, who have changed throughout my studies, but who have all been very helpful: Dr Monica Threlfall, Professor Mark Webber and Professor Brian Hocking. I express my gratitude also to Professor Mike Smith and Dr Helen Drake, who have offered the most precious advice on various occasions, from departmental seminars to drafts of articles. I would also like to thank the other staff members from PIREs and from the Learning Resource Centre for their great support and for creating an unforgettable, research-friendly atmosphere.

Thanks also to my friends from the PIREs ‘postgraduate research community’, including Asimina Michailidou, Carina Gerlach, Bezen Coskun, Borja Garcia, Melchior Szczepanik, Ajaree Tarvomans, Alex Prichard and Emilian Kavalski. A very special thanks goes to Ana Juncos: we shared our PhD adventure from ‘Day One’ and Ana has turned out to be not only a great colleague, office-mate, co-author and partner in ‘heated’ discussions, but also a loyal friend.

At the end of my third year, I moved to the University of Maastricht, Department of Politics, to teach on the European Studies Programme. I would like to thank the UM for the research grant they awarded me to finish my thesis and my colleagues, who have given me a lot of support in the difficult final stages of writing-up. I am particularly grateful to Dr Sophie Vanhoonacker, our Director of Studies and agony aunt, who initially motivated me to apply for a PhD in Loughborough and who has believed in me throughout. Thanks to my supportive colleagues in Maastricht, especially Paul Stephenson, Tom Casier, Patrick Bijsmans and Michal Gondek at the UM and Simon Duke and Thomas Christiansen from EIPA.

The empirical part of the thesis would not have been possible without the help of many practitioners, especially those from the EU institutions, the Polish Ministry of Foreign

Affairs and the Polish Permanent Representation to the EU in Brussels. My thanks to the latter for hosting me over several weeks in 2006 – it was a most illuminating and fascinating experience! I would also like to thank Kasia Dyja and Ilona Bryg for their great friendship and wonderful hospitality during my numerous visits to Brussels and London.

Finally, all this would not be possible without my family, who have always been very understanding, patient and motivating, especially my grandmother, Zosia, and my sister, Agnieszka, but most of all my mother, without whose encouragement, constant support and love I could never have completed this thesis.

Ten Doktorat dedykuję Mojej Mamie – Lucynie.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACN	Associates Communications Network
AP	Action Plan
CBSS	Council of Baltic See States
CEI	Central European Initiative
CEECs	Central Eastern European Countries
CEFTA	Central European Free Trade Area
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy (EU)
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CIVCOM	Committee for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management (EU)
CoE	Council of Europe
COEST	Council Working Group on Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EU)
COREU	Correspondance Européenne
CORTESY	COREU Terminal System
COTRA	Council Working Group on Transatlantic Relations (EU)
COWEB	Council Working Group on Western Balkans (EU)
CSCE	Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe
COREPER	Committee of Permanent Representatives (EU)
DG	Directorate-general (EU)
DUE	Department of European Union (Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs)
CEE	Central Eastern Europe
EC	European Community
ECHIO	European Community Humanitarian Office
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
EP	European Parliament
EPC	European Political Cooperation
ESDI	European Security and Defence Identity
ESDP	European Security and Defence Policy
EU	European Union

ESS	European Security Strategy (EU)
EUSR	European Union Special Representative
GAERC	General Affairs and External Relations Council
IGC	Inter-governmental Conference (EU)
JHA	Justice and Home Affairs (EU)
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
ODIHR	Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE)
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PfP	(NATO's) Partnership for Peace
PSC	Political and Security Committee (EU)
QMV	Qualified Majority Voting
SG/HR	Secretary General of the Council/High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP)
TEU	Treaty establishing the European Union
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
US	United States of America
WEU	Western European Union
WTO	World Trade Organisation

INTRODUCTION

The day of Poland's accession to the EU was a very emotional time for many Poles. Vast numbers celebrated the fact that their country had eventually joined the Western structures. For many, it marked a symbolic end to the period of Soviet dominance, followed by efforts to build a democratic, independent state that culminated in membership of NATO and the EU. The latter has also served to legitimise the changes and reforms that took place in Poland after 1989. This transformation process was often perceived as Poland's 'return to Europe', which was successfully concluded in 2004 and which had a profound impact on the political, economic and social dimensions of public life.

In striving for EU membership, Poland had to fulfil a number of entry criteria and adopt the body of the EU legislation; here the 'impact of Europe' is most clear. However, there were other, less tangible effects in many spheres of politics. This thesis aims to explore the implications that the EU accession bid and later EU membership had for Polish foreign policy. This is done in four substantive chapters. One focuses on procedural changes in the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), while the other three investigate change in policy substance, focusing on the policy towards the EU's Eastern neighbours in general and Ukraine and Belarus in particular.

The thesis examines changes in Polish foreign policy in the time period 1998 - 2006 between the start of the accession negotiations and the second anniversary of Poland's accession to the EU. A large part of the analysis relates to the period after Poland became an active observer within the EU in April 2003, after which the impact of likely EU membership intensified.

All three chapters which examine policy substance focus on Poland's immediate Eastern neighbours, first on the general approach within the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and then on Ukraine and Belarus in particular. This choice has been made for several reasons. Firstly, Poland had demonstrated long before actual

enlargement took place that it wanted to play a leading role in shaping the EU's policy towards the East. At the time when enlargement was taking place, the Union was in the process of re-defining its approach towards that region and formulating new policies. This was already a promising situation for any researcher of Europeanisation. At the same time, the danger of choosing a non-representative policy area was avoided, as relations with both Ukraine and Belarus are of a very special, even strategic importance for Poland. Therefore, they would be perhaps the least likely to become the subject of national adaptation and change due to EU accession. In this respect, if there was evidence of Europeanisation in the case of policy towards Poland's Eastern neighbours, one could assume that it would also be present in the case of other areas of foreign policy.

This brief introduction first presents the structure of the thesis and then explains the research methods and sources that were used in the course of the study.

The structure of the thesis

The thesis begins by establishing an analytical framework for the study in **chapter one**. It is not the primary aim of this study to make a theoretical contribution, but this chapter is necessary to guide the analysis of the substantive chapters that follow. The concept of Europeanisation is critically approached and its application to date is reviewed. Its meaning is related to other similar concepts that are occasionally confused with Europeanisation, such as adaptation, globalisation and convergence. Later, the use of this particular approach in studies of the interactions between national and European foreign policy is discussed and a two-phase model of Europeanisation is proposed. For methodological purposes and in order to add explanatory value to the study, three mechanisms responsible for change are identified: conditionality, learning and socialisation.

Before the framework that has been established in **chapter one** is applied to the substantive chapters, the historical context to the analysis is given in **chapter two**. The chapter pays special attention to the tradition of modern foreign policy-making in Poland

and the effects that the fall of the 'iron curtain' had on the MFA and on the substance of policy. Such analysis is especially vital because the thesis attempts to study the notion of change, and for identifying and explaining change one has to establish as clearly as possible the *status quo* at the onset of the research timeframe. It is also important, after identifying certain trends and 'dogmas' present in Polish foreign policy for centuries, to establish whether they had any significance in the Europeanisation process (for example they could be factors obstructing Europeanisation). The background presented in chapter two also allows for identifying the post-communist 'baggage' that Poland brought to the EU.

The thesis then proceeds to apply the analytical framework to the substantive chapters. By engaging in the study of both procedures and policy-substance, it attempts to make a more complete contribution on the Europeanisation of Polish foreign policy than it could do had it only looked at one of these two elements. By doing so, it tries to find links between Europeanisation of procedures and substance, between the policy-making processes and policy-outputs. The substantive chapters look for evidence of Europeanisation, but also verify how useful the analytical framework is: whether it is useful to make a distinction between adaptation and Europeanisation; what is the role of 'change agents'; whether processes of conditionality, learning and socialisation are indeed crucial drivers underpinning change. The analysis focuses on identifying examples of 'uploading', 'downloading' and 'crossloading'.

The first case study, in chapter three, analyses policy procedures and focuses on the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Due to the nature of this chapter, some additional contextual background is presented with regard to the institutional setting of both European and Polish foreign policy. The chapter focuses on different dimensions of change, identified as systemic, organisational, cultural and process-related and it pays special attention to the shift from adaptation to Europeanisation that took place in April 2003. It will be argued that it was very clear in the case of institutions, while less evident in the case of policy substance. One part of the chapter is devoted to the role of 'change agents', who are identified as Polish representatives sent to the Permanent Representation

in Brussels. Both their role in the Europeanisation process, as well as the significance of a gap that appears between them and their colleagues who remain in Warsaw are investigated.

Next, the thesis moves on to investigate the Europeanisation of Polish foreign policy substance. This is done in **chapters four, five and six**. They are all related to the policy towards Poland's (and hence the EU's) Eastern neighbours. **Chapter four** bears a special significance. While constituting a case study in its own right, it also provides a background for the more detailed analysis concerning Ukraine and Belarus in **chapters five and six** by discussing the general approach of Poland and the EU to the region. All three substantive chapters follow the same structure. First, the EU's approach to the region/country is explained. Because of the nature of European foreign policy, where national foreign policies remain divergent, special emphasis is put on the different interests of the member states and how they are eventually reconciled at the European level. Second, Poland's policy towards the region/country is explained, with prominence given to any points where Polish and EU's approach differ. This is because such difference, sometimes called a 'misfit' in Europeanisation literature, usually leads to either 'uploading' efforts on the part of a member state in order to bring the European policy closer to its own or in national adaptation ('downloading') or changing national foreign policy so it would be in line with the EU's approach. Finally, each chapter analyses the interaction between Polish and EU policy on chosen examples, which can be either a more general principle of a policy (e.g. the issue of potential EU membership for Ukraine or the choice between isolation and engagement with regard to Belarus) or a reaction to a specific event (e.g. the Orange Revolution in Ukraine or the undemocratic elections in Belarus). This analysis is designed to establish *if* and *how* national and European foreign policies influence one another.

The thesis ends with two sets of conclusions in the final **chapter seven**. The first set refers to the issue of *how* the research has been done and highlights its contribution to the conceptual debate on Europeanisation, as well as methodological issues that might be relevant to further research. The second set of conclusions presents the results of the

analysis of the empirical evidence in the four substantive chapters and presents the overall conclusions with regard to the Europeanisation of Polish foreign policy.

Research methods and sources

This section outlines the research methods and sources that were used in order to develop this thesis. A large amount of data was obtained with the use of qualitative methods, such as semi-structured interviews and participant observation. The thesis also uses primary sources, mainly official EU documents and Polish documents predominately originating from the MFA. This material is complemented, where possible, by secondary literature, especially in **chapter two** and in **chapters four and five**. It has to be noted, however, that the number of primary sources concerning the Polish MFA and its recent adaptation to CFSP accessible to researchers is extremely limited. This is partly because of the nature of foreign policy as an issue area, which is to a large extent confidential. Referring to any Polish secondary sources has also been difficult, as there are no comprehensive accessible academic studies on the Polish MFA. Additionally, the changes examined are fairly recent. This difficulty has been overcome by using different methods of qualitative data gathering.

In the course of this research, 46 in-depth, semi-structured interviews were carried out with officials from the Polish MFA, mainly from the Department of the EU and in the Polish Permanent Representation to the EU in Brussels. Other interviews involved national representatives sitting in the Council from old and new member states and officials from the European Commission (DG External Relations) and the Council Secretariat General. The semi-structured nature of the interviews allowed for some flexibility. The practitioners would often share their information on an issue that would later be followed-up in other interviews. This form of interviewing also allowed me to ask additional questions or to expand on some chosen topics. The access was most difficult in the case of the Polish MFA and easiest in the case of Brussels-based officials. Generally, once an initial contact was made with one person, who often acted as a 'gatekeeper', he or she was very helpful in establishing further connections within the

same institution. A six-week period in which I was able to participate in EU Council meetings reduced the problem of access and made possible the establishment of contacts within the institution.

In the early stages of data gathering, three interviews were conducted in Brussels with the Polish representatives to the Council working groups. Then, the possibility of conducting an internship (with the goal of gathering data and observing the work of the Polish Permanent Representation to the EU in Brussels) was suggested. The next phase involved a two-month stay in Warsaw, as a visiting scholar at Warsaw University, during which time I was able to conduct interviews in the Polish MFA. Gaining access to this institution proved to be a much more difficult and time-consuming task than previously expected. Polish officials are not yet used to being approached by academics and especially not those from foreign universities. This deadlock was finally overcome when official permission for interviewing staff was granted by the Deputy Director of the Department of the EU, who also agreed to be interviewed himself. From that moment numerous officials were approached and proved to be in most cases very enthusiastic and informative sources of information. Finally, a number of officials from the MFA and the Permanent Representations were interviewed more than once, in a follow-up procedure.

Such a methodological approach, however, may lead to obtaining data that is biased by the personal agendas of the policy-makers. This is because the practitioners would often give just 'their side of the story', that might have been influenced by their personal experiences, disappointments or attempts to justify some of their actions. For this reason, when possible, the evidence obtained was checked against the information available from other sources. In order to verify the statements and the self-perception of Polish diplomats, two techniques were used. First, a number of national representatives to the Council Working Groups from other member states and relevant officials from the Commission and the Council Secretariat were interviewed. Their views and accounts of events were then compared with the ones given by the Polish officials. Secondly, participant observation was conducted for six weeks in the Permanent Representation of Poland to the EU and in the Council of the EU. Two Polish representatives were

‘shadowed’. The meetings of three Council working groups (COEST, COTRA and COWEB) were attended and followed closely for six weeks in June and July 2005. COEST and COWEB met twice a week, while COTRA meetings took place on a weekly basis. Some meetings of COREPER II and PSC were also attended.

Most of the interviews were recorded. However, in a few cases permission to do so was denied or the recording device was stopped by the interviewee and shorthand was taken by the author. All officials who were interviewed were informed about the nature of the project; about how the material would be used in the thesis and about the possibility of switching between the ‘on’ and ‘off the record’ modes during the interview. Additionally, in most cases, a research declaration was sent via e-mail before the interview took place (see annex 1 at the end of the thesis). The vast majority of interviews were off the record, and a detailed list with names and institutions of those interviewed has been provided for the examiners but not bound into this thesis.

In the process of writing this thesis, the results of the empirical work were presented at various conferences. This has resulted in parts of the work being published as the following articles:

- ‘The Impact of Enlargement: Europeanisation of Polish Foreign Policy? Tracking adaptation and change in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ (2007) *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy*, vol. 2, no. 1 (contains some findings from chapter three)
- ‘The deadlock that never happened: The impact of enlargement on the Common Foreign and Security Policy Council Working Groups’, *European Political Economy Review*, no. 6 (March 2007), pp. 4-30 (co-written with A.E. Juncos)
- ‘Playing the Brussels game: strategic socialisation in CFSP Council Working Groups’ (2006) *European Integration online Papers*, vol. 10 no. 11 (co-written with A.E. Juncos)

- ‘Learning the ropes and embracing the rules: Institutions as arenas for learning and socialisation in CFSP’, *Working Paper of the Observatory of European Foreign Policy*, no. 70, July 2006, Bellaterra (Barcelona): Institut Universitari d’Estudis Europeus (co-written with A.E. Juncos)
- ‘Poland and the European Neighbourhood Policy’ (2006) *Foreign Policy in Dialogue*, vol. 6 no. 19, pp. 34-43 (co-written with Piotr Buras)
- ‘Europeanisation: framework or fashion?’ (2005) *CFSP Forum*, vol. 3, no. 5 (co-written with Claudia Major)

A few of the above articles were written jointly with young academics working on similar subjects, in which cases the results of our empirical work were combined. However, all evidence presented and analysed in this thesis originate from the work conducted solely by the author. The thesis now moves on to chapter one and presents an analytical framework for the study.

CHAPTER 1

POLISH FOREIGN POLICY AND POLISH MEMBERSHIP OF THE EU: AN ANALYTICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to establish an analytical framework to study the interactions between Polish national foreign policy and EU foreign policy. Due to the nature of the research topic, there are several requirements that such a research design must meet. Firstly, it has to encompass the processes and interconnections between two levels of analysis: a European foreign policy (CFSP) and a national one, and to accommodate a third level: the international environment in which the EU and its member states operate. In this way, the impact that the EU exerts on the candidate country (later a member state) and the reverse can be captured. Secondly, it should allow for studying changes in both procedures and policy substance. Finally, it has to comprise the study of a candidate state that then becomes a member of the EU, taking into account differences between the two statuses.

The chapter has been structured as follows: the first section discusses the Europeanisation approach with its advantages and disadvantages. It has recently become a very fashionable term, but its meaning has been blurred by applying it without much methodological rigidity, while it has been used to describe various different processes and phenomena. Therefore, the section starts with a brief literature review, focusing on how Europeanisation has been conceptualized so far and defining it for the purpose of this study. With the aim of achieving conceptual clarity, it is then compared to other similar concepts, such as globalization or convergence which are sometimes confused with Europeanisation. The concept of a distinctive Eastern-style Europeanisation is also examined, as regards its usefulness for this research. The chapter then proceeds with a brief overview of how the Europeanisation approach can be applied to the study of

foreign policy. The utility and any added value of such an analytical choice are discussed while at the same time several methodological challenges are pinpointed. The following section introduces mechanisms of change in foreign policy: conditionality, learning and socialisation. Finally, a two-level model for studying the Europeanisation of Polish foreign policy is outlined.

Europeanisation: challenges and advantages of the approach

The main research question of this thesis is how did the participation in CFSP influence / change Polish foreign policy-making procedures based on a detailed analysis of the Polish MFA and the substance of Polish foreign policy based on a detailed analysis of Poland's policies towards its Eastern neighbours. The study examines national adaptation to the CFSP on the one hand, and the extent to which Poland has been able to influence European foreign policy on the other. This implies that research has to be conducted at both the national and European levels and that national foreign policy is treated as dependent, but later also as an independent variable. A somewhat natural choice for such a study was to start with the Europeanisation approach, as it seems to fulfill the requirements of providing a flexible framework for analysing a dynamic process on different levels.

Europeanisation has recently become a 'fashionable' term among academics, but its unsystematic use easily obscures its meaning. The importance of the process has been recently assessed as "central to understanding of the contemporary politics of the continent" (Featherstone 2003: 20). Nevertheless, while its proponents attempt to achieve greater methodological and conceptual clarity, the Europeanisation agenda remains contested. The concept itself is disputed and used to describe a variety of processes.¹ Its

¹ For a discussion of institution building at the EU level see: Risse et al. (2001: 3); of a shift in attention of institutions see Wessels and Rometsch (1996: 328); of the influence of European governance on domestic politics see Buller and Gamble (2002); of Western institutional integration and consensus building see Zaborowski (2002); of the development and sustenance of the European arrangements for cross-border connections see Wallace (2000a); of the development of new norms see Checkel (2001b: 180); of the similar concept of 'Europeification' referring to transnational authority and policy-making in the EU see

frequent and inconsistent exploitation poses the danger of, what Radaelli calls, *conceptual stretching* (Radaelli, 2000: 4) and some have even argued that it has lost any precise meaning (Kassim, 2000: 235). Recently, the term has become so fashionable that some researchers with broad academic interests “jumped on the bandwagon” of Europeanisation studies (Lehmkuhl, 2007: 339). Doubts were raised whether Europeanisation means nothing more than putting a new label on the wider processes of globalisation or democratisation, in other words, whether it is “a cause or a symptom of a wider phenomenon” (Stavridis, 2003: 14). On the other hand, it was also argued that different concepts of Europeanisation complement each other (Olsen, 2002) and it should not be defined in too narrow terms (Harmsen and Wilson, 2000: 20).

Europeanisation has been researched from a historical perspective, as a matter of cultural diffusion and as a process of adaptation of the institutions or the adaptation of policy and policy process (Featherstone and Radaelli, 2003: 6-7). As observed by Bulmer (2007: 47) this already implies that there have been competing agendas of Europeanisation - namely the temporal, sociological and institutional. This study engages with the latter two and tries to bring them closer together.

The term Europeanisation was used as a synonym for ‘Westernisation’ with regard to the ‘return to Europe’ of Central Eastern European Countries (CEECs) (for example: Agh, 1999). In this respect, some authors, focusing on CEECs, have reflected on Europeanisation as a process of adapting Western norms and patterns of governance.² Most definitions of Europeanisation, however, agree on one of its aspects, being “a national-supranational nexus regarding authoritative policy decisions” (Ladrech, 2001).

Despite this broad interest and a rising number of studies referring to Europeanisation, there still remains a lack of a comprehensive explanatory framework to account for varying patterns of domestic adaptation across policies and countries (Knill and

Andersen and Eliassen (1993); and of the increase of cross-border and private issue-formation in Europe see van Schendelen (2003: 31).

² Adopting such understanding of Europeanisation, Agh surprisingly concludes that the Europeanisation of the CEEC polities has been “relatively well-accomplished” (Agh, 1999: 839). Lippert *at al.* (2001: 983) refer to the “pre-EU Europeanisation” of the CEECs that preceded “EU Europeanisation”.

Lehmkuhl, 1999: 1). It appears that different aspects of Europeanisation have been studied in depth, but there is still not enough “systematic study of why, how and under what conditions Europeanisation shapes a variety of domestic structures in a number of countries” (Risse, Cowles et al., 2001: 3).

Which Europeanisation?

Europeanisation has been designed for and initially applied to the study of policies falling under the so-called first pillar of the EU, such as the environment, agriculture or telecommunications. One of the first definitions of the term, proposed by Robert Ladrech, is still widely cited by many academics. It considers Europeanisation as a “process of reorienting the direction and shape of politics to the degree that EC political and economic dynamics become part of organizational logic of national politics and policy-making” (Ladrech, 1994: 69). The emphasis is put on the organisational adaptation, learning and policy-change (Ladrech, 2001). In response, Radaelli suggested a definition that also focused on norms and values, additionally to Ladrech’s national policy and policy-making, describing Europeanisation as a:

“process of a) construction, b) diffusion and c) institutionalisation of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, ways of doing things, and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the making of EU public policy and politics and then incorporated in the logic of domestic discourse, identities, political structures, and public policies” (Radaelli, 2000: 4).

Whereas Ladrech mentions only ‘organisational logic’, Radaelli also includes individuals in his understanding of the term. Furthermore, he clarifies that concepts like convergence, harmonisation and political integration should not be confused with Europeanisation. However, these definitions, both perceiving Europeanisation mainly as a process, only refer to ‘downloading’, which gives a very reactive role to the member states. In other words, they define the impact the EU has on the member states and their adaptation but

they do not mention the reverse effect that the states have on the EU and the interaction occurring between the member states.

This is related to the fact that the study of inter-relations between the EU and its member states initially focused specifically on national adaptation. Bulmer (2007: 49) identified two phases of Europeanisation writing: the first one dealt with the consequences of European integration at the national level and treated the latter as an independent variable, whereas the second one also included domestic factors as explanatory variables. However, with time, studies began to investigate Europeanisation as a two-way process, including the reverse dimension (e.g. Bomberg, Peterson, 2000; Torreblanca, 2001; Börzel, 2002; Börzel, 2003; Beyers and Trondal, 2003).

As Tanja Börzel (2002) emphasised, governments tend to reduce the costly 'misfit' between the domestic and European level with their responses which are shaped by policy preferences and action capacity. This process has been named a 'bottom-up' Europeanisation or policy 'projection'. Recently, Vink and Graziano (2007: 9-10) proposed adopting a 'bottom-up-down' approach, which would begin the analysis at the domestic level, then move on to see how the policies or institutions were being formed at the EU level and finally assess their impact on the national level. They defined Europeanisation very broadly as "the domestic adaptation to European regional integration" (Vink and Graziano: 7). In spite of their argument that "there is nothing necessarily top-down" about this approach (Vink and Graziano: 8), it seems to be primarily focused on the national level and favours the 'downloading' dimension of the process.

An additional dimension was added by Howell (2004), who conceptualised Europeanisation as a meso-theory with three substantive theories concerning: downloading, uploading and cross-loading. Reuben Wong (2005: 141) has recently named identity reconstruction as a third dimension of Europeanisation, next to policy convergence and national projection. Such distinctions, however, seem to be mixing up the process (direction) of Europeanisation with its mechanisms and potential results. It

seems that identity reconstruction may occur also both in the case of downloading and uploading and does not necessarily constitute a separate dimension of Europeanisation.

As outlined above, there is still no agreement among the scholars using the Europeanisation approach as to whether it is just one side of the picture or whether it should be treated as a circular process. Here, Europeanisation is conceptualised as an ongoing and mutually constitutive process of change, linking national and European levels, capturing the growing interdependence of both (Major and Pomorska, 2005). It is composed of the following dimensions (see Figure 1):

- **‘uploading’** (bottom up): the projections of national preferences to the EU level leading to the emergence of the new structures of government and policy substance
- **‘downloading’** (national adaptation, top down): the reception of EU generated incentives and their integration into the national level

The two dimensions above may be complemented by the third dimension of **‘crossloading’**, which has, however, less significance for the Europeanisation process. It can be defined as the exchange of ideas, norms, ‘ways of doing things’ between the states or other entities, so that the change takes place not only ‘due to’ but also within Europe. In other words, it encompasses the processes that are not included in the two main dimensions of Europeanisation: ‘uploading’ and ‘downloading’. ‘Crossloading’ usually involves horizontal learning of practices and institutional arrangements that takes place for example between the ministries but outside of the EU context. Therefore, its significance for this study, which is mainly focusing on the ongoing dynamics between the European and national levels, is limited.

The above conceptualisation of Europeanisation allows us to analyse domestic change in a dynamic perspective, as opposed to providing a snap-shot approach. Nonetheless, such an approach results in several methodological challenges, such as blurring the boundaries between cause and effect and between dependent and independent variables. If the role of

theory is to develop causal explanations of certain phenomena, then this major challenge of the Europeanisation approach becomes apparent.

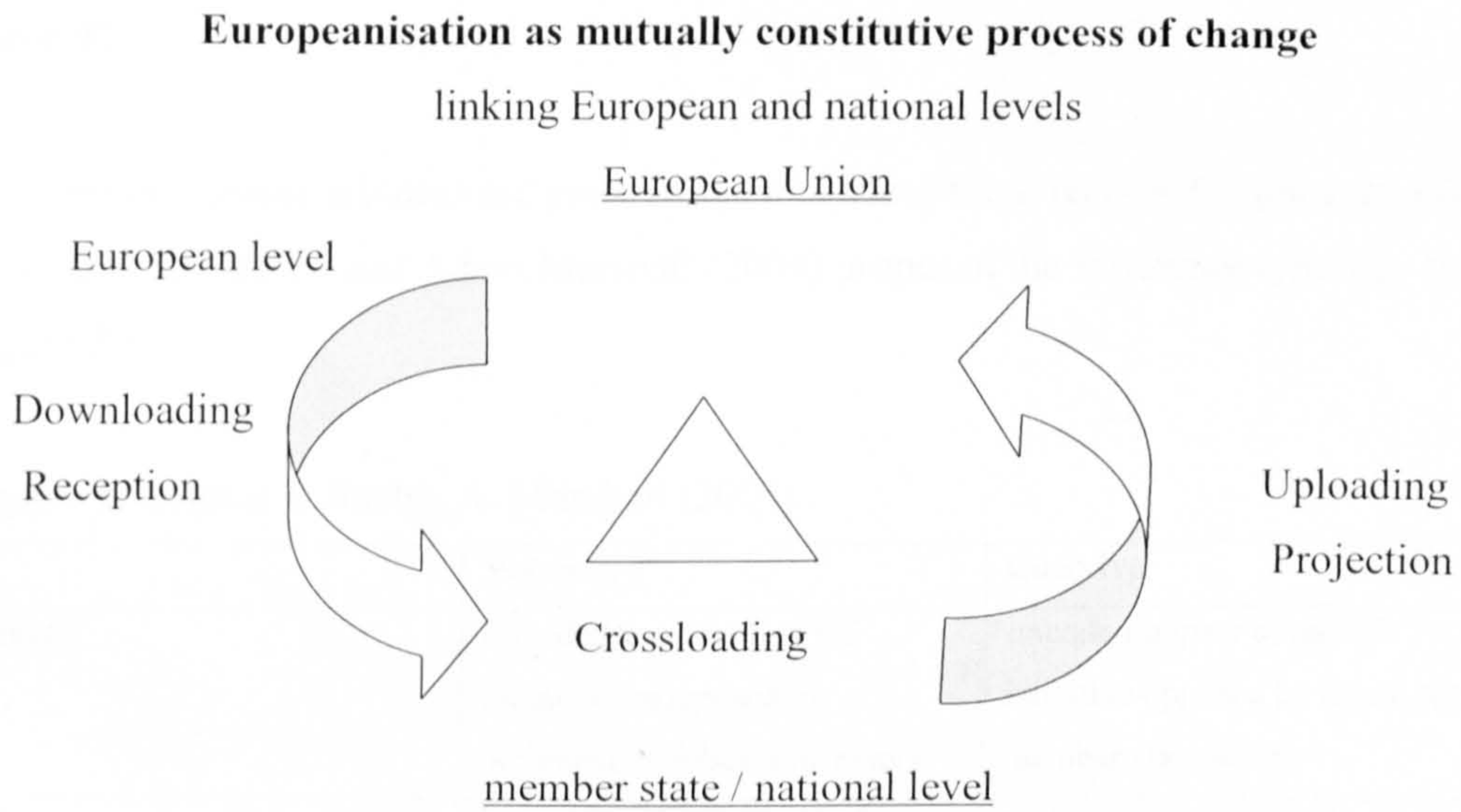


Figure 1. ‘Bottom up’ and ‘Top down’ Europeanisation. Based on Börzel (2003: 3).

In relation to the three dimensional conceptualisation of Europeanisation, applying it to foreign policy means, in practical terms, focusing on the following research questions:

‘Downloading’ dimension / national adaptation:

- Has national foreign policy and its institutions changed as a result of EU membership?
- What were the mechanisms of change?

‘Uploading’ dimension:

- Has the state tried to promote its national foreign policy goals at the EU level?
- What were the mechanisms of uploading?
- What strategies for policy uploading were used?
- Why has the state attempted to ‘upload’ its policy goals?
- Were there cases of issues being reserved for the national level i.e ring fencing?

'Crossloading' dimension:

- Was there a process of learning from other member states?
- Did the state try to influence other member states outside of the EU institutional context?

Alternatively, some scholars are more concerned about the effects of Europeanisation processes. Ian Bache and Adam Marshall (2004) proposed the following typology (see Figure 2):

Figure 2. Source: I. Bache, A. Marshall (2004)

	Voluntary	Coercive
Direct	Intended impact of an EU initiative unopposed by dominant member state actors	Intended impact of an EU initiative opposed by dominant member state actors
Indirect	Unintended or inadvertent impact of an EU initiative on the member state unopposed by dominant member state actors	Spillover consequences of coercive-direct Europeanisation in one area to other

From this model, the most problematic concept is the one of indirect and coercive Europeanisation. In other words, can Europeanisation be unintended by the EU and at the same time forced by it? An assumption sometimes made in the literature is that voluntary changes are more long-lasting than coercive ones. This fact could be demonstrated by a case study of the adaptation of new member states, especially in the area of foreign policy, where most Europeanisation effects would be indirect (because of the specific policy field). Before accession, arguably, the Europeanisation process was forced by conditionality and the prospect of prompt accession. As some evidence suggests, the CFSP chapters were relatively 'easy' to close and generally the states declared full compatibility with the *acquis politique*. Nonetheless, this change may soon turn out to be just 'provisional'. This may serve as an example of indirect-coercive Europeanisation. After the accession, however, the change would be voluntary and hence longer lasting.

Delimiting the concept from other similar terms

There are a number of concepts in the literature that are occasionally associated with Europeanisation. This section attempts to explain the differences between those terms and Europeanisation as defined above in order to delimit its meaning and avoid conceptual stretching.

Adaptation

The basic definition of adaptation was given by Rosenau (1981). He argued that state interactions and responses to internal and external demands result in “daily fluctuations” within its structures. Adaptive behaviour is the process “whereby actors maintain a balance between internal needs and external demands” (Rosenau, 1981: 3, 29). It is directed one way only and the role of the state is as a passive recipient. Europeanisation is understood here in a broader sense. Apart from adaptation, it encompasses active responses of the state, which uploads its policies onto a higher level, and a process of cross-loading, as explained above.

Globalisation

Europeanisation is often compared to globalisation when it comes to ‘overstretching’ the concepts and is sometimes called a regional dimension of global processes. In fact, despite similarities, Europeanisation has many distinctive features, and the EU itself is often perceived as a *sui generis* organisation. There is no global equivalent of the EU institutions that would exert pressure on states, as the member states voluntarily pooled some sovereign economic and also political powers in Brussels. Nonetheless, as will be explained later, sometimes it is difficult to clearly distinguish the changes caused by both processes. For example, in the case of institutional and organisational change in foreign ministries, some are caused by global changes and the transformation in the way the foreign policy is conducted generally and some are related to EU membership.

Convergence

Convergence, defined as a growing similarity of policies over time (Holzinger and Knill, 2005: 776), may be one of the results produced by the Europeanisation process.³ However, these are not synonymous terms. Europeanisation is mediated by domestic conditions and thus the same adaptational pressures often lead to different outcomes. Some authors, focusing on the end-effects of Europeanisation, expect that convergence would eventually occur, sometimes even defining Europeanisation as convergence, for example in foreign policy (Wong, 2005: 146; 2006: 3). Others prefer to examine Europeanisation as a process and stress that the approach does not make any assumptions regarding convergence (e.g. Radaelli, 2004: 3) and that treating the two as synonymous would create confusion between the process and its outcomes. In fact, as observed by Radaelli (2004: 5), there is more evidence of differentiated impact than of the convergence. This study is more sympathetic to the latter opinion, and focuses on the processes, rather than the result, without making any predictions regarding the final outcomes.

EU-isation

Europeanisation is sometimes understood as a broader concept than EU-isation, which usually focuses on the impact of the EU on its member states or third countries that involve direct pressures from the first one. An example is a debate on the Eastern-style Europeanisation or the impact that the EU exerts on its neighbours. However, here, the two concepts bear the same meaning and, in practice, refer to the same processes. The term Europeanisation is used more often in the literature.

³ As noted by Radaelli and Pasquier (2007: 39), some studies indeed demonstrate that Europeanization results in convergence, such as in the case of competition policy.

Europeanisation and foreign policy⁴

As asserted by Brian White and confirmed by numerous empirical studies, “foreign policies of member states have been significantly changed, if not transformed, by participation over time in foreign policy-making at the European-level” (White, 2001: 6). The conceptual approach of Europeanisation has been applied to similar studies in an extensive range of policy areas in the community pillar of EU policies.⁵ However, foreign policy has been analysed less often in this respect. Arguably, one of the reasons for this is the very nature of CFSP. The EU has been described as ‘weak’ in this policy, in relation to the member states, and in comparison to other policies, such as those related to the single market or competition (Featherstone, 2003). Hix and Goetz (2001) judged that in the sphere of foreign policy there has been only a limited impact on national policy choices. On the other hand, the predominant stream in the Europeanisation studies so far,

⁴ For the sake of clarity, it needs to be explained what is understood in this study as foreign policy, even though, as claimed by Chris Hill, definitions of any political activities are “notoriously difficult” (Hill, 2003: 3). Smith and Webber understood foreign policy as being “composed of the goals sought, values set, decisions made and actions taken by the states, and national governments acting on their behalf, in the context of external relations of the national societies. It constitutes an attempt to design, manage and control the foreign relations of national societies” (2002: 2). This conceptualisation, however, limits the agency to the state (and its government). Such point of view might be disputed today, having in mind modern ‘entities’ emerging in the international arena, like the multinational corporations, international NGOs, or nations without a state. As this research is focused not only on Polish national foreign policy, but also on the CFSP of the EU, it would be problematic to employ a definition that does not encompass the Union as an actor capable of conducting a foreign policy. Another definition of foreign policy was given by Hill as “the sum of official external relations conducted by an independent actor (usually a state) in international relations” (Hill, 2003: 3). He then argued that the concept of an “independent actor” allows for inclusion of the European Union. From the perspective of agency, this definition is more suitable for the purpose of this study, however, with two further qualifications on the scope of the policy. On the one hand, we deal only with a narrow and traditional understanding of what foreign policy is, being very close to the concept of diplomacy, and largely exclude other dimensions of external relations, like security, trade or development aid. On the other hand, the study also analyses informal aspects of diplomatic relations, including the so-called ‘corridor diplomacy’. In this sense, it is in line with the recent definition of foreign policy given by Keukeleire and MacNaughtan, as “that area of politics which is directed at the external environment with the objective of influencing that environment and the behaviour of other actors within it, in order to pursue interests, values and goals” (Keukeleire and MacNaughtan, 2008: 19). The more detailed insight into the debate concerning definitions of foreign policy and its changing nature remains beyond the scope of this study.

⁵ For an overview of different policies see a volume edited by Graziano and Vink (2007); other examples include: the Europeanisation of environmental policies (Haverland, 2003b; Börzel 2002; Knill and Lenschow, 1998; 2001), immigration policy (Favell, 1998), telecommunications and electricity regimes (Levi-Faur, 2002; Schneider, 2001), airline policy (Lawton, 1999), financial services (Howell, 2002) and organised interests (Perez-Solorzano, 2004).

has focused on national adaptation, where adaptational pressures are necessary conditions for change to take place (Radaelli and Pasquier, 2007: 41). This is probably another reason why the foreign policy domain has been marginalized in Europeanisation research.

In the last two decades, there were only a few attempts in the academic literature to analyse member states' foreign policies as embedded in the CFSP. The major contributions are the two works edited by Christopher Hill (1996 and 1983), and a volume edited by Ian Manners and Richard G. Whitman (2000). Ben Tonra (2001) conducted a comparative study of foreign policy Europeanisation in Ireland, Denmark and the Netherlands, Jose I. Torreblanca (2001) applied Europeanisation to Spanish foreign policy and Reuben Wong (2006a) to French foreign policy. When it comes to specifically analysing institutional change in foreign ministries, a comparative study was edited by Brian Hocking (1999) and later by Hocking and Spence (2002). Dave Allen and Tim Oliver have published on the Europeanisation of the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Allen and Oliver, 2004 and 2006b).⁶

Bulmer and Radaelli (2004) classified CFSP governance within the 'facilitated coordination' model, where national governments are key actors and unanimity is still a prevailing rule when it comes to decision-making. They characterised it as a non-hierarchical system with a horizontal pattern of Europeanization. Europeanisation takes place through a process of learning among the national elites. They argued, that if there is no agreement over a certain policy within CFSP, it points to the fact that the policy has not been Europeanised. This approach to Europeanisation seems to treat it as a convergence among the member states. Nonetheless, this does not tell us much about the member states' foreign policies, as every single one of them is able to veto the agreement. Additionally, it is not clear which policy they refer to as the independent variable: CFSP in a certain arena being a sum of national foreign policies. It seems that the 'facilitated coordination' mode of governance and its main mechanisms of

⁶ Recently, a debate on the subject has been unfolding within FORNET (www.fornet.info), with several short contributions published in the *CFSP Forum* (www.fornet.info/CFSPforum.html).

Europeanisation, as described by Bulmer and Radaelli, are more relevant to the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) practices than to CFSP.

The distinctive features of second pillar policies should be taken into account at the onset of this study. CFSP is an intergovernmental policy with unanimity remaining the general rule. This places the emphasis on the significance of national officials, who operate at both European and national levels, acting as change agents between the two. CFSP is also characterised by the lack of legal pressures and the European Court of Justice (ECJ) does not have prerogatives. Therefore, Europeanisation is expected to be voluntary, rather than coercive, with emphasis on the informal channels of change.⁷ Finally, there is no clear template of policies to which the state could adapt and divergence persists between national foreign policies. Hence, an even more important role is expected of socialisation and learning processes.

Beyond the original 15 member states: Eastern-style Europeanisation?

The time-frame of this study begins before Poland became an EU member state. Therefore, this section of the chapter relates to the issue of Europeanisation prior to actual membership and raises the issue of the usefulness of adapting any special framework for the aspirant members. As some academics extended the scope of Europeanisation beyond the EU member states (e.g. Wallace 2000a: 370; Wallace, 2000b: 36; Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier, 2007), it was contested as to whether the same framework, previously developed for the study of change in the EU member states, could be used for researching the possible effects and nature of adaptation/Europeanisation of the 'outsiders'. In other words can we still talk about the same process, channels and responses of the state as when we refer to the EU member states? In the current section of the chapter this question is discussed in relation to foreign and security policy issues. Eventually, the usefulness of making the distinction of Eastern-style Europeanisation in the analytical framework is challenged.

⁷ An exception here would be the period prior to accession, when the EU uses the policy of conditionality towards the candidate states, also in the foreign policy area. Hence, the adaptation pressures are stronger and the motivation for change comes from the perspective of membership.

Most of the Europeanisation studies so far have been from within the EU and might be thought of as ‘inward-looking’. This tendency has recently been questioned (e.g. Wallace 2000a; Wallace, 2000b; Goetz, 2000; Goetz 2001b; Grabbe 2003; Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier, 2007) and the challenge “to pin down the territory covered by the concept” acknowledged (Radaelli and Pasquier, 2007: 39). The current study shares the arguments put forward in the debate and does not narrow down the range of Europeanisation to only the EU member states but also includes applicant states. As a result, the period prior to and during the accession negotiations has been included in this research. At the same time, the possibility that the processes of Europeanisation amongst the EU-25 are of a different nature to those of the original EU-15, should be carefully considered.

The idea of an ‘Eastern style Europeanisation’ has only recently emerged from the academic literature (Goetz, 2000; Goetz 2001b; Grabbe 2003; Dimitrova, 2002) and emphasised the exclusiveness of the 2004 enlargement with its genuinely novel characteristics. The studies of ‘Eastern style’ Europeanization addressed the issue of power asymmetry between the EU and the applicant states, demonstrated by the principle of conditionality, and the requirements that the CEEC applicants had to fulfil in order to join the EU. The authors of the concept assumed that there were significant similarities in the Europeanisation process between the new member states, among which Poland is significantly the biggest country. Nonetheless, an immediate criticism of such concepts would point to the fact that the Europeanisation of Poland has more in common with the other large EU states, such as Spain, than with the other small new member states, such as Estonia or Slovenia. There are studies pointing out the differences between the process of Europeanisation of foreign policies among the big and small member states⁸ (Aggestam, 1999; Tonra, 2001). In this respect, Poland may prove itself to be a ‘large’ rather than an ‘Eastern’ state, and, equally, it is possible that the processes described here are characteristic of enlargement in general and hence not exclusively ‘Eastern’

⁸ Some academics would rather refer to the distinction between the ‘minor’ and ‘major’ member states, rightly pointing out that it is not the size that is crucial, but relative power over the state’s environments (Tonra, 2001: 46).

Uncertainty concerning the outcome of negotiations was noted by Grabbe (2003) as being the distinctive characteristic of CEEC Europeanisation.⁹ As it refers to the overall result, it seems to have relevance also for the foreign policy field. As Regelsberger (2004) conceded, the alignment with CFSP documents became more frequent at the end of the negotiations. This may be due to the fact that necessary changes were introduced, but it may also be because of the growing conviction that accession would be successful. Nevertheless, it is worth mentioning that this feature is by no means exclusive to the 2004/2006 accession states. The same situation took place with other enlargements, combined with even greater uncertainty regarding the results of the membership referendum, i.e. the Norwegian experience.

Notwithstanding the issue of the possible distinctiveness of the CEEC and their Europeanisation, the more general necessity of differentiating between the Europeanisation of member states and the candidate states was also emphasised in the literature. Lippert *et al.* (2001) proposed distinguishing five stages of the Europeanisation of the CEEC-5 (Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovenia and Estonia) executives. They are preceded by the pre-stage (first contacts) and include: the stage of Europe Agreements (characterised by disillusion of old ministries and restructuring of the executive and forming a backbone of institutional relations); pre-accession and basic institutional adaptation (between 1994 and 1997/8; characterised e.g. by establishing institutional arrangements for increasing contacts with the EU and introducing structures necessary for legal harmonisation with the EU); membership negotiations – concentrating efforts (characterised mainly by creating institutional structures to explain, monitor and control the implementation of *acquis*) and finally post-accession (characterised by path-dependence in Europeanisation of national administrations).¹⁰

⁹ Nonetheless, it is worth noting that the case of Poland might be different to that of the other candidates. That is due to the fact that, with Poland being the biggest candidate state, it was generally difficult to picture enlargement proceeding without it. Hence, Polish politicians were in a position to raise objections regarding some of the EU requirements and negotiate better conditions.

¹⁰ The assumption underlying the last stage was a hypothesis, not backed by empirical research, as at the time of writing the article, in 2001, none of the CEE-5 was an EU member state, nor did it enter an active observer period.

Methodological challenges of applying Europeanisation to CFSP

Applying Europeanisation as described above raises several methodological problems, which are pinpointed in this section. The distinction between dependent and independent variable is difficult to make and hence causality is also difficult to detect. Additionally, it suggests the generated result as an outcome – a Europeanised entity. Nonetheless, it would be difficult to define such results: the EU-generated input - viewed as modifying the national level - is also seen as being conceived at the same national level. In such a circular process, what is a result and what is a cause? Member states influence the EU level, causing new structures and policies to emerge. At the same time they are involved in the adaptational process to the changes taking place at the EU level, to which they will again respond. There is no ultimate inevitability to the process and it is not one-way.

Thus, there is a danger that Europeanisation promises more than it can actually deliver when applying it to empirical studies. Europeanisation has to be considered as both a process and a constantly changing result at European and national levels (Major and Pomorska, 2005). For the sake of practical and parsimonious analysis it should be possible to separate the dependent and independent variables. By conceptualising the two main dimensions of Europeanisation as ‘downloading’ (national change caused by an EU impact) and ‘uploading’ (projecting ideas from the national to the EU level and emergence of new European structures), one can achieve some clarity. The ‘crossloading’ dimension complements the picture of the two-level interactions by adding the processes happening between the member states, but outside of the EU institutional framework.

In the case of CFSP the generated input of Europeanisation is difficult to detect. The participation in CFSP rarely requires the adaptation of national legislation, different instruments and procedures are available for policy-makers and the decisions are usually not regulatory (Smith, 2004a: 58-59). This is less problematic when examining change in institutions, than in case of policy-substance. CFSP follows an intergovernmental decision-making process. National governments still possess veto powers and there is no supranational entity with prerogatives comparable with those held by the European

Commission in relation to first pillar policies. Europeanisation is mostly a voluntary action, as there are no strong adaptational pressures with exception of the period prior to accession, when the EU uses the policy of conditionality. There are no legal binding obligations similar to those in the first pillar, thus mechanisms of change will also be less formal and focused more on actors, acting as transmission belts between the two levels.

Finally, the link between domestic change and EU pressures or influence is difficult to determine. The researcher is under constant risk of looking for previously defined outcomes and overestimating Europeanisation as an explanatory factor. In other words, it is a strenuous exercise to 'isolate the EU effect' from the other intervening variables and avoiding the assumption that "if they do something similar to what Brussels wants, they must be doing it because of Brussels" (Radaelli and Pasquier, 2007: 41). The two main alternative explanations for change that are usually mentioned in Europeanisation studies are globalization and independent domestic factors (Lehmkuhl, 2007:342). Often, Europeanisation may be accompanied by national processes of policy-redefinition (Radaelli, 2004: 9) or institutional reforms. National foreign policy is influenced by a vast number of internal and exogenous factors, often pressing in different directions. At the domestic level these include the internal reforms (such as those related to the transformative change in the CEECs, triggered in 1989), change in the political situation (such as changes in government, leading parties, and shifts in public opinion), activities of pressure groups (such as NGOs or lobbying of industrialists' organisations) or other internal political events (such as revolutions or terrorist attacks). On the other hand, there are external factors, stemming from the broader international environment. These may be related to notions of globalisation, such as the influence exerted by international organisations other than EU (such as NATO, OECD or the Council of Europe) or international political developments (such as 9/11 or the war in Iraq). Eventually, one has to acknowledge that Europeanisation is a process occurring in parallel to the variables listed above. Nonetheless, it is a different issue to be examined, whether it can be finally classified just as another intervening variable.

An added value of applying Europeanisation to CFSP

In spite of the complex state of the research and conceptualisation of the term, it is argued that Europeanisation does not only offer a useful analytical framework, but also brings an added value and offers valuable insights into the analysis of CFSP and national foreign policies.

First and foremost, it allows the capturing of on going interactions between the national and the EU level to be captured, in contrast with the snap-shot analysis. Europeanisation also offers insights into the mechanisms and channels of change and contributes to the understanding of “the changing nature of governance and the state by endogenising international governance in the models of domestic politics and policy” (Radaelli 2004: 15). In other words, it brings the national foreign policies back to the studies of CFSP and CFSP to the research of national foreign policies.

Some authors have also recently argued that Europeanisation may serve as a bridge between different approaches to the studies of the national foreign policies of the member states (Wong, 2006b: 5), such as the ‘state-centric’ and ‘European-idealist’ school. Certainly, it is argued here that Europeanisation, while being a useful framework, may also be used together with a variety of other theories and does not itself preclude any of them. In this sense, this study does not perceive Europeanisation as an opposing paradigm to intergovernmentalism – something that is sometimes suggested in the literature (Wong, 2005: 147) - but rather as an approach that does not assume “that the balance of power between the state and European institutions is being tilted in one direction or another” (Radaelli, 2004: 3). From this perspective, the perception of Europeanisation is closer to the views of those who argued that it is rather a “set of model-building puzzles” (Olsen 2002: 944) or a “phenomena which a range of theoretical approaches have sought to explain” (Bulmer, 2007: 47) and a starting point for further studies. Such a position allows for embedding Europeanisation with other theoretical approaches that may bring more explanatory power to the analytical framework.

Finally, an important point has been raised by Radaelli and Pasquier (2007: 41): it seems that studies of the EU have generated too many *sui generis* explanations. EU studies have developed somehow in separation from the other mainstreams of political research. Using Europeanisation for the study of foreign policy may thus also help to bring it closer to the cumulative research of International Relations and Political Science. As it has been shown above, the Europeanisation approach has some methodological shortcomings, especially when it comes to providing the researcher with explanatory factors. Therefore, the chapter now moves on to discuss the possible way to overcome this obstacle by identifying three different mechanisms behind change and applying them to this research.

Three mechanisms of change: conditionality, learning and socialisation

This study not only aims at identifying changes in the process and substance of foreign policy, but also tries to explain how these changes occurred. In doing so, it refers to three mechanisms of change: conditionality, learning and socialisation. The Europeanisation approach allows for such combinations, as it does not make any presumptions about the nature of the process of European integration. The significance of the three mechanisms changes with time, as the country in focus transforms from a candidate state to an EU member state. Conditionality plays a crucial role prior to the accession, while the other two mechanisms are related to change once the country joins the EU.

National adaptation before accession and conditionality

Conditionality has been identified in the literature as the main mechanism facilitating change in the candidate states. The main differences between the Europeanisation of candidate and member states stem from the fact that the candidates take actions necessary to adapt their policies and administrations in order to become members. The main logic of conditionality, applied by the EU, is based on exerting pressure on the candidate states on order that they comply with the entry conditions. The motivation on the candidates'

side comes from the perspective of membership.¹¹ There are a number of different types of pressures that are exerted on the candidate and then the member states: political; legal; time legitimacy and social pressures (e.g. on actors in epistemic communities).

Conditionality has been included by Holzinger and Knill (2005: 780) into their category of ‘imposition’, which they claim takes place when the EU exerts direct pressures on the state, using incentives or sanctions. This is valid in the case of all accession negotiation areas, including the CFSP.¹² Furthermore, during the negotiations, CFSP is a part of the negotiated package, tightly connected to other areas. Only when the candidate state closes the negotiations in all of the so-called chapters, is it invited to join the EU. CFSP matters are outlined in chapter XXVII of the *acquis communautaire*.¹³ However, almost no specific legal adaptation into the national law is necessary as CFSP (the ‘second pillar’) does not operate with the same legal instruments (such as directives and regulations) as are found in the ‘first pillar’. Instead, it is equipped with instruments like common positions, common strategies, joint actions or EU declarations. Candidate states are obliged to adopt the so called *acquis politique* and to ensure that their national foreign policies are in compliance with the positions expressed by the EU member states within the framework of CFSP. Various forms of adaptation are needed also for the applicant state to be able to execute sanctions and other restrictive measures imposed by the EU.¹⁴

The policy of conditionality is possible because of a clearly asymmetric relationship between the candidates and the EU (Dimitrova, 2002; Grabbe 2003). This situation has been observed since 1994 when the accession countries were given the possibility of alignment with the official EU documents concerning CFSP. However, this was only allowed on a ‘take-it-or-leave-it’ basis. In other words, the candidates had the chance to

¹¹ As described by Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (2004: 662): “The dominant logic underpinning EU conditionality is a bargaining strategy of reinforcement by reward, under which the EU provides external incentives for a target government to comply with its conditions”.

¹² Under membership conditions, the pressures in the foreign policy domain are perceived to be generally lower than in other policy areas, where there are legal obligations undertaken by the member states and the rulings of the ECJ apply. Once inside the EU, there are also no more external incentives provided.

¹³ *Acquis communautaire* is the body of the EU legislation that all candidate states have to adopt in their national law if they want to join the Union.

¹⁴ In the case of Poland, these were the changes in legislation concerning the introduction and withdrawal of economic sanctions.

give formal support to the EU position as it was presented to them or refuse doing it altogether. There was no formal possibility of conducting any negotiations concerning the content of the documents and the candidates were also not included in the drafting process. As will be discussed in more detail in the forthcoming chapters, the formal meetings within the framework of the structured dialogue, such as the ones of Association Committee and Association Council, did not leave much room for interaction and were perceived more like a monologue by the applicants (Dunay et al, 1997: 326).

Such an asymmetrical relationship resulted in a one-way process, directed from top to bottom, from the EU to the national level. According to the concept of Europeanisation presented earlier, the candidate states prior to achieving the status of active observers (when the channels for uploading were opened) were not undergoing full Europeanisation. Another important difference to the Europeanisation of the actual member states was the presence of strong adaptational pressures resulting from conditionality. Nonetheless, one should be careful about predictions that the outcome would also be different. Goetz (2001b) claims that 'Eastern-style' Europeanisation caused greater changes in the CEEC administrations than in the original EU member states. This is formulated on the grounds of five factors listed by him as: weaker administrative traditions and cores, policy and institutional 'voids', greater susceptibility of policy-makers to external advice, strong conditionality in EU accession negotiations and the short time available for achieving EU compatibility.

As regards the degree of Europeanisation related to conditionality, different theoretical schools would provide different answers. Sociological accounts would be ambivalent about the results (as the channels for socialisation were very limited) while, for example, rational choice institutionalists would expect stronger outcomes. The perspective of forthcoming EU membership was a strong incentive for the administrative reform in the candidate states, as they are conditions of the successful fulfilment of all entry requirements (Lippert *et al.*, 2001: 981).¹⁵ The candidates were subjected to strong

¹⁵ Nonetheless, as noted by Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (2004: 662), other mechanisms of change and rule transfer cannot be *a priori* excluded. The CEEs may perceive the reforms as simply the effective way

adaptational and political pressures,¹⁶ however time constraints and set deadlines may have also played a role in fostering changes. Strong conditionality left little place for national actors to execute their ‘veto’ points (Dimitrova, 2002: 172). According to the rational institutionalist logic of domestic change, the low number of veto points is considered as a factor facilitating Europeanisation, hence the institutionalisation process is expected to be successful in candidate states. Schimelfennig and Sedelmeier (2007: 88) assumed that the drive to join the EU, combined with the “high volume and intrusiveness of the rules attached” allowed the EU to have an “unprecedented influence” on the institutional structures of the candidate states. However, the possibility of changes being just a temporal answer to the entry requirements and being easy to undo, must also be taken into account.

Europeanisation through socialisation and learning

Europeanisation does not provide researchers with many explanatory factors behind change. Next to conditionality, the two mechanisms used in this study to explain changes, especially once the applicants become observers, are learning and socialisation. The study here borrows some concepts used by new institutionalism and in particular its sociological branch. As individual diplomats and decision-makers, acting in the framework of formal and informal institutions at national and European levels, are the focal points of the research, the agency-centered, but institutionally embedded ontology of sociological institutionalism, promises much for this study. Like Europeanisation, new institutionalism does not engage in the debate on the winners and losers of the integration process (Bulmer 1998: 371). Instead, it allows for making a consequential link between the three studied areas: polity, politics and policy. With polity as its focal point, new institutionalism assumes that institutions will structure politics, to some degree determines the decision-making and implementation process, and ultimately exerts an

to improve the functioning of their administrations and thus implement them independently to the EU pressures. The mechanisms may also be those of socialisations of actors, rather than strategic action aiming at membership.

¹⁶ Arguably, these pressures are much stronger than those observable in other international organisations (Lippert *et al.*, 2004: 983).

impact on policy outcomes (Weaver and Rockman, 1993:7-9; Bulmer, 1998). The approach can also include both strategic interest calculi with the more normative approach of culture and beliefs.¹⁷

Learning

Learning is identified here as one of the most important processes behind the Europeanisation of national foreign policy. The policymakers themselves have always put an emphasis on experience and lesson-drawing, often as a justification of effectiveness (Rose, 1991: 5). The concept of learning is usually bounded with the individual; even if one talks of ‘organisational’ or ‘institutional’ learning, it implies that learning at the individual level was translated into the organisation or institution (see: Reynolds, 2005: 3; Levy, 1994).

Jack Levy defined learning as “a change of beliefs (or the degree of confidence in one’s beliefs) or the development of new beliefs, skills, or procedures as a result of the observations and interpretation of experience” (1994: 283). Based on this definition, learning is understood as an active process which involves the following stages: 1) observation of one’s own experience or others’ experience; 2) an active interpretation of this new information; 3) a change of beliefs (Juncos and Pomorska, 2006a: 3). The second stage allows a distinction to be made between learning and simple imitation or passive assimilation of new information.

There are two different types of learning distinguished in the literature: learning from others and learning by doing. Both have its positive and negative dimensions (Rose 1993: ix). Policy makers learn from others how to do or how not to do things. Similarly, they draw lessons from their own behaviour, either successful or failed (learning from

¹⁷ There are different opinions between students of institutionalism regarding the usefulness of embedding its different branches. For example, Hall and Taylor (1996) advocate the moves towards “more open and extensive interchange”, while Hay and Wincott (1998) argue that such attempts are not desirable, as rational and sociological institutionalisms are “based in mutually incompatible premises”.

mistakes). It is generally believed that people more often learn from failure than from success and that the former more often leads to policy change than not (Levy, 1994: 304).

Learning can take place at the individual and institutional level. Both are studied here, but the latter one is crucial for any structural change. However, individual learning precedes the institutional learning and sometimes the first one does not lead to the latter. There are a number of factors referred to in the literature that may obstruct the institutionalisation of lessons learnt. They are of varied nature; like the lack of resources (financial or human) or inadequate organisational arrangements, which may prevent learning from being institutionalised. Also a high rotation rate of officials may obstruct learning processes (Juncos and Pomorska, 2006a: 7).

Learning from others is a rational (strategic) action, “in which governments rationally utilize available experience elsewhere in order to solve domestic problems” (Holzinger and Knill, 2005: 783). Nonetheless, this definition refers to the governments, whereas it starts at the level of experts in epistemic communities. Only later, when it is institutionalised, can one speak of government’s learning. Provided with new information, individuals reassess their beliefs and they may change either their strategies, as they consider the new strategy to be the optimal one to achieve the goals, or adjust their own preferences. In the case of the latter they would consider that the new goals will better satisfy their basic or fundamental interests.

The literature also makes a distinction between simple and complex learning (Levy 1994: 286). The first leads to actors learning new strategies (means), while the latter results in change in means but also goals (ends). In this study, simple learning would mean changing the strategies of negotiations in Brussels, while complex learning would imply a change in policy goals or even national foreign policy interests. The study mostly focuses on simple learning, while any changes in core policy objectives remain very difficult to observe methodologically. It was observed in the literature (Tetlock in Levy 1994: 286) that beliefs in foreign policy are hierarchically organised, with the tactical beliefs at the bottom and the strategic ones at the top of the decision-making ladder. Here,

the focus is set at the level of experts, thus any changes in tactics rather than core beliefs will probably be easier to detect.

In this study, learning on the individual level takes place in a new environment, as the Polish national representatives arrive in Brussels. According to some scope conditions defined by Checkel (2001a), learning is more likely to occur in such circumstances. This research puts emphasis on the lower levels of decision-making, in national ministries and the Council of the EU, where the consensus-oriented atmosphere and strong tendency towards information-sharing provide good opportunities for the newcomers to learn from others. Referring back to the scope conditions defined by Checkel (2001a), learning is more likely to occur in such less politicised settings. Finally, as mentioned before, the crucial phase of learning would occur in this case when the lessons learnt by the representatives in Brussels either do or do not become institutionalised at higher levels in the national capital. If this phase is lacking, there is a danger that the lessons learnt will be lost while an individual official is replaced by someone who had not had a similar experience.

Another important fact for this study is that an organisation that is faced with a challenge would normally search in its own past for the lesson to be learnt (Rose, 1993: 62). In the case studies of this research, this 'organisational past' was rather limited. Apart from the substantial lack of tradition in modern foreign policy making, the participation in the EU and its CFSP was a complete novelty for the Polish MFA. Therefore, it is expected that a lot of lessons would have been drawn either from others or from their own mistakes (learning by doing). In this respect the study argues, in line with the argument of Levy, (1994: 304) that successes or failures of past policies are of crucial importance for the learning processes.

There are several main channels through which learning takes place in the scope of this study. It is facilitated by the institutional setting in the Council of the EU and then in the institutionalized flow of information between the Permanent Representations in Brussels and the MFA in the capitals. Learning can occur at different levels of decision-making in

CFSP. This study is mainly concerned with the lower level of experts in the Working Groups and with the desk officers in the MFA, but attention is also paid to the institutionalized forms of providing feedback by the experts to the higher level decision-makers.

Socialisation

Socialisation has been identified as another mechanism that is crucial for the Europeanisation of national foreign policy. It takes into account the results of repeated interactions between the national diplomats within the EU institutions and within the CFSP domain. Such frequent contacts lead with time to a change of strategies and interests. Socialisation has been often linked with Europeanisation. Still, some scholars have warned that it is “neither sufficient nor necessary condition for Europeanisation” (Radaelli, 2004: 11), as there might be processes of socialisation not followed by Europeanisation and not generating domestic change. Still, there is a growing acknowledgement that Europeanisation generates socialisation by increasing the interdependence between actors at the domestic and the EU level (Radaelli and Pasquier, 2007: 43).

Turning to the socialization literature, this study shares a number of arguments developed by the sociological institutionalist school of thought. One is the influence that the institutions exert - a ‘cognitive dimension’ of influence on actors (Hall and Taylor, 1996: 15). The institutions provide actors with cognitive scripts or patterns of behaviour and the latter are thus often perceived as trying to “define and express their identity in socially appropriate ways” (Hall and Taylor, 1996: 16). They make conscious decisions, even though they are embedded in the dominant institutional values (Peters, 1999 :29).

In the literature socialisation has been defined as “a process by which social interaction leads novices to endorse expected ways of thinking, feeling and acting” (Johnston, 2001: 493). This can lead to an emergence of the “we-feeling” and even a common identity (Deutsch, 1957: 5-7). Actors internalise the norms and “take them for granted” and “the

benefits of behaviour are calculated in abstract social terms rather than concrete consequential terms” (Johnston, 2001: 495). This implies that there is a switch from a “logic of consequences” to “logic of appropriateness” (Checkel, 2005).

However, more recent accounts of socialisation¹⁸ already make a distinction between its different types, and some of them do not imply the internalisation of norms. In some situations actors would simply follow the rule without reflecting on whether it is ‘the right thing to do’. In this case they would be just playing a role that would be socially expected of them (so-called, type I internalisation) and they could either simply imitate the behaviour of other group members or apply the rule strategically in order to maximise their final rewards (Checkel, 2005). In other cases (type II internalisation) the actors would consider the norms as ‘the right thing to do’.

Socialisation of elites has been observed since the early days of the CFSP and European Political Cooperation (EPC) before it. Initially, the process known as the ‘co-ordination reflex’ developed between the national diplomats. Repeated contacts and information exchange between the foreign policy makers led in time to a process of socialisation (Glarbo, 1999; Manners and Whitman, 2000; Nuttall, 1992, 2000; Tonra, 2001, Juncos and Pomorska 2006b). According to the Copenhagen Report, approved in 1973, the habit of working together had become a reflex of coordination which has profoundly affected the relations of the Member States between each other and with third countries” (as quoted in Allen and Wallace, 1982: 26). The EPC brought together diplomats “in time and space on a regular basis” and as a result “provided completely different terms for social integration between both national diplomacies and their individual diplomats” (Glarbo, 1999: 640).

As a result of the member states’ participation in EPC/CFSP, national representatives were “exposed to a spirit of cooperation and mutual understanding” (Beyers, 2002), what some called *esprit de corps*. Such a club-like atmosphere described in the EPC and CFSP literature, still seems to exist nowadays, after the last EU enlargements. Despite often

¹⁸ See a Special Issue of *International Organisation*, Fall 2005.

expressed doubts, whether this *esprit de corps* would continue when more actors take a seat around the table, there is now evidence that informal cooperation has actually increased after the enlargement at different levels of decision-making (see: the Special Issue of European Political Economy Review, Spring 2007).

One of the results of the social interaction between diplomats ('diplomatic intersubjectivity') was the emergence of the common code of conducting common foreign policy (Glarbo, 1999: 645). National diplomats formed an 'epistemic community'¹⁹ and were able to use their expertise and institutional position to influence not only European politics and decision making, but through that also the foreign ministries (Spence, 2002: 33). They may act as 'change agents' in relation to their own national administration. The process still starts during their stay abroad, but the influence is even stronger on their return to the capitals (the so called 'contagion' effect; see Page and Wouters, 1995: 197).

There have been studies on officials in Brussels that were based on an understanding of Europeanisation as broadly used by anthropologists, as a process of reshaping identities, which "relativizes without necessarily supplanting national identities" (Harmsen and Wilson, 2000: 17). As shown by a research carried out by Bellier (2000) on Commission officials, there is a slow process of hybridisation taking place, when the 'national being' becomes a 'European being'. The minimal conditions are easily met also by national diplomats in the Council. They include the knowledge of a second language, professional experience in an international environment and experience of personal contacts with other Europeans (Bellier, 2000: 149-150).

This study builds on this literature. The definition of socialisation is however limited to the "adoption of certain rules of behaviour, ways of doing things, stemming from interactions with members of the same group" (Juncos and Pomorska 2006b: 3). This does not imply adoption of the norms immediately after the actors enter a new

¹⁹ 'Epistemic community' is understood here as defined by Haas (1990, quoted in Rose, 1991: 16), as "knowledge-based network of individuals with a claim to policy-relevant knowledge based upon common professional beliefs and standards of judgement, and common policy concerns".

environment. Instead, they start observing the group's behaviour and discover some underlying norms, which they later apply to their behaviour. This will be applied to the Polish diplomats entering a new environment in the negotiation rooms in the Council of the EU and discovering the 'rules of the game' in Brussels and we will also examine what follows on from this initial encounter.

In spite of using the concept of socialisation, this study does not enter the discussion on the internalisation of norms or identity reconstruction for several reasons. The empirical study was not designed specifically to detect any such changes and the time period of the study is relatively short, whereas any of the processes touching upon actors' identities are usually incremental and long-term. Nonetheless, there are some specific factors in this project that would suggest that actors become socialised because of strategic interests, such as a high rotation rate of officials (meaning that they do not spend long time within one group, but also that they keep in mind the fact that they will eventually come back to their capitals), the long-term nature of negotiations and the officials' embedment into two behavioural logics: one in their home ministries in the capital and one in the Council of the EU. The nature of socialisation is also related to the following channels of socialisation of the Brussels-based national representatives:

- the regular meetings in the Council; often one diplomat covers more than one group, they meet once (e.g. COTRA²⁰) or twice (e.g. COWEB, COEST²¹) a week
- the extraordinary meetings of the Working Groups and additional formal social events, such as Working Groups' parties or cocktails organised by the Presidency
- using a specific jargon, often referred to as 'Eurospeak'
- informal meetings, either bilateral or in a group of so-called 'like minded groups of states' (sometimes the group meets more often in the same formation); usually they take place over lunch
- meetings on private occasions; the members of one group also meet on private grounds, the atmosphere in the group is often very friendly, group photos are taken at the

²⁰ COTRA is an acronym for the Transatlantic Relations Working Group of the Council.

²¹ COWEB is an acronym for the Western Balkans Working Group and COEST for the Central Asia and Eastern Europe Working Group of the Council.

end of presidencies, former group members stay in touch, visit each other, inform about personal issues even on the special group-mailing lists

- being a part of a network of formal and informal communication channels; those vary from using COREU Terminal System (CORTEsy) to frequent contacts via phone and mailing lists
- sharing similar situation vis-à-vis their capitals (often similar problems arise)
- sharing certain informal 'codes of conduct', such as the rules on the use of CORTEsy, not opening issues closed at the level of the Working Groups at a higher political forum
- sharing common interests in producing results and working towards reaching the compromise; it is common that at the end of a long meeting the pressure to reach agreement from the group and the presidency is high, so not to pass the unsolved problem to a higher political level

The so-called coordination reflex, observed in the literature, means that diplomats share a lot of information before decisions are taken through formal and informal channels. Strategies are often discussed prior to a meeting amongst the 'like-minded groups of states' and positions coordinated between diplomats in Brussels and their counter-parts in the capitals. The tendency to work out consensus, rather than refer to a formal vote, also results in a high density of contacts between diplomats, who strive to get a broad agreement to 'keep everyone on-board' (Juncos and Pomorska 2006b).

Conclusions: two phases of change in foreign policy

Building upon the analytical insights from this chapter, this section offers a model that will be used in order to observe and explain changes in Polish foreign policy. It seems that Europeanisation changes substantially with time. Hence, it would be difficult to follow and analyse it without setting any benchmarks and dividing it into distinctive periods. Based on the mechanism and type of change, as well as the 'direction' of the Europeanisation process (uploading or downloading), two phases are distinguished. Crossloading takes place in both periods, even though in phase two contacts are already conducted through the EU institutions. Also, the channels and adaptational pressures are

different within each of the phases. The new member state is first a subject to a sole adaptation and the full process of Europeanisation is only initiated when the socialisation of elites starts. Initially, the downloading process takes place to a great extent via the formal channels, whereas later informal channels also play an important role. The model is designed to capture the correlation and interdependence of institutional and policy-related Europeanisation. Those two have more often than not been researched separately.

Phase I

National Adaptation

In the case of Poland Phase 1 begins after Poland becomes an EU associated state (February 1994) and it ends when Poland achieves the status of an active observer (April 2003). It encompasses over 10 years although most of the changes are observed only towards the end of the period. The type of change observed is mainly organizational and systemic. Phase I is characterised mainly by one-way directionality of change: top-bottom or, in other words, national adaptation (downloading). Even though, as explained in the previous chapter, it is conceptualised by some academics as Europeanisation, here it is seen as only one of its dimensions. In the case of a new member state, it can be considered as the first stage of Europeanisation, which is defined as a circular process accompanied by cross-loading. There is hardly any socialisation taking place and very little learning. The channels through which the change is introduced are mainly formal, as with the requirements and obligations necessary to close the negotiation chapters and thus allow for later participation in European foreign policy making.

During this phase, when the applicant state (Poland) starts the negotiations, the EU uses the principle of conditionality. The applicant undertakes certain formal obligations in relation to the CFSP. In order to become an associated state, it has to introduce some basic changes in its institutional arrangements. Any non-compliance could undermine the whole negotiation project and jeopardise the future accession, hence, the political and time pressures are very strong. The impact of the EU is very direct and the process of change is of a coercive nature.

The first administrative changes involve, for example, appointing the official responsible for CFSP, following the institutional arrangements of structural dialogue, such as attending the meetings of (Associated) European Correspondents, installation of the ACN and establishing initial decision-making mechanisms when making decisions of alignment to EU positions. The European Commission has published regular reports regarding the state of preparations for membership, including the section on CFSP/ESDP. They set a road map for membership and pinpointed the necessary institutional arrangements. The applicants did not yet act “within the EU policy cycle, unlike the member state administrations” but “interacted with the EU system at different levels to different degrees” (Lippert et al., 2001: 984). In addition, the greater scope of the adjustments prior to the actual 2004 enlargement, in contrast to earlier ones, resulted from the swift institutionalisation of CFSP and the changes within the EU itself.

The progress in adaptation to CFSP is closely monitored by the European Commission, as in the other accession negotiation chapters. The assessments of compliance were produced every year in the Regular and Monitoring Reports.²² Interestingly, the negotiations over the CFSP chapter in most cases proceeded smoothly and were quickly concluded, as in the case of earlier enlargements. Usually, the candidates would emphasise that their foreign policies were in line with the CFSP and fully accept the CFSP strategic goals in their negotiating positions. In this respect, the process does not resemble the classic hard-bargaining negotiations that take place in other policy areas, like agriculture or the environment. No transition periods are usually granted to any of the applicants, nor do they ask for them. However, it seems natural that all candidates attempt to minimise any potential ‘misfit’ in the foreign policy area, between the domestic and EU level.

With regard to policy substance, the initial adjustments are made in Phase I. However, even formally some divergence still exists. The applicant state has the right not to align

²² The reports and other documents concerning the enlargement negotiations can be accessed on-line via the Europa portal (<http://www.europa.eu.int>). The 2003 Regular Reports: http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/report_2003/index.htm (07.07.04)

with EU positions, if it is not in its national interest, whereas such a situation would already be impossible in most of Phase II. In most of the cases, foreign policy is formally in line with the CFSP, even though refusal to sign up to the EU statements occurs occasionally. No possibilities to negotiate are given ('take-it-or-leave-it'), so there is no place for any bottom-up processes. There is no (or very rare) socialization and little cross-loading (with the exception of some bilateral arrangements between government ministries regarding the exchange of officials).

On the other hand, from the beginning of the structured dialogue, the applicant states in the last round of enlargement were given the chance to align with some of the CFSP declarations agreed on by the existing fifteen EU member states as well as to adhere and demarches, and participate in joint actions. In light of their general compliance with the CFSP, it might seem surprising that occasionally the candidates refused to sign the EU declarations. Some initial empirical studies point to procedural reasons, nonetheless, some cases of national foreign policy or the more generally understood national interest are also apparent and will be discussed further later in this study. It remains to be considered, therefore, whether the formal closing of the CFSP chapter, usually prompt and unproblematic, is only a strategy, designed to facilitate the rapid fulfilment of the entry criteria.

Phase II

The Europeanisation of national foreign policy

Phase II starts when the candidate state acquires the status of an active observer (April 2003 in the case of Poland) and continues after formal EU accession. The dominating type of change is process-related, regulative and cultural (the initial phase), even though the organisational change still progresses with various institutional improvements. Phase II, in addition to a degree of domestic adaptation, is characterised by 'bottom-up' Europeanisation, as well as the process of cross-loading. The channels of change are both formal and informal. A crucial development takes place amongst the elites, who begin to socialise and learn at the EU level. Another pivotal change takes place in the cultural

dimension and is related to the change of perception of the EU in the ‘us’ and ‘them’ paradigm.

During this phase, the applicant / member state becomes fully involved in the making of CFSP. As socialisation and learning processes start at the level of individuals, feedback is given back to the capital and institutional arrangements are improved. The beginning of this phase is characterised by officials and elected politicians learning by their own mistakes. The important factor is that only the officials sent to Brussels undergo the process of socialization – soon the first misunderstandings appear in relation to their colleagues from the capitals. Socialization occurs first at the level of experts. Hence, on one hand we can speak of Brusselisation (a substantial physical shift of diplomats from national capitals to Brussels) and on the other, the impact the process has on the behaviour and perceptions of some diplomats. Europeanisation in this phase is no longer a necessary requirement, as most of the required institutional arrangements are (or rather should be) already under way. Therefore, changes are now more voluntary in nature and adaptational pressures are less strong than before the accession.

No formal divergence from the official EU line is possible after joining the EU, as the new member state is involved in negotiations within the Council of the EU. In parallel to the elite socialization, there is a learning process taking place and first attempts to use the CFSP as a channel to project national foreign policy goals. The new member state is given a chance to negotiate within the Council, which means that the possibilities for a bottom-up dimension of Europeanisation arise. Measuring that impact still remains one of the methodological challenges.

Figure 3. Two-phase model of change

	Phase I	Phase II
direction of change	top-bottom	bottom-up and top-bottom
main mechanisms of change	conditionality	learning and socialisation
channels of change	mainly formal	formal and informal

This chapter presented the analytical framework for the thesis and proposed a two-phase model of change, leading from Adaptation to Europeanisation of national foreign policies. Three mechanisms were also identified as facilitating change: conditionality, learning and socialisation. Before this framework is applied to the four substantive chapters dealing with the impact on the procedures and substance of Polish foreign policy of Poland's involvement with and participation in the EU's CFSP, the historical context of Polish foreign policy is presented in the next chapter. This allows for a better understanding of the tradition of Polish foreign policy-making on the one hand and explains the 'baggage' of the communist period that Poland was left with after 1989 on the other. This contextual background is also helpful with the analysis that follows the notions of continuity and change in Polish foreign policy just before and after Poland joined the EU.

CHAPTER 2

'THE RETURN TO EUROPE': REDEFINING POLISH FOREIGN POLICY AFTER 1989

Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to provide some historical context for the analysis of Polish foreign policy in relation to participation in the EU's CFSP which follows. Tradition, history and collective memory, all play an important role in Poland's understanding of foreign policy. It has often been argued that Polish foreign policy is in particular heavily conditioned by national history (for more see: Sanford, 2003). This chapter presents some prevailing trends and paradigms that will later be examined against the background of Polish participation in the EU's CFSP. Bearing in mind that the concept of Europeanisation is a circular process, such a brief outline makes it possible to determine the foreign policy 'baggage' that Poland brought to the EU. This allows, in turn, for a better understanding of the 'uploading' efforts undertaken by the Polish decision-makers in their attempt to influence European foreign policy. The chapter also touches upon the question of national identity and foreign policy, as the latter is an area very closely associated with national sovereignty. EU membership provoked questions in Poland about whether there was a shift in transcending newly regained sovereignty and independence in foreign policy making 'from Moscow to Brussels'.

The chapter begins with an outline of the tradition of making Polish foreign policy before 1989. It has to be noted that for decades after World War II, Poland and its foreign policy remained under Soviet dominance. This involved adhering to the ideological interests of the Soviet bloc and becoming involved in special relations with other communist states. Only with the end of the 'Cold War' did the country regain national and foreign policy independence. The transformative change of 1989 put in motion the grand avalanche of changes in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEECs) and played an important part in the broad process that led to the collapse of the Soviet Union, bringing the rivalry

of the two superpowers to an end and with it the Cold War. The chapter is then organised around the three main areas of Polish foreign policy after 1989: 'normalising' relations with the Eastern neighbours and sustaining an effective policy towards the region, escaping the 'grey zone' of security by joining NATO and finalising the transformative change by entering the EU. Additionally, Polish-German and Polish-Russian bilateral relations are touched upon, as well as the problems of regional cooperation in Central Eastern Europe.

The choice of these issues was conditioned by the belief that they form a crucial part of the input that Poland brings to the EU. Some of the policy lines, like the approach towards Belarus, Ukraine, Russia or attitudes towards NATO, are likely to cause complex negotiations, maybe even hinder cooperation, with other EU member states within the CFSP *consensus* building process. The events presented also constitute a background for the case studies conducted in the course of this research.

The tradition of foreign policy making in Poland before 1989

As Juliusz Mieroszewski (1970: 328) pointed out in the 60's: "Poland has 1000 years of history, but it does not have a yesterday to which it is possible to refer". Indeed, since the end of the XVIII century, the Polish state did not formally exist on the map of Europe, partitioned between the three neighbouring states of Russia, Prussia and the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Poland only gained its independence after the First World War, in November 1918, as a result of lucky external circumstances, or, as some called it, "a fluke" (Davies, 2005: 290). As noticed by Biskupski (2000: 37), it was "not restored, but reinvented, and, as a result, fit ill into the role it had previously played in the European structure". This period of Polish history is often remembered today in relation to the plan of US President Wilson, who made the independence of Poland and its right to sea access one of his famous "Fourteen Points" in January 1918 (Davies, 2005: 286; Biskupski, 2000: 49). It is often argued in Polish historical accounts that the fight to retain national identity was crucial in the Polish concept of the "nation without the state" (Lastawski, 2001: 35). As one of the characteristics of this national identity, that might be important

at a later stage of analysis, the authors usually refer to *przedmurze chrześcijaństwa*, which can be roughly translated as a defensive wall of Christianity against the East and the “Asian barbarism” (Lastawski, 2001: 38).

Due to the partitions of Poland, which lasted for 123 years, the first opportunity to gain experience in modern and independent foreign policy making was during the 1920s and 30s. The foreign policy pursued by the government still remains a matter of controversy among Polish historians and political scientists, mostly because of the events that followed in 1939. Notwithstanding these divisions, there seems to be broad agreement that even if the Poles decided to steer their diplomatic efforts in different directions, they did not manage to prevent the unfolding events and the fall of the Polish state (Kuźniar and Szczepanik, 2002:16). In other words, there is an overwhelming perception that the fate of Poland was once again determined by unfavourable external conditions and the Second Republic was “destined for destruction” (Davies, 2005: 321).²³

After gaining independence and securing her borders, Poland had to conduct a foreign policy in defence of the *status quo*. Generally, the decision makers decided to base their policy on the principle of non-alignment. Polish diplomacy in the inter-war period, conducted since 1926 mainly by Józef Piłsudski, and after his death continued by the foreign minister Józef Beck (from 1932 till 1939), was characterised by a number of underlying principles (Kamiński and Zacharias, 1998: 276-281). The first was that of balancing between the neighbouring powerful states and not entering into cooperation with any of them. However, all attempts to construct a system of regional alliances with the Baltic States resulted in failure, mostly because of negative Polish-Lithuanian relations (Biskupski, 2000: 89). Beck’s idea of building a block called “Third Europe”, began with cooperation between Poland and Hungary designed to counter that between Germany and Russia, but this started too late to have any impact on evolving events (Biskupski, 2000: 89). Seeking alliances with the Western allies, especially Great Britain,

²³ As Biskupski (2000: 87) puts it: “Two elements of the geopolitical situation were baleful realities: In the west, Germany was unreconciled to the loss of its territory to reborn Poland and was hostilely disposed toward Warsaw; in the East, the Soviet Union regarded Poland as a barrier to the spread of communism in Europe.”

and obtaining British security guarantees was another objective of the policy. This was despite the fact that the image of France and Great Britain had already been damaged when they failed to provide help to Poland in its struggle with the Red Army in 1919-1920.

Preventing the Soviet Union from becoming a dominant power in Central and Eastern Europe was a factor that would be ever-present in Polish foreign policy from that time. For this reason, Polish politicians strictly avoided entering into any cooperation with Moscow and Berlin (Kamiński and Zacharias, 1998: 279), and “the Doctrine of the Two Enemies” was continued until 1939 (Davies, 2005: 311). Despite the suspicions of the West, Polish diplomats “resisted the advances of Goering and Ribbentrop no less than those of Litvinov and Molotov” (Davies, 2005: 318).

The efforts of Polish diplomacy did not manage to prevent the next partition of the state between Germany and the Soviets. In 1939, the Nazi regime voiced claims to Gdańsk and ‘the Polish Corridor’. Beck’s refusal to accept them led directly to the attack on Polish independence. In July 1939, a ‘Non-Aggression Pact’ between Germany and the USSR was signed with a secret protocol on the partition of Poland and the Baltic states. The notion of the ‘corridor’ and the Ribentropp-Molotov Pact has since become a powerful metaphor and a sensitive issue for the Poles – one that would be frequently referred to by Polish officials concerned about recent German-Russian negotiations conducted behind Poland’s back.

During the Second World War, the Polish government existed in exile, first created in France and then transferred in 1940 to London and recognised by the Western states (Davies, 2005: 361). It also conducted diplomatic relations with third-parties, even with the USSR from July 1941. However, it was excluded from any negotiations over the future of Poland that took place at the three grand conferences in Teheran, Yalta and Potsdam. When it came to deciding the post-war order, “(f)or both Washington and London policy regarding Poland was fundamentally based on ruthless Realpolitik and

comported ill with grand declarations of fighting a war for democracy and decency” (Biskupski, 2000: 119).

Formally, Poland regained its independence in June 1945. However, Russian troops were still present on Polish territory, the new authorities were the protégé of the USSR and Poland was cast into the Soviet zone of dominance. Polish foreign policy after the war was based on the rejection of the principles of the Second Republic: that Poland could survive as an independent country, without accepting a subordinate status; and that the Western allies would provide help in defending Polish national interests (Biskupski, 2000: 132). This was done in order to emphasise the need for accepting the protectorate of the Soviet Union (Sanford, 2003: 189).

Before long, the countries of the communist bloc signed a number of cooperation agreements, such as the one setting up the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) or the Warsaw Treaty Organisation, containing guarantees of help and security and setting up ‘special’ economic relations. The Treaty signed with the USSR in 1948, gave the latter a key position in determining Polish foreign and security policy (Rachwald, 1995: 129). The doctrinal rules imposed a ‘socialist internationalism’, or a socialist entity, in foreign policy. Thereby, to different extents at different times, they turned out to be defining for Polish foreign policy (Modzelewski, 1999: 36). As described by Kuźniar and Szczepanik (2002: 21), after 1945, Poland experienced “a systemic cut off from the norms, values and standards of European civilisation”. One of the priorities of the security policy of Poland was the protection of the socialist system and, after 1956, the communists claimed that Poland could not exist without a socialist system (Zięba, 1985: 43). The Warsaw Treaty Organisation quickly became a tool of Soviet dominance over the bloc, ready to intervene at any signs of disobedience. This was later codified as the ‘Brezhnev doctrine’.

After the end of the war, the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs stood in need not only of resources, but also of skilled diplomats and experts. The situation worsened, after the Soviet dominance was reinforced in 1948. The ‘clearing action’ in the Polish Foreign

Service was proclaimed in 1949 and lasted till 1956 (Kukulka, 2000: 119-123). The key positions were filled with people loyal to the communist party and there was no place for any non-compliance with its guidelines. The rejection of the 'Marshall Plan' in 1947, initially welcomed with interest by the Polish government, but abandoned under the pressure of the USSR, serves as an example of Poland following Soviet, rather than national interests. Poland also had to follow the Soviet stance on international events e.g. condemning 'Israel Zionist imperialism' after the Six Day War in the Middle East in 1967 or participating in the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 (Castle and Taras, 2002: 34).

Nonetheless, it would be a mistake to perceive Poland's dependence on the USSR in a static way, as its forms and strength evolved over time (Kupiecki and Szczepanik, 1995: 43). Soviet supervision of Polish foreign policy weakened in the late 50's as some initiatives on the international scene came from the Polish government, such as the Rapacki Plan²⁴. Some historians viewed it as a step towards European unity and strategic Polish-German cooperation (Biskupski, 2000: 147). During the mid-60's, the situation allowed for Polish church representatives to write the "Letter of the Polish Bishops" addressed to their German counterparts on 18 November 1965. It not only forgave the Germans, but also asked for forgiveness and called for improving relations between the two nations (for more see: Davies 2005: 444-445). Eventually, the Treaty with the Federal Republic of Germany was signed in 1970 and the German Chancellor Willy Brandt knelt in front of the Memorial to the Victims of Nazi Oppression. At the same time, the Western Polish frontier was finally recognised (Davies, 2005: 445). This was considered as an obvious success of Polish diplomacy, an initiative conducted independently from the USSR.

²⁴ The plan was presented by Adam Rapacki, the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs, on the 2nd October 1957 to the General Assembly of the United Nations and proposed a creation of a non-nuclear zone in Central Europe. It was to encompass Poland, Czechoslovakia and both German States. The proposal included the creation of control systems with representatives from NATO and WTO (Gajda, 1974: 160; Davies, 2005: 441). The idea was, however, rejected by the United States. In 1967, Poland came back to this concept, introducing the 'Gomulka Plan' to freeze the nuclear situation in Central Europe.

The 70s were already marked by a more active role for Poland on the international scene, especially in the field of European cooperation. Polish diplomacy became involved in the newly initiated (1972-1973) Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) (Kuźniar and Szczepanik, 2002: 18). The Polish government was particularly interested in improving its relations with the neighbouring German Federal Republic (FDR) (Modzelewski, 1999: 18) and with France. In the field of wider diplomacy, a lot of attention and support was given to third world developing countries, often perceived by the communist bloc as allies on the 'anti-imperialist front' (Gajda, 1974: 254). However, Davis has argued forcefully that, "(i)n the long run [...] by far the most important development of the decade lay in the reorientation of Poland's international relations" (Davies, 2005: 516).

Building a democratic state – the beginning of an independent foreign policy

Only after the changes in 1989 did Poland regain full sovereignty both nationally and internationally. After the resolutions of the 'Round Table' and the semi-free elections, Central and Eastern Europe saw the first post-Communist Prime Minister, when Tadeusz Mazowiecki took office in Poland in September 1989. Even though the communist party was given the posts of the Minister of Defence and the Minister of Internal Affairs in the newly established government, it did not succeed in gaining control over the MFA. The credit for this belonged to Mazowiecki himself, who considered this sphere of policy to be of major importance, "an instrument to rebuild independence and Poland's image as an independent state" (Vinton, 1995: 31). Professor Krzysztof Skubiszewski was appointed as Foreign Minister by General Wojciech Jaruzelski, who took the newly created post of President. Skubiszewski, coming from the academic community rather than the political environment, remained in office until 1993 under four consecutive Prime Ministers. This turned out to be one of the elements guaranteeing continuity of Polish foreign policy in that period, otherwise characterised by the frequent shifts of governments.

Notwithstanding the general consensus among the political elites on the main foreign policy lines in the following years, some tensions emerged between the government and the President over the control of the MFA. According to the agreements of the 'Round Table' that were later written into the 'Little Constitution' of 1992, the President conducted general supervision of foreign policy, while the government was responsible for its implementation. This overlap of prerogatives became evident especially during the presidency term of Lech Wałęsa and subsequently after the era of Skubiszewski.²⁵

The initial context for forming a new Polish foreign policy was characterised by a deep political, economic and social crisis. There were simply not enough skilled staff and means available to the MFA (Kuźniar and Szczepanik, 2002). There were also plenty of practical, organisational and technical problems to be solved. A symbolic example is reported by Davies (2005: 516). A minister responsible for contacts with NATO in 1990, soon discovered that the telephone line in his office was only linked via a fixed circuit to Moscow. Hence, wanting to contact any Polish diplomat in Brussels, he had to make use of a telephone booth on the street. Apart from such practical challenges, there was also strong pressure to replace the officials that served in the diplomatic service under the communist regime. They were considered inappropriate representatives of the democratically elected government. A major administrative reform was needed and this task was delegated to Professor Jerzy Makarczyk. It is estimated that in the period between 1989 and 1993, 350 of the 698 MFA employees were made redundant, including 90% of Poland's ambassadors and general consuls (Vinton, 1995: 47). In the search for new representatives of Poland abroad, the MFA reached out to well-known academics, journalists and political activists. Some of these new appointments were criticised later, as not all of the new diplomats had the necessary experience, knowledge and expertise concerning their new tasks.

Meanwhile, the training of the new officials required time and the MFA lacked the resources to employ specialists. In 1994, the starting salary was lower than the average

²⁵ Skubiszewski gained trust and confidence of president Wałęsa, thanks to which the MFA could function without any major disruptions (Bartoszewski in Komar, 2006: 262).

industrial wage and set at \$181 per month (Vinton, 1995: 48). A number of new departments were created: the Department of European Institutions, the Department of North and South America, the Department of Europe and the Department of Africa, Asia, Australia and Oceania. At the end of 1991, the ministry administrated 78 embassies, 32 consulates general, a mission, 7 representations, an office of interests, 4 centres of information and Polish culture and 7 Polish institutes (Szczepanik, 2002: 433).

In his Sejm *exposé* in 1990, Skubiszewski outlined the main priorities of Polish foreign policy. The main task of the government was to restore the full independence of the state and provide it with security. This goal was to be achieved through “institutionalising Poland’s role as an international actor” (Sanford, 2003:182) and hence the involvement in the CSCE framework, later with the European Union (EU) and the Council of Europe (CoE).²⁶ Interestingly, NATO was not mentioned at all among the organisations that Poland was aspiring to join. Another urgent goal, defined in the *exposé*, was to redefine the relations with Poland’s powerful neighbours, the USSR and Germany, and to create a strong regional co-operation network (Skubiszewski 1990e). This was in accordance with the three pillars of modern Polish foreign policy, formulated by Jerzy Giedroyc: supporting an independent Ukraine, normalising relations with Germany and obtaining guarantees for Poland’s borders (Prizel, 1998: 103). Some academics wrote in favour of Europeanisation, arguing that the “Westernisation of Poland is the only way to provide Poland with security, chances for economic development and worthiness and as a consequence the protection of valuable elements of national identity” (Kuźniar, 1992: 59). The self-perception among Polish political elites for centuries, proven false by the developments of World War II and its aftermath, was the conviction, that Poland was a great military and cultural power (Prizel, 1998: 69, 103). It had to be dismissed in a process of new foreign policy planning, together with the traditional ‘heroic

²⁶ Poland launched its attempts to join Western organisations in 1989, by taking part as a special guest, in the works of the Council of Europe (CoE) and later joining the organisation in 1991. The following year, a Permanent Representation was established in Strasbourg. Poland has been an active participant of the Council, advocating wide participation for all the countries fulfilling the basic requirements (Łoś-Nowak, 1999: 58).

individualism', in order to rationally and pragmatically adapt to the changes in the international environment (Bieleń, 1992: 91).

The newly chosen Western oriented foreign policy was subjected to a test early in 1991, when the Soviets proposed the relaunch of the Council of Mutual Economic Aid (COMECON). The Poles found themselves in a difficult position, risking a confrontation with Moscow, but still refused the offer (Davies, 2005: 510). In the meantime, the Warsaw Treaty Organisation was going through the ultimate phase of its existence. Polish diplomacy initially proposed transforming it from the military-political organisation into a 'military-defence' and later a 'consultative-defence' alliance and introducing more democratic rules to its functioning (Tabor, 1992: 151). Eventually, the organisation survived till mid-1991, but was treated as a temporary defence alliance that had lost its ideological fundamentals. Finally, the decision regarding the prompt dissolution of the Pact was taken at the ministerial meeting in Budapest in February 1991. Its last meeting took place on the 1st of July 1991 in Prague.

Initially, Poland, like most other post-communist states, especially those that were neighbouring Czechoslovakia, advocated the idea of building a completely new system of European security that would incorporate most European states. In this respect, the CSCE was perceived as its possible base. In January 1990, the Polish Prime Minister introduced the idea of establishing the Council for European Cooperation, a permanent body of CSCE. Its major task would be to assess substantial European problems, in the fields of politics, military, economic, humanitarian and environmental cooperation. During this initiative for transforming the CSCE, Poland saw a step towards the creation of a pan-European Confederation, an idea that was presented earlier by the French president François Mitterrand.

Polish contacts with NATO were officially initiated when Skubiszewski visited the Alliance's Headquarters in Brussels in March 1990 and the Secretary General, Manfred Wörner, paid a visit in September of the same year. Poland had by then clearly expressed an interest in NATO's presence in the region (Kupiecki, 2002). The issue of possible

future enlargement, however, was not yet officially raised. NATO showed its willingness to cooperate by extending a symbolic 'hand of friendship' to its former adversaries. It was only after the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and unification of Germany in 1990, that the presidents of Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary formally declared the willingness of their countries to join the alliance. In response, the same year, the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) was established.

Until 1970, European integration was considered by the communist Polish governments as a form of capitalism "inspired by American imperialism and worthy of ideological condemnation" (Kułakowski, 1997), or "a temporary creation of capitalist states hostile to the socialist countries and the Soviet Union, a creation doomed to collapse through the growth of internal contradictions" (Romiszewska, 1992: 63). These views were softened with time and official contacts with the Communities started in 1988. After the changes of 1989, Poland clearly expressed its interest in joining the EC. Contrary to NATO, the EC were mentioned in the first priority point by minister Skubiszewski in his first *exposé* in 1990, when he said: "we will expand our links with European organizations and groupings, especially with the European Communities and Council of Europe" (Skubiszewski, 1990e). Importantly, there was a broad *consensus* among the politicians from various party-backgrounds concerning this issue.

Establishing closer relations with the EC was perceived as the best guarantee that totalitarian rule would never happen again in Poland. The democratic reforms, initiated in 1989, had to be irreversible. That is why, in May 1990, the Polish government formally applied for an Association Agreement with the EC. Listening to the speeches of the European leaders the Poles hoped that they would be able to join soon. As one of the former foreign ministers admitted later, this attitude proved to be highly naïve (Olechowski, 1995). Nevertheless, financial assistance for Poland was provided in the framework of the EU's PHARE programme, created in 1989.²⁷

²⁷ PHARE was the main financial instrument of the EC's pre-accession strategy towards Central and Eastern Europe.

Skubiszewski's Early Ostpolitik

One of the major challenges for Polish foreign policy in the 1990s was to redefine the relations with the Soviet Union and the other members of the Warsaw Pact. Tadeusz Mazowiecki (1990) expressed this as follows:

“we have opened a new chapter in Polish-Soviet relations. They are no longer determined by ideology and relations between the communist parties. They have become normal relations between states and their governments, guided by the will of their people and the *raison d'état*”

The most pressing issue was the presence of Soviet troops on Polish territory, but the Polish government reacted much more slowly than its Southern neighbours on this matter. It had the idea of using the Soviet troops, as well as the existence of the Warsaw Pact, as an argument in the border dispute with Germany. Thus, the government formally confirmed its good relations with the USSR and used it as the guarantee of its Western border (Millard, 1996; Terry, 2000). When a campaign aimed at the withdrawal of troops was initiated, it already proved complicated, as the Soviet Union (and later Russia), still considered its Eastern neighbours as subject to its own influence. On top of that, the USSR had already encountered problems with providing housing to a large number of soldiers returning from other states. In September 1990, the Polish government proposed the commencement of negotiations leading to the withdrawal of Soviet soldiers by the end of 1991 (Skubiszewski, 1990a). Eventually, both sides agreed that the combat forces would be withdrawn from Poland by November 1992 and the remaining ones by the end of 1993.

At the same time, Poland negotiated a new treaty with the USSR, bringing the talks to an end in December 1991. The negotiations were substantially prolonged by the fact that the

Soviets proposed a clause based on the so called 'Kvitsinsky Doctrine'.²⁸ It stated that neither side could join any military organisations directed against the other. This was strongly rejected by the Polish side. As the talks were finalised when the USSR was already falling apart, the proposed clause would never enter into force. In this situation, the negotiations started from the beginning over the new treaty with Russia.

While repeatedly emphasising that Poland belonged to Western Europe, Polish authorities wanted to intensify its relations with her Eastern neighbours. They advocated the idea of closer relations between Russia and Western Europe, perceiving them both as a potential counterbalance to the unifying German states. Minister Skubiszewski declared the "total openness of Poland to the East" (Skubiszewski, 1990c). The idea of Poland acting as a 'bridge' between Western and Eastern Europe was present in the public debate, but specifically avoided by the government. In this respect, the minister introduced his famous 'dual-track' policy towards Poland's Eastern neighbours. It recognised the Soviet republics as autonomous and equal partners, but at the same time formally respected the, still existing, centre in Moscow. In 1991, as admitted by the minister, the relations with some of the Soviet republics were virtually the same as with other sovereign states (Skubiszewski, 1991). The Polish government saw the guarantee of the security of Poland's eastern flank by linking two issues: the independence of its Eastern neighbours and democracy (Skubiszewski, 1992). Additionally, relations with the 'West' were dependent on how well Poland managed its relations with its Eastern partners. It was believed that Poland could prove its credibility by establishing proper relations with the East and by engaging in the discourse of democracy.

The new 'dual track' policy, however, proved to be difficult to put into practice. An example of the challenges may be found in the Lithuanian case. When Lithuania proclaimed its independence, it received a warm welcome from Poland. However, during the subsequent blockade of the country by the Soviets, the Poles offered only symbolic support. After the assault on Lithuanian state television in January 1991, permission was

²⁸ Yuli A.Kvitsinsky was at that time the Minister of Foreign Affairs and is thought to be an author of the referred clause (Prizel 1995: 102).

given to open the Information Bureau of the Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Warsaw. However, fearing the reaction of Moscow, Poland did not offer any diplomatic support to Vilnius, even though Lithuania requested it and expected it to be granted (Burant, 1993: 400). Relations with Lithuania were further complicated by the existence of a strong Polish minority in that country and the Polish government's claims that it was mistreated.

The 'dual-track' policy also turned out to be a disappointment for Ukraine. Pursuing its goal of gaining independence, it perceived Poland as its 'gate' to Europe. The declarations by Ukrainian politicians, regarding their hopes for a crucial partnership with Poland, received only a lukewarm response from Warsaw. In Poland, an independent Ukraine was seen as a guarantee that Russia would not come back to its imperial politics. However, at the same time, strong support of an independent state could seriously endanger Poland's political and economic relations with Russia who, still perceived to be a major player in the region.

The Eastern policy of Skubiszewski was further criticised for being too passive towards Russia. Some observers denounced his 'dual-track' policy as not satisfying to any of the involved sides (Michta, 1999: 46). Moscow perceived it as interfering in its internal affairs and the states struggling for independence didn't see it as sufficient support for their efforts (Stadtmüller, 2001). Others saw it as a prerequisite, a kind of clearing of the decks, before launching the active Eastern policy that followed (Kuźniar, 1994). The situation behind the border was very unstable and to some extent unpredictable. There was no guarantee that Russia would not seek to regain its influences by hard means. Such fears were only confirmed by the putsch of August 1991 and expressed by Zbigniew Brzeziński in his article in *Foreign Affairs*, where he wrote:

“Even a cursory glance at a map suggests the main thrust of any Soviet effort to redress the geopolitical situation is likely to be directed to Poland. From the Soviet point of view, the restoration of some degree of control over Poland would

greatly reduce the momentum of the centrifugal forces now at work in Lithuania, Byelorussia and the Ukraine” (Brzeziński, 1991: 12).

The German border problem

Another major goal of Polish foreign policy at the time was to normalise the relationship with Germany. The Oder-Neisse frontier dispute was still not formally solved. Germany continued to recognise the border of 1937 and not the one established during the Potsdam conference. The communist government of Poland had signed a treaty with the Federal Republic of Germany in 1970 and the border was then acknowledged by the latter, which declared that it would not use military force to impose change. Still, the question of a final settlement was postponed until later and the status of the frontier remained provisional. The treatment of the German minority in Poland, concentrated in the region of Silesia, was yet another divisive aspect of the Polish-German relations, next to the issue of the Germans expelled from the territories that became Polish after World War II.

These differences notwithstanding, there were significant interests that unified the two neighbours. Germany required Polish acceptance on its road to unification. Poland, seeking security guarantees and aspiring to join Western organisations, had to establish good relations with its Western neighbour (Michałowski, 2002). Therefore, prompt solutions to the divisive issues were sought by both partners. The border problem was raised by Skubiszewski in July 1990, at the ministerial conference in Paris (Skubiszewski, 1990d). The Treaty on the Confirmation of the Border was signed shortly afterwards, in November 1990. Both sides agreed that the border, specified in the Treaty between Poland and the Democratic Republic of Germany (1950) and the Treaty of 1970, was final. The two sides also concluded that they did not have any territorial claims towards each other and would not raise any in the future. As Andrew Michta observed (1999: 43), these agreements “marked the first step in overcoming the historical burden of the Polish security dilemma”.

From that time onwards, Germany was perceived in Poland as a key player and the major ally in the process of the Polish 'return' to Western European structures, such as the EU. Concerned about the security guarantees in the East, Germany also became a strong supporter of Polish NATO accession. It has also become Poland's major economic partner. In fact, Poland soon became one of the seven countries, the only one among the CEECs, to meet with German officials annually at the highest political level (Feldman, 1999: 354). In 1995, the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Władysław Bartoszewski, was invited to give a speech at the joint meeting of the two chambers of German Parliament. The significance of the event was marked by the fact that he was to be the only foreigner to take the floor. He spoke for an hour, watched live on television by 20 million Germans and widely commented upon in the European press (Bartoszewski in Komar, 2006: 264). The speech by a former prisoner of Auschwitz focused on the necessity to build the common future by the two sovereign nations, based upon the values that were once violated by the Germans under Hitler's rule (Ibid.). This showed a positive change in Polish-German relations that took place shortly after 1989 and can be counted as one success of Polish foreign policy.

Regional cooperation

Seeking new security guarantees and stability in the neighbourhood, Poland strongly supported the idea of creating new regional forms of cooperation. The so called 'new regionalism' aimed at creating new frameworks for relations between the countries that were formerly divided by the 'Iron Curtain' and could not conduct their independent foreign policies. Polish politicians believed that the states aspiring to join NATO and the EC would have a stronger voice in negotiations if they acted together. In this respect, Poland, contrary to its partners, like the Czech Republic and Hungary, did not express its ambition of joining the EC as the first and privileged state. The task of establishing the fundamentals for regional cooperation was not easy, as the historical relations between the states in Central Europe were complex and did not feature close cooperation. Growing nationalistic forces, minority problems and competition for establishing economic relations with the West, were only a few of the most serious obstacles. Some

observers feared that Eastern Europe seemed “to be doomed to remain a fragmented region where the countries refuse to see their common interest, regardless of geographic proximity” (Dunay, 1994: 121).

The idea of launching regional integration in Central Europe was, with the dissolution of the old system, encouraged by the West, which was afraid of the possibility that the region would become ‘Balkanised’. First, Austria, Yugoslavia, Hungary and Italy initiated the Danube-Adria Group (which was later changed in 1990 to the Pentagonale and in 1991 to the Hexagonale, after the Polish accession and the Central European Initiative (CEI) in 1992). A major role was played by the Prime Minister of Italy, Gianni de Michelis, who wanted to counterbalance the German presence in Central Europe (Reisch, 1993: 31). Poland was willing to join as well, but because of the negative position of Czechoslovakia (which joined in 1990) its application was initially rejected. This changed in 1991, due to events in the USSR and the weakening of the international position of the Czech and Slovak Federations by nationalist movements (Hyde-Price, 1996: 112). The cooperation within CEI has been taking place mainly in the fields of culture, transport, communications and education. From the beginnings of CEI’s existence the national minority issues constituted a major problem dividing its members. As it did not concern Poland to a great extent, it supported the idea of economic cooperation and free regional trade, rather than focus on theoretical solutions for minority issues (Reisch, 1993: 35).

However, it was the Visegrad Triangle²⁹ that turned out to be of much greater importance for Poland than the other regional organisations. The presidents of Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary signed the founding declaration in Visegrad in February 1991. It soon became a forum for the three countries to cooperate and coordinate their relations with the East and efforts to join the Western structures. The organisation was mentioned in almost all *exposés* concerning Polish foreign policy (Gajewski, 2002). The main aims were to restore the participating states’ independence, democracy and freedom, and to eliminate all remaining aspects of the totalitarian system, construct

²⁹ After the dissolution of Czechoslovakia the organisation changed its name to the Visegrad Group.

parliamentary democracy, create a modern free market economy and become fully involved in the European political and economic system.³⁰ Initially, it received a very cold reaction from the USSR, which saw it as an unfriendly coalition. Some observers saw the organisation as “a caucus of like minded Central European reform elites with somewhat tenuous control over the political, economic, and security resources of their respective states rather than a ‘real’ summit meeting of fully empowered national leaders of unquestionably stable political systems” (Tokes, 1991: 103).

The participating countries signed a series of bilateral agreements on security and military cooperation. However, they were never developed, as the signatories preferred to concentrate their efforts in this field on NATO. They wanted to avoid giving an impression of creating a military alliance, which could be perceived as a threat to the countries in the region, remaining outside Visegrad cooperation, and push them into forming a counter bloc (Dunay, 1994: 137). One of the achievements of the Visegrad Triangle was undoubtedly the creation of the Central European Free Trade Area (CEFTA) in 1992. This organisation was meant to facilitate the economic integration of its members with the EU.³¹

Nonetheless, the cooperation of the Group faced numerous difficulties and the break-up of Czechoslovakia considerably slowed down its activities (Gajewski, 2002). Its *raison d'être* was questioned after the European Council in Edinburgh in December 1992 announced individual processing of EU applications (Szczepaniak, 1999: 230). As a result, Poland was more interested in tightening cooperation than the other participants.³² The government of the Czech Republic with Vaclav Klaus in the office of prime minister from June 1992, saw its priorities as integrating with NATO and the EU, but not necessarily within the Visegrad Group. Therefore, it opted for the “country-by-country approach” to EU enlargement (Steves, 2001: 349). Other states also feared possible

³⁰ Declaration of the Republic of Poland, the Czech and Slovak Federal Republics and the Republic of Hungary on the Cooperation in Pursuit of European Integration, 15 February 1991, Visegrad, *Zbior Dokumentow*, <http://www.zbiordokumentow.pl/1991/1/18.html>

³¹ Slovenia, Romania and Bulgaria joined later.

³² Wałęsa particularly insisted on institutionalisation of the cooperation, as some claimed, opposing the views of Skubiszewski (Vaduchova, 1993: 41).

Polish dominance and, until the signing of the border Treaty with Germany, unwillingness of becoming involved in the Polish-German relationship (Zięba, 1992: 99). Despite numerous attempts undertaken by the Poles which were aimed at the further institutionalisation of the Visegrad Group, it remained a relatively loose forum for coordination due to the objections of its partners.

Another effort of Poland that aimed to establish stronger regional links was to cooperate with the states situated at, or not far from, the Baltic Sea. As a result of the conference in 1990, with eight countries participating, a Council of Baltic Sea States (CBSS) was created two years later. Its activities focused on the environmental issues and trade. Polish interests lay primarily in establishing ties, especially economic ones, with the wealthy Scandinavian states. It was also an attempt to build cooperation in the axis of South-North, instead of the historically divisive East-West border.

The new policy towards Poland's Eastern neighbours after 1991

Relations with Moscow and with the newly independent Eastern neighbours raised a lot of controversies in Poland. Whereas some politicians claimed that better relations between Poland with the East would strengthen its position with the West, others considered such statements to be unrealistic (Kupiecki and Szczepanik 1995: 75; Kuźniar and Szczepanik, 2002: 24), potentially undermining Poland's Western-oriented foreign policy. The notion of 'balance of powers' in the region came into play again; the active Eastern policy was strongly connected to the Polish-German relationship and the principle of balanced engagement with both east and west (Barcz, 1992: 72). However, the geopolitical situation changed in Poland's favour in 1991, after the dissolution of the USSR. Apart from Kaliningrad, it did not share any other border with Russia. A natural 'buffer zone' emerged between the two states, consisting of the former Soviet republics behind the Eastern border. The policy towards these new neighbours was a major challenge for the new Polish government and had to be carefully planned and implemented.

Despite this evident necessity, the years that followed were marked mainly by Polish aspirations to join NATO and the EU, whereas Eastern policy was not conducted with any great enthusiasm. There were two main strands to the Polish approach to the East and neither of them prevailed soon enough. The first one called for a 'realist' approach and for establishing good relations with Russia. The proponents of this idea called for a cautious policy towards the East, and for treating it as a 'bloc'. They argued that the existence of such a single entity, which was bound to be more stable, was advantageous for Poland. Hence, they advocated separating interests from morality and rejected treating values (such as supporting independence of the newly proclaimed independent states) as a decisive component of state security guarantees (Bieleń, 1992: 93-94). The second option, on the contrary, emphasised establishing good relations with the neighbouring countries rather than with Russia (Calka, 1998).

A Treaty with Russia was signed in May 1992, but the relations were still being negatively influenced by Poland's aspiration to join NATO. This caused strong opposition among Russian politicians, who spoke of the serious security threat that an enlarged NATO would pose for Russia. Relations with neighbouring Lithuania, Ukraine and Belarus were complicated by the issue of 'minorities', mainly the (mis)treatment of the Poles residing in these countries. The history of Poland and its neighbours was often marked by conflicts or by Polish dominance. What is in Poland still remembered with pride, like the Commonwealth with Lithuania, is considered as Polish oppression in Lithuania itself. In January 1992 Poland finally signed a declaration on friendly relations and good neighbourhood with Lithuania and in March it launched diplomatic relations with the Republic of Belarus. The treaties with Latvia and Estonia were signed in July the same year. In December, Poland was the first country to formally recognise the independence of Ukraine and in May 1993 both countries signed a treaty of good-neighbourliness, friendly relations and cooperation.

Ukraine has also played a crucial role in Polish foreign policy, being the subject of a jealously guarded influence by Russia. As observed by Prizel (1995:114), any alliance between post-communist Poland and Ukraine would include the population of more than

80 million, with nuclear power that would most likely be perceived as a potential threat by its neighbours. The Polish Minister Hanna Suchocka announced, in August 1993, a 'strategic partnership' with Ukraine as one of the priorities of Polish foreign policy (Menkiszak and Piotrowski, 2002: 221). At the same time, on various occasions, Russia expressed its discontent with Polish involvement in the case of Ukraine, something which was to continue for years to come, especially after the Orange Revolution. Nevertheless, up to 1994-1995 Polish policy towards Ukraine was predominantly characterised by formal declarations, lacking any real substance (Wolczuk, 2001).

The next substantial change in Polish policy towards the East took place in 1994. The 'dual track' approach, facing criticism outlined above, was no longer considered as appropriate. A change of Minister of Foreign Affairs brought Andrzej Olechowski to the office and ended the 'Skubiszewski era'. At the outset of his term, Olechowski expressed a wish to "open a new chapter in the Eastern policy of Poland" (Olechowski 1994b). This new approach was officially outlined in the presentation of Polish foreign policy in 1994, in a speech delivered to the *Sejm* (Olechowski, 1994a). The core of the policy consisted of three aims. The first was to build up good relations with the states of special significance for Poland: first of all with Russia and Ukraine, but also with Belarus, the Baltic States, Kazakhstan and Moldova. The second aim concerned creating political and military stabilisation in the region with Poland as a 'stability exporter'. Finally, the third task was to take advantage of the recent economic changes. The last task was tightly connected to security challenges, defined by the government as the possibility of Russia exercising economic pressure in order to rebuild its political position in the region (Calka, 1995). In spite of disbanding the CMEA in 1991, the states of Central Europe remained economically dependent on Russia; it served as a market for their goods and provided them with natural resources, especially with gas and oil (Bowker, 1995: 78).

Another problem requiring an urgent solution was the issue of Kaliningrad. The future of the military base was uncertain from the end of the Cold War. As noted by Zajęzkowski (2000), after the changes on 1991, the enclave has not managed to replace the old one with a new identity. There were proposals to transform it into a zone of economic

prosperity that would fulfil the function of a Russian bridge to the EU. After EU enlargement, the territory would be encircled by new EU members. However, the development of the region did not move in this direction. This explains why Polish officials were interested in cooperation with Kaliningrad on a regional basis and within the Northern Dimension of the EU. The situation was complicated further with the introduction of visas for Russian citizens due to the forthcoming Polish accession to the EU. Russian officials proposed establishing an extraterritorial corridor through Polish territory, between Russia and Kaliningrad. This was a rather unfortunate proposal, considering the Polish historical experience, described at the outset of this chapter. The Poles had denied Hitler such a transit corridor before World War II and since then the phrase *korytarz* (corridor) has carried a very negative meaning in international politics. Hence, the idea was strongly opposed by the Polish government and finally also abandoned by the Russians.

By way of conclusion, the general *consensus* on foreign policy was sometimes breached by voices criticising the new approach. With the change of policy, Polish-Russian official relations deteriorated and were even temporarily frozen. Since 1995, the issue of NATO enlargement was excluded from bilateral Polish-Russian relations. Some improvements in contacts with Moscow were only noted in 2001. It became apparent from the above that 1991 proved a very significant year for Polish foreign policy. CMEA was disbanded and the Warsaw Pact dissolved. Poland became a member of the Council of Europe and signed the Association Agreements with the European Communities. It managed to conduct a reorientation of its foreign policy and stated the main goals to achieve in the years ahead. Despite major disagreements when it came to internal affairs and reforms after 1989, foreign policy remained above those quarrels. Even if occasionally the course of the government was questioned, Poland proved itself as a stable and reliable partner on the international scene as it pursued its 'return to the West'.

Escape from the 'grey zone' – the Polish road to NATO: 1989 – 1999

After the changes of 1989, Poland and its neighbours, still members of the Warsaw Pact, found themselves in a 'grey zone' of security, or what some called the 'security vacuum'. The old system was collapsing, yet there was no clear idea what would replace it and so security guarantees were needed for the newly gained sovereignty. In spite of the recurrent government changes in the young Polish democracy, the issues of security and foreign policy were usually not dragged into the political games and a broad, cross-party consensus was maintained (Latawski, 1994: 48).

In the early 1990s, different ideas on security guarantees circulated on the Polish political scene. The acceptance of some kind of neutrality - linked to historical experience - was broached. Henry Kissinger, who visited Poland in June 1990, suggested transforming Polish territory into a neutral zone (Loś-Nowak, 1999: 60). Zbigniew Brzeziński also claimed that the best security system would be provided by an Austrian-style neutrality for the Visegrad countries (Solomon, 1998). However, because of Poland's geopolitical location, the government opposed the idea of creating any kind of buffer or neutral zones. According to minister Skubiszewski, they could too easily become the subject of rivalry between the 'super-powers'. Instead, the government opted for the creation of the all-European security system, built around the CSCE (Skubiszewski, 1990b). Similar proposals came from the other CEECs. As mentioned before, the Polish Prime Minister even proposed creating the Council for European Cooperation within the CSCE, but the idea did not gain enough support from the other states. It became clear, especially after its inability to solve the Yugoslavian conflict that CSCE was not able to fulfil the role that the Polish government imagined. In this situation, the organisation began to be perceived by the Polish MFA as a device for involving Russia in the continent's security questions (Skubiszewski, 1992). This was of special importance after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1992, and when its former republics gained independence.³³

³³ These changes brought new security challenges for Poland and the same year inter-state agreements with Russia, Ukraine and Belarus were signed.

The role of NATO was initially seen as an organisation within the CSCE framework, which should not compete, but rather co-operate with the latter. NATO itself was at first reluctant to undertake any talks on possible membership for the former communist states. It was neither prepared nor willing to take any responsibility for security in the region, especially considering the strong opposition coming from Russia. The latter perceived any possibility of tying its former satellite states with the West as attempts to weaken its own position. Many observers from Western Europe opposed any involvement of NATO in possible conflicts in the CEECs and questioned whether “NATO would be capable of distinguishing between the good and the bad guys” (Valki, 1994: 116). Eventually, in 1990, after the summit in London, NATO offered the post-communist states a symbolic hand of friendship and proposed establishing diplomatic contacts between the Alliance and these states.³⁴ Nevertheless, the proposal fell short of any prospect of membership.

Poland began recognising NATO as the main guarantor of European security after 1991. Consequently, joining the Alliance became one of the priorities of its foreign policy. On the one hand, it became clear that the CSCE would not transform itself into an organisation able to provide European security and on the other hand, Poland saw the guarantee of its ‘hard security’ predominantly in the presence of American troops in Europe. In the official discourse, Polish officials emphasised that the enlargement of NATO was never intended against any state, and relations with the countries outside of the Alliance should remain friendly (Dutkiewicz and Lodzinski, 1998: 96). The response came from NATO in 1991, after the meeting in Copenhagen, which produced a statement on ‘Partnership with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe’. Contrary to Polish expectations, it contained neither security guarantees for the region nor any decisions concerning possible enlargement. In 1992, Poland officially declared that full membership of NATO was its strategic goal. The reaction of the Alliance remained reserved, taking into account Russian opposition. This proved a disappointing and

³⁴ NATO official web page; NATO publications; URL:<http://www.nato.int/docu/handbook/2001/hb020103.htm> 12.02.04)

disillusioning experience for the Poles. What NATO proposed instead in 1992 was cooperation within the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC).

In this situation, some confusion was caused by the proposal of the Polish president Lech Wałęsa to create the so called 'NATO-bis'. It was supposed to involve all Visegrad countries, some former Soviet republics, Romania and Bulgaria and was meant to serve as a kind of transitional step before joining NATO. Later, the presidential security adviser admitted that it was just "an idea and not a project existing in real life" (Latawski, 1994: 48). The new concept remained very vague and the government distanced itself from it, denying any detailed knowledge in this matter (Kupieccki, 2002).

Generally, in 1993 the approach of the Western European states and the US to Central Europe was determined by American policy, based on talking to Russia and only Russia (Kuźniar, 1994). The same year, the Russian president Boris Yeltsin sent a letter to the UK, France, Germany and United States, warning that any attempts to enlarge NATO would be seen by Russia as a threat to its security. Instead, he opted for 'cross guarantees' to Central Europe, provided by both NATO and Russia. The Polish government officially denied conducting any policy leading to the isolation of Russia and claimed that once admitted to NATO it would contribute to the improvement of relations between the Alliance and Russia. From the Polish perspective, Western *appeasement* would only strengthen "chauvinistic and nationalistic forces" in Russia (Skubiszewski, 1993).

In 1993, Russia redefined its position towards NATO and the European security structures. Previously, Boris Yeltsin had expressed interest in Russian participation in NATO, later the hypothetical participation was rejected, alongside the idea of the whole organisation serving as a guarantor of European security (Stadtmüller, 2001). However, the same year brought a surprising statement by the Russian president visiting Poland. During an informal dinner, pressed by President Wałęsa, he claimed that Polish accession to NATO would not be in opposition to Russian interests. After a great effort on the part

of Polish diplomats to formalise this statement, it was put into an official document.³⁵ This was possible thanks to Yeltsin, who, despite the strong reaction of accompanying officials, did not want to withdraw or water down his earlier claim.

This revolutionary remark was soon 'undone' by the Russian ministry, but the Polish diplomats took advantage of the spoken words. In September, the Polish President sent an official letter to the NATO Secretary General, in which he called for Poland to be admitted to the organisation. He argued that it would "remove that invisible barrier which still keeps Europe divided into two parts - states which enjoy fully ensured and guaranteed security, and states which do not" (Wałęsa 1993). A few days later, Manfred Wörner spoke in favor of opening "more concrete perspectives for countries from Central and Eastern Europe which want to join NATO and which we may consider eligible for future membership" (Solomon, 1998: 25).

The creation of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) caused some disappointment in Poland, as it did not offer any concrete security guarantees to the region. Some politicians warned that leaving the country in the 'grey area of uncertainty' may revive Russian 'imperial tendencies' (Weydenthal de, 1994). It soon became clear that the process of accession would take a long time, so the Poles pressed for a clear declaration from NATO on the question of enlargement. At the beginning of 1994, on the initiative of the United States, NATO invited Central European Countries to participate in a programme called the Partnership for Peace (PfP). From the very beginning, the Poles wanted to treat it only as a step leading to full membership, even though in the view of some NATO member states it was not formally linked to enlargement and was in fact initially considered as an alternative to enlargement.

³⁵ The Declaration of both Presidents contained the famous passage: "The Presidents discussed the issue of Poland's intention to accede to NATO. President Lech Walesa explained Poland's well-known position on this issue, which was received with understanding by President Boris Yeltsin. In perspective, a decision of this kind by sovereign Poland aiming at all-European integration is not contrary to the interests of other States, including also Russia." ("Joint Polish-Russian Declaration", Warsaw, 25 August 1993, Zbiór Dokumentów, <http://www.zbiordokumentow.pl/1993/3/7.html>)

There was also a great deal of disappointment regarding the proposal amongst the supporters of NATO enlargement. The Polish immigrants' circles in the US started a protest campaign, initiated by Jan Nowak-Jeziorański, who called the PfP a "new Yalta" (Lis, 1999: 65). Together with Zbigniew Brzeziński, they began a powerful campaign in support of full NATO membership for Poland (Bartoszewski in Komar, 2006: 261). Allegedly, less than half of Polish soldiers considered the initiative as the optimal solution to the challenges of European security at the time of the creation of PfP (Jarmuszko, 1999: 38). They perceived it as mainly serving American and Western European interests and not those of the Central European countries.³⁶ Even more disillusioning was the fact that Russia was also invited to the programme. Still, the Polish government was aware that "as regards NATO, we still cannot count on spectacular results, unless some dramatic and for us threatening events were to occur in Russia. For today, our task is to uphold debate on the subject - something we have managed to do" (Olechowski, 1994a). During the meeting with Bill Clinton in Prague in January 1994, Lech Wałęsa spoke about the "hesitation of the West" and accused the PfP of sustaining inequalities between the 'partners' and called the programme "too small [a] step" (Wałęsa 1994).

Nevertheless, Poland became an active participant in the PfP and signed its first Individual Partnership Program (IPP) in June 1995. Overall, it contributed to shifting the political relations between Poland and NATO to a higher level. In such circumstances, the Poles started another lobbying campaign, especially in the US, aiming at enlargement. The long awaited announcement finally came in 1996, when President Clinton and his Secretary of State spoke of the necessity to make a breakthrough in the process of NATO enlargement. In July, the Senate passed the NATO Enlargement Facilitation Act. Under American pressure, Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic were invited to the accession talks at the NATO summit in Madrid in July 1997. The expected date of their accession was foreseen as the 50th anniversary of the Alliance. Before the end of 1997, the Protocols of Accession were signed. The negotiations went on, while the politicians emphasised that there could not be any form of second class membership for the

³⁶ With time, however, the perceptions of the programme became much more positive.

newcomers (Pastusiak, 1998). The battle between the opponents and supporters of enlargement was especially vital in the US, where prominent voices were asking “why die for Gdansk?” (Layne, 1998: 61).

On the 27 November 1997, Polish Prime Minister Jerzy Buzek received a letter from the NATO Secretary General, Javier Solana, in which NATO countries recognised Poland as ready to join the Alliance. This meant the end of negotiations and readiness to sign the Accession Treaty. Eventually, Poland became a member of NATO, as planned, in April 1999. Jerzy Buzek expressed the view shared nationwide: “we returned to the community to which we always belonged — a community in which our culture, values and policy are rooted” (Buzek, 1999). The Polish vision of NATO has always been one of an organisation that would engage in a dialogue with non-members and be open for further enlargement. In his speech at the NATO anniversary in Washington, President Kwasniewski emphasised that the door of the Alliance must remain open (Kwasniewski, 1999).

‘Return to Europe’ – association and access negotiations with the EU

Mazowiecki argued that “People often speak about Poland’s comeback to Europe. Poland had been present spiritually in Europe, but not politically”³⁷ (Mazowiecki, 2003: 73). This section of the chapter shows how integration became institutionalised until Poland became a member of the EU.

The EU Association Agreements were signed in December 1991. On the insistence of Poland, the final text incorporated a clause, stating that “Poland’s final objective is membership in the Communities and in the opinion of the Parties the association will help Poland to attain this goal” (Europe Agreement, 1994). However, there was no hint of any concrete steps facilitating enlargement, or any possible dates. Due to the delay in the ratification process in most of the member states, it only came into force in 1994, and not,

³⁷ As translated by the author from the original in Polish: „Mówi się bardzo często o powrocie Polski do Europy. Polska była duchowo w Europie, nie była w niej politycznie.”

as expected, a year earlier. The Agreements established the institutions of Association: the Council (consisting of the representatives of the Polish government, the Commission and the Council of Ministers), the Committee (operational body, consisting of representatives of the Polish government and the Council of Ministers) and the Parliamentary Committee.

The critics pointed out that the Agreements focused only on one of the four freedoms promoted by the EU – trade (Millard 1999: 207). Another serious reason for disappointment was the fact that the barriers for agricultural goods, textiles and steel, all being crucial products that the post communist states sought access for in the EU market, were not removed (Hyde-Price, 1996: 199). With the signing of the Agreements, a political dialogue was established between the EU and Poland and it was acknowledged that it “will contribute to the strengthening of security and stability in Europe” (Art.2). However, in Poland, this was perceived as a very general statement, while the government was already expressing a clear will to join the cooperation within the CFSP (Kolodziejczyk, 1998: 80).

The economic and political criteria for membership were spelt out by the Copenhagen European Council in 1993, creating a framework for future enlargement and setting the goalposts for any potential members. Subsequently, in March/April 1994, Hungary and Poland submitted their application for membership of the EU. The first calendar of accession was presented by the European Commission only at the end of 1995. Throughout the whole process, a gap existed between the Polish expectations and the answers it was given by the EU. The Commission’s officials were mentioning 2002, as the date of the possible enlargement, which seemed very far away to the Poles. Nor did the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) in Amsterdam in 1996 introduce any necessary changes in the EU itself, which would prepare it for enlargement. In July 1997, the Commission presented Agenda 2000, a document that addressed the issue of enlargement and the necessary preparations for it including financial adjustments within the EU.

In order to prepare for the negotiations, the government introduced an administrative reform in 1996. The Committee for European Integration (CEI) was created and given the responsibility for the process of Polish integration into the EU. As support, the government established the Office of the Committee for European Integration (OCEI) with a Secretary, Danuta Hübner. To reassure the continuity of the negotiation process and Polish politics towards the EU, the National Strategy of Integration (NSI) was published in January 1997. It outlined the institutional arrangements for cooperation with the EU and set the goal of obtaining as few transitional periods as possible. The same year, the prompt integration with the EU was mentioned by the Foreign Minister Dariusz Rosati within Polish foreign policy priorities.

Polish relations with the EU suffered some disruption in 1997. After the formation of a government by the centre-right parties, the Office of the Head of European Integration Committee was led by Ryszard Czarnecki, who was not an enthusiastic supporter of integration. Subsequently, after the tension in government over the control of PHARE funds, he was removed from office a year later. The official entry negotiations started in March 1998. Jan Kułakowski, the former Polish ambassador to the EU, was nominated as the chief negotiator. There seemed to be no problems in harmonising Polish foreign policy with the CFSP. In the speech inaugurating the negotiations Minister Bronisław Geremek (1998) claimed: "Poland's participation in the Common Foreign and Security Policy, will enhance the EU policy towards its Eastern neighbours, contributing to the development of open and partner-like relations with countries remaining outside the enlarged Union".

In the field of security priorities, next to joining NATO, Poland was also aspiring to membership in the Western European Union (WEU). This presented Polish politicians with the dilemma of choosing between the EU and the US – WEU and NATO. This explains why they frequently emphasized that Poland treated WEU and NATO as complementary organisations and not as alternatives. In May 1993, Poland gained the status of an associated partner in the WEU. For some time many politicians believed that Poland would join the WEU first and that that would foster NATO membership. Some

scholars saw the two processes, NATO and EU enlargement, as bound by an incremental linkage. This was explained by the fact that “significant moves in EU enlargement process had a kind of knock-on effect on NATO – particularly American – policy” (Smith, 1999: 54).

During the negotiations, Poland remained critical of EU efforts to strengthen cooperation in the security field. Before the European Council meeting in Helsinki, in 1999, it asked for full participation in decision-making on any possible military operations and called for discussion of such decisions with NATO. At the same time, the Polish government declared that EU efforts would only be effective when coordinated with Washington (Zieba, 2001). This caused some irritation among EU Member States’ politicians, especially the French President, who called Poland “an American Trojan Horse in Europe, building its independent military capabilities” (Zieba, 2001: 202).

In 2000, Commission officials stated that Poland might be among the countries joining the EU in 2004 (Parzymies, 2002). Meanwhile, the Polish government set a goal of being completely prepared for accession by 2003. At the same time, it expressed readiness and a wish to participate in all decisions concerning the future institutional framework of the EU (Kulakowski, 2001). However, Poland was not invited to join these negotiations in Nice, but it welcomed the outcomes, especially those giving it a strong voting position in future European institutions. The conclusions of the European Council stated that the EU would be ready for enlargement by 2003, so that the new member states could take part in the European Parliament elections in 2004. The fulfilment of the Copenhagen criteria by Poland was announced by the Commission in October 2002. It also stated the country should fulfil the remaining criteria and be ready for membership by 2004. After closing the negotiations, Poland signed the Accession Treaty in Athens in April 2003 and finally joined the EU on the 1st of May 2004.

Conclusion

It is clear that Poland has experienced overwhelming changes over the past 100 years. More recently, while it went through numerous transformations, with recurrent government crisis and economic ups and downs, its partners were also undergoing rapid changes as well. Significantly, a brief glimpse at the map from 1989 reminds us, that all Poland's neighbours would also change: the two German states unified, Czechoslovakia divided into the Czech Republic and Slovakia, while to the East the former Soviet Republics gained independence as Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Belarus. At the same time, Poland discovered that its old alliances were destroyed and it was largely on its own (Weydenthal, 1993). Furthermore, the EU itself went through a significant number of reforms such as the Treaty of Maastricht and the enlargement of 1995. It soon became clear that Poland was to join an organisation quite different from the one it desired to join after 1989.

The goal of joining the EU, formulated very early in the 1990s, formed a significant part of the subsequent conduct of foreign policy. In order to achieve it, the country had to fulfil a number of requirements, which fostered democratic change. Nevertheless, other exogenous sources of change must be acknowledged, as shown in the current chapter. It became evident, that isolating the 'EU effect' would not be a simple task. As discussed here, the EU was only one of the organisations Poland aimed to join after 1989. The other ones, such as NATO, the Council of Europe and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), also played an important role in foreign policy changes.³⁸

Another issue emerging from this chapter, is a certain 'baggage' that Poland carried over from its historical experiences and the recent communist period. It has shown important paradigms of Polish policy towards its Eastern neighbours. The relationship with the Soviet Union and later Russia has been characterised for centuries by mistrust and a desire to counter-balance the power of the latter in the region. In the inter-war period this was pursued by avoiding close cooperation with the Soviets, while simultaneously

³⁸ Thus, some authors preferred in the past to refer to the process of 'Westernisation', rather than 'Europeanisation'.

attempting to strike a balance between the Soviet Union and Germany as well as entering into alliances with countries on the Western flank of the Soviet Union (like Romania and the Baltic States). After the Second World War, foreign policy was dependent on the USSR, but the paradigm was still present in the thinking of the independent, influential émigré circles, such as the Parisian “Kultura”. Shortly after 1989, the search for balance in the region returned with the dual-track policy of minister Skubiszewski. As will be shown in the following chapters, the strategic notion of ‘leaving the EU door open to the East’, supporting the Western orientation in Ukraine (e.g. during the Orange Revolution) and advocating its potential EU membership was also motivated to some extent by the determination to counter-balance Russia. The idea of creating an independent Eastern Dimension for the EU, discussed later in the thesis, also seems to be directly related to the historical legacy of Poland’s relationship with Russia and the Soviet Union and the perceptions of security in the region.

As demonstrated in this chapter, this ‘eastern’ aspect of Polish foreign policy was the most complex and sensitive. Problems were caused by the (mis)treatment of minorities, historical conflict over issues such as the murder of Polish army officers by the Red Army in places like Katyń and the Polish-Ukrainian fighting at the end of the Second World War. Therefore, Poland entered the EU with a clear ambition to shape the Union’s policy towards the East, emphasising its experience and knowledge concerning the former Soviet states.

The chapter has also touched upon Polish-American relations. The special role played by President Wilson and the US was noted with regard to Poland regaining independence after the First World War. This and other factors contributed to a broad perception in Poland that relations with the US were both special and strategic. This was strengthened by American pressure to open the doors of NATO for Poland, while EU membership remained uncertain. This factor in Polish foreign policy, sometimes called Poland’s instinctive Atlanticism (Zaborowski and Longhurst, 2003), would become another important element in the story of Poland’s integration into the EU’s CFSP which is discussed in the next four chapters.

CHAPTER 3

THE EUROPEANISATION OF THE POLISH MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Introduction

This chapter describes and analyses the changes in the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), related to Poland's membership of the EU and its participation in the CFSP. First, a few additions are made to the analytical framework presented in chapter one in order to better explain institutional changes. Later, the chapter proceeds with a brief outline of the main actors and institutional settings of the CFSP and of Polish national policy. The analysis of the Europeanisation of Polish MFA begins with a section referring to the coordination of European policy, in which the MFA is an active participant. The chapter then moves on to discuss the main changes in offices and procedures inside the MFA, as well as the differences in socialisation and learning experienced by Polish officials both in Brussels and in Warsaw.

Referring to the Europeanisation approach, downloading, or institutional adaptation is considered here as changes to the Polish administrative machine that are result of the EU entry negotiations and of the developments at the EU level in the CFSP domain. Uploading is a slightly more problematic dimension in the case of administrative change, especially when it comes to trying to measure the outcome. It should be treated as changes at the EU level that result from the successful projection of national (Polish) preferences. However considering the relatively recent date of Poland's accession, it is probably too soon to anticipate new members like Poland having a significant impact on EU procedures.

Europeanisation and the changing role of foreign ministries

The general analytical framework and some theoretical insights into the study were considered in chapter one. However, to enhance the clarity of this chapter, this section will add a few points that are important for understanding change in the foreign ministry of an EU member state. As asserted by Olsen (2002: 16), the impact of European institutions on member state institutions and the ability to penetrate them “is not perfect, universal or constant” and is modified by specific, domestic conditions (e.g. Wessels and Rometsch, 1996; Wessels *et al*, 2003; Kassim, 2005). Hocking (2002: 274) lists several features affecting the adaptational process of national MFAs, such as their traditional role and status in foreign policy-making, or specific national norms in the domestic bureaucratic culture. Having said that, a common feature is the fact that the foreign ministries are not characterised as having a “high degree of adaptive capacity” (Hocking and Spence, 2002: 5).

The role and significance of the foreign ministries of the EU member states have undoubtedly altered because of their participation in European foreign policy making. At the same time, the processes of globalisation and regionalisation have also exerted an impact on their organisation and work. Hence, one of the methodological challenges related to applying the Europeanisation approach is the danger of overestimating its influence as an “all-explaining factor” (Major and Pomorska, 2005: 2). Several critics have expressed the suspicion that Europeanisation might just be “a cause or a symptom of a wider phenomenon” (e.g. Stavridis, 2003: 14). Some changes in the foreign policy process may certainly be attributed to the more general aspects relating to the changing nature of foreign policy (Hill, 2003), alterations in the number of actors in foreign policy in general and their functions. Arguably, foreign ministries have gained strong competitors in the field, internally within government, but also ‘outsiders’, such as companies or other Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). This has been mainly attributed to the two following factors: 1) internal changes within the state, such as “horizontal decentralisation of foreign relations” and 2) international developments of “complex interdependence” (Hill, 2003: 82).

Nevertheless, some changes in the EU member state foreign ministries can be directly linked to participation in CFSP, such the establishment of new posts or of new coordinating mechanisms. Also the negotiation culture and ‘ways of doing things’ in Brussels have an impact on national diplomats and permanent representatives. From this perspective, any broad changes sparked by globalisation are complemented by the changes caused by participating in a *sui generis* system of foreign policy making within the EU. Unlike negotiations within other multilateral organisations (such as NATO or the UN), the CFSP affects *the whole* of national foreign policy: through its wide geographical and issue-related spectrum. It affects member states’ bilateral relations with other member states and third countries, but also participation in international organisations, where the EU attempts to coordinate its positions and speak with one voice (for example in the WTO).

This changing role of the MFAs can be observed in the example of the functioning of the Polish Permanent Representation to the EU. It formally remains part of the MFA, being headed by a diplomat from this ministry and being accountable to the MFA. Nonetheless, a large proportion of the staff are seconded from Polish domestic ministries, such as the Ministry of Agriculture or Treasury. In this sense, in spite of being commonly known as a ‘small MFA’, the Permanent Representation is no longer to be viewed as the “extension of the foreign ministry”, but rather as an “extended arm of the national capital” (Spence, 2002: 22).

Relating adaptation in the area of foreign policy to the impact of the EU in general, it should be noted that EU membership meant especially tough challenges for the MFAs and national foreign policies, compared to other ministries and policy areas. This is because, in most cases, EU membership challenges the core and traditional functions of the MFA. Hence, the diplomats often face the dilemma of either adjusting to the new system or losing their position and influence within the domestic decision-making processes.

Stemming from the different perceptions of the diplomatic arena, MFAs are currently perceived to be acting in two ways (Hocking, 2002). The first view emphasises the traditional role of the 'gatekeeper'. In this case, the MFA attempts to maintain a leading role in the formulation of national positions and actions in the international arena by preserving its high position in the national foreign policy hierarchy. The other image of the foreign ministry is one of the 'boundary-spanner', when it uses the strategy of cooperation with other actors and acts as a mediator between them. Usually, in attempts to regain their status, the EU MFAs were forced to abandon the 'gatekeeper' role and engage in the 'boundary-spanning' role, as in the case of the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), as explained by Allen and Oliver (2004). The Europeanisation of the FCO has mostly manifested itself in the altered structure and management of those FCO desks dealing with the other EU member states and in the growing importance of the UK Permanent Representation to the EU. This chapter will examine the pressures exerted on the Polish MFA and its responses, presenting some empirical evidence for a possible comparative analysis with the other EU member states.

Typology of institutional change

In order to categorise changes observed in the MFA, the following typology was adopted from the literature, mostly from Bulmer and Burch (2000). These include:

- **Systemic change:** concerning constitutional amendments and fundamental changes to the state's structures (in this case the changes would relate to the foreign policy area, e.g. regarding the requirements of participation in the CFSP)
- **Organisational change:** change in networks and offices
- **Process-related change:** relating to the 'ways-of-doing things', such as distribution of information or concluding national positions

- Cultural change: regarding norms and values within all previous dimensions

This taxonomy will be used throughout the text, but the chapter has not been structured according to the type of changes observed. In the concluding part, this division is brought back into focus and findings in each dimension are summarised. It is acknowledged that there is no clear-cut division between these different types of change and some of them may overlap. Notably, cultural change is the most problematic one, difficult to measure and at the same time occurring via incremental processes.

Institutional context 1: The CFSP of the European Union

The main difficulty in conducting research related to the CFSP is that it constitutes a 'moving target'. The changes in its institutional setting have gained speed in recent years, initiated by the establishment of the CFSP as the second EU pillar by the Treaty of Maastricht, signed in 1991. Some important innovations were introduced by the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997), which incorporated the *Petersberg Tasks*³⁹ and established the post of High Representative for the CFSP. The Treaty of Nice (2001) opened the possibilities for enhanced cooperation within the CFSP, except in issues related to defence. The cooperation in the latter area gained its momentum during the St. Malo Summit of December 1998, with the subsequent Summits in Cologne (June 1999), Helsinki (December 1999) and Feira (June 2000) providing some substance to what is now called European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). Hence, the process of Polish adaptation to CFSP is characterised by the 'moving goalposts', as the EU was undergoing dynamic changes.

The CFSP is characterised by its own distinctive decision-making process. Even though it remains in the same single institutional framework as the first and the third pillar policies, the role and responsibilities of the institutional actors and member states differ significantly from the communitarian pillar. CFSP is mainly transgovernmental in nature

³⁹ *Petersberg Tasks* include humanitarian and rescue tasks, peace-keeping and combat-forces in crisis management, including peace-making.

with a vast number of issues to which unanimity applies and member states retain their veto power. Qualified majority voting (QMV) is very limited and usually applies only to implementation of the policies that were earlier agreed upon by unanimity.

The provisions related to the CFSP are included in Title V of the Treaty on European Union (TEU). It states that the members states should support the Union's external and security policies "actively and unreservedly in a spirit of loyalty and mutual solidarity" (Art. 11.2). At the same time they shall refrain from any action, which is "contrary to the interests of the Union or likely to impair its effectiveness as a cohesive force in international relations" (Art. 11.2). The Treaty lists five objectives of the Common Foreign and Security Policy:

- 1) safeguarding the common values, interests, independence and integrity of the EU, in conformity with the principles of the UN Charter
- 2) strengthening the Union's security
- 3) preserving peace and strengthening international security, in accordance with the principles of the UN Charter, Helsinki Final Act and the Paris Charter
- 4) promoting international cooperation
- 5) developing and consolidating democracy, rule of law, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms (Art. 11.1)

The main body responsible for defining the principles and drawing the general guidelines of European Foreign Policy is the **European Council**. It consists of the Heads of States or Governments, meeting at least twice a year. It decides unanimously on the *common strategies* of the Union. The most important decision-making body in the area of CFSP is the **General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC)**, meeting at least once per month. It is composed of the Foreign Ministers of the member states and implements common strategies, adopting joint actions and common positions by QMV.⁴⁰ Twice a

⁴⁰ QMV, however, does not apply to the issues with military implications. Also, any member state may object to taking decisions by QMV on grounds of important national reasons (see also Smith, 2003:44).

year Foreign Ministers also meet on an informal basis during the weekend. Such gatherings are known as *Gymnich* formula.

Within the Council, a predominant role belongs to the Secretary General, who also holds the post of the **EU High Representative for the CFSP**, whose position was created by the Amsterdam Treaty (1997). He/she assists the Council in the process of implementation in the CFSP area. The **Council Presidency** has a role of representing the Union to the external world, with tasks such as peace brokering or upgrading the Union's relations with third countries (Art. 18 TEU; Nugent, 2003: 426). The office of the presidency rotates every six months. The main responsibilities are to ensure the coherence, assert Union positions and take responsibility for implementing CFSP decisions. It also represents the Union in the international organisations and at international conferences (Art. 18 TEU; Reiderman, 2004: 64-65).

The **Committee of Permanent Representatives (COREPER)** meets once a week in order to prepare the meetings of the Council. It works in two formations. The so-called **COREPER II**⁴¹ comprises the National Ambassadors to the EU and deals with external relations. Its meetings are prepared by a group of so-called *Antici*. The responsibility of preparing the CFSP related issues for the Council belongs to the **Political and Security Committee (PSC or COPS)**, which is composed of national representatives on a senior ambassadorial level. As decided by the Nice Treaty, it took over the responsibilities of the Political Committee as the main CFSP 'support committee' (Nugent, 2004: 427).⁴² The PSC is assisted by a group called *Nicolaidis*. It normally meets twice a week and discusses issues related to the substance and political analysis of foreign policy of the Union, while COREPER II looks into the financial, institutional and third pillar implications of the EU's external activities.

The daily business of CFSP and the relations between the member states are managed by the **European Correspondents** in the Commission and each of the member states. They

⁴¹ COREPER I is composed of Deputy Ambassadors and deals with the first pillar issues.

⁴² The Political Committee has not yet been dissolved, although it was anticipated.

hold meetings on a monthly basis and communicate daily via the CORTESY (COREU Terminal System), which allows for sending encoded messages between the member states' capitals, the Commission and the Council. Finally, the CFSP/ESDP working groups manage various foreign policy issues, often on a technical level.⁴³ Currently, about 10% of all working groups (36 individual groups) deal with external relations (Duke and Vanhoonacker, 2006: 171). There are organised geographically or thematically and bring together junior diplomats based in Brussels in the Permanent Representations to the EU.⁴⁴

The Commission plays a less central role in CFSP issues than when it comes to the first pillar policies. According to the Treaty it is fully associated with the CFSP and maintains its representatives at all levels of discussions. It also shares with the member states a right of initiative.⁴⁵ The role of the European Parliament (EP) is very limited in the second pillar. The Presidency should consult the EP on the “main aspects and the basic choices” of the CFSP and ensure that the Parliament’s views are “duly taken into consideration” (Art. 21 TEU). The EP may also ask questions and make recommendations to the Council. Once a year it holds a debate on the implementation progress of the CFSP. Finally, the European Court of Justice (ECJ) does not have prerogatives in the area of CFSP.

The setting presented above gives a snap-shot of CFSP actors and institutional settings. Nonetheless, as mentioned before, it is a dynamic structure. A Convention on the Future of Europe held in 2003 in Brussels proposed an EU Constitution, including a number of changes with far-reaching consequences for the CFSP. The most essential ones were the creation of the (‘double-hatted’) EU Foreign Minister and European External Action

⁴³ The empirical research for this study was conducted by the author when attending the meetings of the following Council working groups: COWEB (Western Balkans), COTRA (transatlantic relations) and COEST (Eastern Europe).

⁴⁴ However, Working Groups occasionally also meet in the so-called ‘capital formation’ and then member states are represented by the officials that come from the capital.

⁴⁵ For a recent account on the role of the Commission in CFSP see for example: Duke, 2006.

Service (EEAS)⁴⁶. The situation became complicated when two member states, France and the Netherlands, rejected the Constitutional Treaty in national referenda. An agreement was struck among the heads of state and government in 2007 that parts of the text would be ratified in a new Reform Treaty. These include the creation of a High Representative of the Union for Foreign and Security Policy, who would chair the Foreign Affairs Council and at the same time become a Vice-President of the European Commission. Notwithstanding the question of the problems with ratification, the example reflects the earlier argument of ‘moving goalposts’ for candidate states who have to negotiate a novel system, and changes within it, as they happen.

Institutional context 2: Polish foreign policy

The institutional setting of Polish foreign policy was a subject of transformative change after 1989. This has already been mentioned in the previous chapter, which also touched upon the lack of tradition in the making of modern foreign policy. This section focuses primarily on the recent and current institutional arrangements. Nonetheless, it is acknowledged that the structure remains dynamic and due to undergo further reforms.

The main actors involved in contemporary Polish foreign policy are named in the state’s Constitution. In the period under review, two documents must be taken into account: the so-called Small Constitution of 1992 and the current Constitution from 1997. The outline below is based on the latter one, but the differences between the two are part of the systematic change, also related to EU Membership. In 1997, two articles (art. 90 and 91) in Chapter III (Sources of Law) were inserted in the text of the Constitution due to the forthcoming EU accession.⁴⁷ They relate to the delegation of the competences of the state’s organs to an international organisation and the issue of international agreements as part of domestic legal order.

⁴⁶ For more on these two, see the “CFSP Forum” (2004) vol. 2, no. 4 and articles: Sir Brian Crowe, ‘The Significance of the New European Foreign Minister’ and Simon Duke, ‘The European External Action Service: A Diplomatic Service in the Making?’

⁴⁷ The author is grateful to Anneli Albi for clarification of this issue.

According to the latest (1997) Constitution (art. 146) the **Council of Ministers** (*prowadzi*) conducts the foreign policy of Poland. The **Prime Minister** holds the most powerful position within the Council of Ministers, takes part in the meetings with other heads of government (Stemplowski, 2004). The main lines of Polish foreign policy are outlined first in the *exposé* of the new Prime Minister in front of the Parliament and later on an annual basis by the **Minister of Foreign Affairs**.⁴⁸ The **President** is the state's formal representative in foreign relations and, as stated in article 133.3, cooperates with the Prime Minister and appropriate minister in the field of foreign relations. He/she ratifies international agreements with the approval of the Parliament and formally nominates Polish representatives abroad. The **two Chambers of the Polish Parliament** are the *Sejm* (the Lower Chamber) and the *Senat* (the Upper Chamber) and they have certain prerogatives in the foreign policy area, such as the ratification of international agreements or taking the decision to go to war. Both chambers have the European Union Committees on Foreign Affairs, which are consulted on the preparation of European policy of Poland.

The **Ministry of Foreign Affairs** forms a natural centre of every-day foreign policy making. The **Permanent Representation of Poland to the EU** is formally a part of the MFA, and it fulfils the indispensable function of representing the Polish national interest in Brussels. It is regarded as one of the most important Polish diplomatic representations abroad and is commonly called a 'small MFA', as it comprises officials from different ministries, who represent Polish views in Brussels.

Additionally, during the period of Polish association to the EU and in the light of the opening of accession negotiations, another institutional arrangement was made in order to increase the effectiveness of the national coordination of EU policies. In 1996, the **Committee for European Integration (KIE)** was created. The position of the Head of KIE was made equal to that of the foreign minister, both of whom are members of the Council of Ministers. This had an impact on their mutual relations (Borkowski, 1998). According to Polish law, the Minister of Foreign Affairs was given the task to coordinate

⁴⁸ For more, also on the political system and foreign policy, see: Stemplowski, 2001.

other state institutions' activities related to foreign affairs with the exception of the competencies reserved for KIE.⁴⁹ The overall coordination of European policy was delegated to the **Office of the Committee for European Integration (UKIE)**.

Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The Polish MFA has gone through a process of administrative reform in recent years. It was given its *status* in 1997, which was annulled by the new *status* introduced, in 1998 and 2001. The number of departments was increased from 22 in 1997, to 38 in 1998 and then reduced to 23 in 2001. The Department responsible for coordinating European policy and cooperation with the EU, including participation in the CFSP, was created by the *status* of 1997. This was the Department of European Integration, which was changed in 2001 into the Department of the European Union and the Accession Negotiations (DUEiONA). Once Poland joined the EU in 2004, the name was shortened to the Department of the European Union (DUE, *Departament Unii Europejskiej*). It became responsible for relations between Poland and the EU. According to regulations, from 2004⁵⁰ its main functions are:

- to take responsibility for preparing the Polish strategy of active membership in the EU
- to analyse the positions of other member states regarding European integration and formulate conclusions leading to internal or external actions; it also assists Polish representatives in the European Council, GEARC
- to coordinate the preparations of the Polish representatives to COREPER II and Political and Security Committee (PSC)

⁴⁹ Ustawa z dnia 4 września 1997 r. o działach administracji rządowej. (Dz. U. Nr 141, poz. 943, Art. 32.2)

⁵⁰ Zarządzenie nr 1 Ministra Spraw Zagranicznych z dnia 23 stycznia 2004 r. w sprawie zmiany regulaminu organizacyjnego Ministerstwa Spraw Zagranicznych oraz uchylecia niektórych zarządzeń Ministra Spraw Zagranicznych. (Dziennik Urzędowy MSZ, Nr 1, 2004)

- to assist the representative of the MFA at the KIE meetings
- to take responsibility for the Polish position towards the EU enlargement process
- to coordinate the Polish contribution to the discussion over the institutional reform of the EU
- to assist the process of cooperation between the MFA, *Sejm*, *Senat*, NGOs, political parties and local government
- to share responsibility for the introduction into Polish law of the decisions on international sanctions
- to supervise the work of the Polish Representation to the EU and, in co-operation with the Department of Europe, supervises Polish diplomatic representations to the EU member states and EU Associated states
- to analyse and distribute EU documents within the Ministry

In addition the MFA holds a leading role when it comes to Polish participation in CFSP. It coordinates the process of coming to the national position on issues related to CFSP and supports the work of the Political Director and the European Correspondent. It also analyses the developments of CFSP and EU relations with other international organisations and third countries.

Institutional context 3: Policy coordination towards the EU

Before Poland gained the status of an active observer, the MFA was not seriously challenged in its 'gatekeeper' role. But this function was undermined during the

accession negotiations which involved a wide range of ministries and was coordinated not by the MFA, but by UKIE. The coordination system also involved both chambers of Parliament (*Sejm* and *Senat*). As a result, one could observe some internal, intra-governmental rivalries in the processes of European policy coordination. Formulating instructions for the Polish representatives required inter-ministerial cooperation, and thus the role of the MFA started shifting in the direction of the 'boundary-spanner'. Blurring the distinction between the domestic and international environment with regards to the EU, further undermined its 'gatekeeper' function. Such a development was not welcomed by some of the MFA officials and soon the competition with UKIE became a vivid illustration of the struggle to retain its role. On the one hand, the necessity to cooperate with other institutions was acknowledged, but on the other hand, all foreign policy issues-areas were jealously guarded. This section reflects upon the role of the institutions involved and their interaction with the MFA.

In the period preceding accession a special role was fulfilled by the Committee for European Integration (KIE) and its Office (UKIE). The KIE was created in 1996 in order to coordinate Polish policy regarding the EU, preparations for accession, including the adaptation of law and facilitating the administration of EU funds designated for Poland.⁵¹ The Committee included the Head of the Committee (member of the Council of Ministers), the Secretary of the Committee (designated by the Prime Minister) and members (ministers, depending on the issue discussed and no more than three persons appointed by the Prime Minister). From the outset, it was the Prime Minister who headed the Committee. UKIE was created as a continuum after the previous Office for European Integration and Office for Foreign Aid, both created in 1991. It was designed to assist KIE in its statutory tasks.

The prerogatives of those bodies in the area of foreign policy, in practice, were rather limited from the beginning. The role of UKIE was more significant in the very beginning of the negotiations. It was then one of the three major bodies involved, together with Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Negotiation Team, placed initially in the Prime

⁵¹ Ustawa z dnia 8 sierpnia 1996r. o Komitecie Integracji Europejskiej. (Dz. U. z dnia 30 sierpnia 1996r.)

Minister's Chancellery and later in the MFA.⁵² When the team was transferred to the MFA, part of the staff went to UKIE and part to MFA. Interestingly, at one point, the Secretary of KIE was also the Under Secretary of State in the MFA, what some officials called 'a personal union'. However, UKIE was directly responsible to the Prime Minister.

The main task of UKIE was ensuring the coherence of all Polish positions, presented in different EU bodies, especially the Council meetings. It was the leading coordinating instructions for COREPER I. The Deputy Ambassador in the Polish Representation, attending COREPER I, is a former Director of Department in UKIE. UKIE is also formally responsible for implementing the outcome of negotiations. This included for example changes in law or adapting the administration, for example the introduction of a special administrative system regarding sanctions. As and when the process is delayed, UKIE, occasionally reminds the MFA of this obligation. As claimed by some officials involved in the process, UKIE also tried to influence the foreign policy field (e.g. when drafting the National Plan of Integration), but apparently unsuccessfully.⁵³

In spite of the fact that the role of UKIE was bound to change in 2004, after Poland joined the EU, the government decided to keep the existing institutional arrangement and to avoid any 'drastic' changes. The system of preparing instructions for Polish representatives to the EU that was used in the 'active observer' period was maintained after accession. There were still some overlaps and even informal competition between UKIE and the MFA, such as in the case of instructions for COREPER II, mentioned above.

When analysing relations between the UKIE and other ministries, it becomes clear that the area of foreign policy is a special case within the coordination mechanism of European policies. It has traditionally been a *domaine réservé* of the MFA. Formally, the work of all Council bodies has been followed by UKIE. As it prepares the work of the European Committee of the Council of Ministers regarding the merit of the Polish

⁵² Interview (no. 4)

⁵³ Interview (no.2)

positions, all documents pass through its offices. UKIE is formally responsible for the meetings of all the Working Groups and is a coordinating institution in each case, so the MFA does not formally coordinate the Working Groups under COREPER II, but is a leading ministry. Therefore, it was claimed by UKIE officials that they should be at least consulted regarding the instructions. However, it was reported in the interviews conducted in UKIE that the MFA was reluctant to involve any third party in the development of its instructions.⁵⁴ Hence, cooperation with the MFA has been difficult at times. The process of preparing instructions for COREPER II and its working groups is shown in annex 4 at the end of the thesis. UKIE officials argued that in the context of European policy making, foreign policy should be treated equally to all other policy fields.⁵⁵

Another body, created in order to facilitate Polish-EU relations was the European Committee of the Council of Ministers (KERM). It started its activities in April 2004, just before the EU accession. It holds its meetings twice a week, on Tuesdays and Thursdays. It has rights of the Council of Ministers in the field of European issues and thus its decisions, with some small exceptions, do not have to be further adopted by the Council of Ministers. In practice, it is a revival of the Preparatory Team of KIE, the so-called 'small KIE', that functioned prior to the accession. The Foreign Minister became the first chair of KERM, and the secretary of KIE became his deputy. Later, this body was chaired by the Prime Minister. Nonetheless, KIE remained for the time being, coexistent with KERM, as the changes in the structure would require changes in the law. As the Prime Minister heads the KIE, it was argued that a more flexible body, like KERM, would be better prepared to meet more often and prepare the instructions for Polish representatives in COREPER's.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Interview (no. 12)

⁵⁵ Interview (no. 12). Also, concerning GAERC, UKIE has been a leading institution regarding all points, except the external relations, which belongs to the MFA. This is another example of blurred responsibilities.

⁵⁶ An interview by the Polish Press Agency (PAP) with Minister Jarosław Pietras, Secretary of State in UKIE, 10 May, 2004; (<http://www2.ukie.gov.pl/WWW.news.nsf/0/CCD0D84A79AA3C7DC1256E90002D0CA6?Open;05.10.2004>)

The changes in the overall coordination mechanisms after the accession have been rather slow and aimed at adapting the existing institutional settings, rather than creating a whole new system. This can be observed in the example of UKIE. Its Secretary expressed the view that all changes should be introduced gradually, when there is a direct need of them and when Poland has already gained some experience from membership of the EU. Therefore, UKIE adapted few new roles after the accession. Similarly, KIE became an almost obsolete formation (meeting approximately twice a year), considering the creation of KERM and the fact that the European issues were raised during the meeting of the Council of Ministers, instead of KIE. Nonetheless, dissolving KIE would mean that UKIE would also have to change/be dissolved, which would be a very sensitive political decision to take.⁵⁷

The Europeanisation of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs

From the very beginning, when CFSP first started influencing a large number of ministerial departments, it met a certain level of resistance, if not opposition, on the part of the MFA officials. As one diplomat recalls:

“When the CFSP came into the MFA and began to appear on the agenda of different departments and the one of the minister, from the very beginning it faced great mental barriers. This process is still taking place. (...) Initially, it was a kind of opposition reflex towards European policy, resulting from some kind of

⁵⁷ The cross-cutting and overlapping competences of different institutional bodies involved are a source of constant criticism and a reason for a planned long-due reform. The origins of such a design seem to be technical (searching for a way to deal with a very complex exercise of entry negotiations and managing the compliance with the conditions), rather than political. At the time when UKIE was created in 1996, the president as well as the government were left-oriented and related to the SLD (Democratic Left Alliance). Also the idea to concentrate the power by the core executive and the Prime Minister can be explained by the need of an effective overall coordination and outlook on the conduct of the negotiations, but also the need for swift transposition of the *acquis communitaire*, including the possibility to provide the incentives to the ministries for timely transposition (for more on this see: Zubek, 2005). The political changes in Poland, related to parliamentary elections in 1997 (won by the right-wing AWS) and in 2001 (won by the left-wing SLD) did not affect the design of the system *per se*. It was rather personal decisions on for example chairs of KIE that were decisive to whether this body was able to fully exercise its authority.

national pride. CFSP was treated as something alien with which Brussels was confronting our policy and attempting to exert influence on it”.⁵⁸

The younger generation was reported to have been generally more pro-European and open for change than older officials⁵⁹. This may be considered as a paradox, bearing in mind the fact that joining the EU remained the priority of Polish foreign policy since the collapse of communism in 1989.⁶⁰

As the Polish Permanent Representative to the EU pointed out, EU requirements produced a “cultural shock” in Polish public administration, particularly in the following three areas: the decision-making process, the professionalism and the stability of the civil service, and the need for a high standard of technical and information systems (Grela, 2003: 43). There was also an ‘us-them’ paradigm which shaped thinking about the EU, which was another challenge faced by those seeking change (Nowina-Konopka, 2003: 31). Some also pointed to the shortcomings of Polish institutions that created foreign policy. These included rivalry, doubling up of functions, faulty cooperation, lack of any analysis of failures (Stemplowski, 2001: 18), and reluctance to share information with others. Needless to say, change was not smooth.

Changes in procedures and offices

The initial process (phase I) of the institutional adaptation to CFSP started when Poland signed the Association Agreements in 1994 and lasted until April 2003, when it gained the status of an active observer to the EU. The speed of change increased with the approaching deadlines of some unavoidable adjustments. The EU applied the policy of conditionality to Poland, as it did with all the other candidates. The main logic behind it was “a bargaining strategy of reinforcement by reward, under which the EU provides external incentives for a target government to comply with its conditions” (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier, 2004: 662). In practice, there were few opportunities

⁵⁸ Interview (no. 2)

⁵⁹ This may be related to the process of recruitment to DUE, described later.

⁶⁰ Interview (no. 2)

for socialisation. The meetings were held occasionally and usually their aim was to negotiate the terms of the Polish accession to the EU. Therefore, the main mechanism behind change was conditionality, whereas the type of change observed was mainly organisational and regulative. It involved the creation of new posts, introducing new coordination mechanisms and some technical improvements.

Structural dialogue – first experience with CFSP

The first changes observable in the Polish administration are related to the structural and political dialogue and the subsequent negotiations. The decision to start a structured relationship between the EU and the EECs was taken during the Copenhagen Summit in June 1993 (for more see: Dunay et al, 1997: 319). As part of the dialogue, meetings were held at the level of Ministers, Political Directors and European Correspondents with the Associated European Correspondents (AECos). General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC) would invite the Foreign Ministers of Associated States to its meetings and the agenda was prepared by the Presidency. Similarly, the Political Committee arranged meetings with the Political Directors. Within the Polish Ministry the role of Political Director as understood in the EU did not exist. Hence, the MFA's officials were repeatedly faced with a dilemma regarding who should attend the meetings. The delegates were usually chosen according to the agenda and the so-called coordinating director was delegated to the forum.⁶¹

During the summer of 1994, the AECos from CEECs were nominated (Dunay et al, 1997: 325), including a Polish diplomat. Their meetings with their EU counterparts would take place at least twice during each Presidency. The agenda was sent out in advance, so there was time to prepare instructions. A former Polish AEC, who attended these gatherings, recalls that the difference between the EU insiders and the candidates was very apparent, even though the Presidency was making an effort to bridge this gap. The original 15 EC member state officials knew each other in most cases also privately. According to the

⁶¹ Interview (no. 22)

diplomat, they also did not seem very interested in engaging in any real discussion and the formula of the political dialogue simply “did not work”.⁶²

The Polish representatives were also invited once during the term of each Presidency to participate in the meetings of the Working Groups. However, usually the EU was represented solely by the Troika with the officials from the Secretariat General of the Council and the Commission (Dunay et al, 1997: 326). In practice, most of these meetings, especially at the beginning of the structural dialogue, were merely “presenting monologues on both sides without actually reacting to each other’s positions” (Dunay et al, 1997: 326). Hence, the Polish side was not very satisfied with the meetings held in the framework of the structural dialogue within the Association Committee and Association Council. Apparently, the time was very limited and some Polish delegates were wondering “whether their reports and statements (...) have been taken into consideration or even looked at again” (Czubinski 2000b: 12).

One of the consequences of the political dialogue was that the candidates were given more possibilities to align with some of the CFSP declarations that had been agreed earlier by the EU-15. Initially, there was no possibility to participate generally in common positions, which in 1997 was only allowed on a case-by-case basis (Dunay et al, 1997: 332). Formally, such possibilities were given to the associated states earlier, when the Europe Agreements came into force in 1994, together with the beginning of the structured dialogue. The EU, nonetheless, did not always give the CEECs the chance to participate in the above mentioned mechanisms.

In practical terms, the political dialogue meant that the ACN (Associated Countries Network), a system of electronic communication with the Council of the EU, was set up in the MFA in 1999. Through this system, the Council Secretariat General sent questions to the Accession States about whether they wished to align with a certain EU positions/declarations/actions. The frequency varied from a few daily to just one question every couple of days. The query was followed by consultations, initially just within the

⁶² Interview (no. 22)

MFA, but later also with other ministries or government agencies in order to confirm whether Poland would align or not.

The time given for alignment was usually very limited. It appears that at first not all the details of the declarations were communicated to Warsaw, just the topic and the intention of issuing it (Czubinski, 2000a). Once it had been agreed upon by the EU 15, Poland would receive the final text, however, with little time for a final decision, usually just 24 hours (Dunay et al, 1997: 333). As a result, some Polish diplomats felt that the EU was not treating them seriously, given such a brief time for an answer. The Polish-EU relationship was thus perceived by some as highly asymmetrical. A lot of complaints appeared, not merely from DUE and the European Correspondent, but from other consulted departments. This resulted in continuous conflict between those bodies.⁶³ Additionally, only the most important issues for the country received full attention, as there was often neither the time nor effective procedures to deal with all of the documents. The distribution of documents was, for example, initially done physically by officials running around the ministerial building.⁶⁴ Nonetheless, the alignment exercise served mainly to force the Accession States to adjust their coordination systems to work at short notice.

The accession negotiations

The accession negotiations were officially opened on 31 March 1998. The institutional preparations started in Poland a little bit earlier. On 4 February 1998, Jan Kulakowski, the former Polish Ambassador to the EC, was nominated as the Secretary of State in the Prime Minister's Chancellery. His main task was to prepare and lead the negotiation exercise. On 24 March 1998, his office was officially named the Government Plenipotentiary for Polish Accession Negotiations (*Pełnomocnik Rządu do spraw negocjacji o członkostwo Rzeczypospolitej w Unii Europejskiej*), also commonly known as

⁶³ Interview (no. 2)

⁶⁴ Interview (no. 10)

the Chief Negotiator. Three days later, the Negotiation Team was officially established.⁶⁵ It was composed of the Representative and ministers or deputy ministers from several ministries, including the MFA, the Polish Permanent Representative to the EU, the Head of the Government Centre for Strategic Studies, the government representative on family issues, the representative of the Head of the Office for the protection of Competition and Consumers (*Urząd Ochrony Konkurencji i Konsumentów*) and the Secretary. Officially it was placed in the Chancellery of the Prime Minister, but assistance also came from UKIE and MFA (Pietras, 1999).

Due to the internal political situation and competition, the negotiations with the EU were led and coordinated by the Representatives of the Government and characterised by the plurality of institutions involved. The main actors were: the Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister, the Head of UKIE and the Chief Negotiator (Zaborowski 2004: 151). The institutional setting was rather cumbersome as a result. Formally, the political leadership was held by the Prime Minister, who was also then the Head of KIE (Committee for European Integration). The Minister of Foreign Affairs acted as the Head of the Polish delegation to the accession negotiations and the Deputy Head function was fulfilled by the Chief Negotiator. In practice, this led to an unclear division of responsibilities as well as a degree of overlap between the Head of UKIE and the Chief Negotiator. At a later stage, political disparities appeared between the Head of UKIE and the Foreign Minister.

The opening of negotiations was closely followed by a screening phase, where compatibility of national law with EU law was checked. This was also done for the CFSP chapter and finalised before the end of 1998. Polish officials received the *political acquis*, including common positions and joint actions and had to formulate a Polish stance on the issues that implied some internal legal changes. This had to be done for example in the case of the ban on flights over Serbia or the adoption of sanctions. Generally, however, screening in the area of CFSP was conducted without any major obstacles and CFSP

⁶⁵ Rozporządzenie Rady Ministrów z dnia 24 marca 1998 r. w sprawie ustanowienia Pełnomocnika Rządu do Spraw Negocjacji o Członkostwo Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej w Unii Europejskiej, 'Dziennik Ustaw RP', Warsaw 26 March 1998; Zarządzenie Prezesa Rady Ministrów z dnia 27 marca 1998 r. w sprawie Zespołu Negocjacyjnego w Sprawie negocjacji o Członkostwo Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej w Unii Europejskiej, Kancelaria Rady Ministrów, P-121-19-98.

issues were among the first opening statements (negotiation positions) presented by the Polish Negotiation Team in June 1998. They were later accepted by the government in August 1998.⁶⁶ Subsequently, it became a basis for negotiation round opened with the EU in November of the same year.

As recalled by one of the officials involved, the negotiation was “not a typical one”, being largely uncontroversial and different to the ones conducted in relation to other chapters.⁶⁷ Any legal issues were already dealt with during the earlier screening phase. Poland was about to join NATO and hence it stressed the complementarity of its own foreign policy with that of NATO and the EU. It also continued to “emphasise the common values and aims” it shared with the EU member states.⁶⁸ Apparently, the discussion did not go into much detail. Poland did not request any transition periods in the area of CFSP and it was subsequently categorised to be among the areas that needed further clarifications. The chapter was not closed during the subsequent negotiation rounds and Poland expressed its discontent regarding this fact, during the IGC in Luxemburg on 22 June 1999 and later in December the same year.⁶⁹ Finally, the negotiations on the CFSP chapter were provisionally closed on 6 April 2000.

As part of the preparations for EU accession, in May 1999, the Polish government accepted the National Program of Preparations for EU Membership.⁷⁰ In the very short part devoted to CFSP, the authors emphasised the necessity to ensure the effective working of these bodies in the MFA - those who dealt directly with the Council, Polish Permanent Representation to the EU and other member states. Therefore, the Program recommended that the number of experts dealing with the CFSP issues in the ministry should be increased, sophisticated computer equipment should be introduced, as well as

⁶⁶ “Poland’s negotiation position in the area of Common Foreign and Security Policy” in: Poland’s Position Papers for the Accession Negotiations with the European Union, Warsaw: Chancellery of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Poland and Government Plenipotentiary for Poland’s Accession Negotiations to the European Union, June 2000

⁶⁷ Interview (no. 22)

⁶⁸ As one involved Polish diplomat claimed, “it was hard to expect the states that were about to join NATO would have a different vision on the EU foreign policy.” Interview no. 22.

⁶⁹ <http://www.polonya.org.tr/negotiations.htm> 31.09.05

⁷⁰ *Narodowy Program Przygotowania do Członkostwa w Unii Europejskiej*, Warsaw, 4 May 1999

extended staff training. The parliamentary comments to the document indicated that the changes in the MFA were to be introduced by the end of 1999.⁷¹

A Secretariat of the EU-Poland Association Council was established in the Polish Permanent Representation to the EU in 2000. Its main function was to prepare the sessions of the Association Council. At the same time, the position of Liaison Officer responsible for the CFSP issues was established and in practice filled by the Director of the Political Department. At that time, there were 5 officials employed in the Political Department,⁷² among the 29 officials in total, divided into 6 departments.⁷³ In June 2001, the position of the Representative to the PSC was created and in March 2001, a Polish representative to the EU Military Committee and the Liaison Officer to the EU Military Staff was established.⁷⁴

As the negotiations were coming to an end, the negotiation team was replaced by the Department of the European Union (DUE). The new department was to introduce the CFSP into the work of the whole of the MFA. As a few DUE officials recall, they soon became one of the least liked teams in the whole institution.⁷⁵ Their internal position within the MFA meant that they remained in direct contact not only with experts, but also with the directors from whom they continuously demanded contributions. This was a novelty in a highly hierarchical institutional design. Hence, intra-departmental tensions quickly emerged, as some in the MFA considered DUE as becoming too powerful.⁷⁶

The situation was complicated further by the fact that the department consisted of relatively young officials,⁷⁷ which left some of their older colleagues feeling

⁷¹ *Opinie na temat Narodowego Programu Przygotowania Polski do Członkostwa w Unii Europejskiej*, Druk Sejmowy nr 1194, <http://biurose.sejm.gov.pl/teksty/r-161.htm>

⁷² Regulamin Organizacyjny Przedstawicielstwa RP przy Wspólnotach Europejskich w Brukseli, Brussels, 11.09.2000

⁷³ Those were: Political Department, Economic-Trade Department, Agriculture Department, Social Policy Department, Science and Environment Protection Department, Administrative Department

⁷⁴ Regulamin Organizacyjny Przedstawicielstwa RP przy Wspólnotach Europejskich w Brukseli

⁷⁵ Interviews (no. 2, 6, 7)

⁷⁶ Interview (no. 7)

⁷⁷ Interview (no. 4, 7, 10)

uncomfortable.⁷⁸ As one of the younger diplomats said: “the generation gap seems to be impossible to close”.⁷⁹ Not only were the higher-ranking officials rushed by younger diplomats, but they had to start considering the EU as an important factor, influencing the whole of national foreign policy. There were several reasons why the average age of DUE officials was, and still is, lower than in other departments.⁸⁰ Firstly, the work required a constant willingness to learn and to adapt working habits to the realities of European foreign policy-making. Young officials do not usually have deep-rooted habits that might be difficult to change afterwards. Secondly, the job required long and unpredictable working hours, especially during the negotiations and active observer period, when the system of coordination was first put into practice. Younger officials were also familiar with the internet and new technological solutions, applicable to their work. In effect, younger candidates were preferred by the DUE.⁸¹

In November 2002, the rules of cooperation between the Council, COREPER and the Accession States in the transition period⁸² were accepted. Until signing the Accession Treaty, Poland was included in the information procedure and received the documents from the European Commission, the Council Presidency (information regarding draft legislation and documents in the CFSP area, JHA and the Treaty on the EU) and the Council Secretariat General (documents of COREPER, the Council and Working Groups’ meetings). Poland was also involved in the consultation procedure that was applied in case the documents classified as common orientations or common guidelines.⁸³

⁷⁸ Interviews (no. 2, 6)

⁷⁹ Interview (no. 6)

⁸⁰ Interview (no. 9)

⁸¹ Interview (no. 9)

⁸² The transition period is understood as a period of time between the formal closure of negotiations and the moment the Accession Treaty comes into force.

⁸³ *System koordynacji polityki europejskiej w okresie poprzedzającym członkostwo Polski w UE*, Dokument przyjęty 28 lutego 2003 r. przez Zespół Przygotowawczy Komitetu Integracji Europejskiej oraz przez Radę Ministrów 4 marca 2003 r.

Becoming an active observer

After the signing of the Treaty of Accession on the 16 April 2003, Poland obtained the status of an active observer. This was arguably the turning point in the process of the Europeanisation of Polish foreign policy, having more significance for day-to-day practices than the formal accession on the 1st of May the following year.

Becoming an active observer meant that Poland was allowed to take part in the meetings related to the CFSP and the ESDP, such as the ones in the Council Working Groups, COREPER II, PSC or GAERC. The process of elite socialisation began here and facilitated change at the national level. Brussels also became an important source of information concerning the way the policy was made in the EU on the one hand, and on international affairs throughout the world on the other.⁸⁴ Participation in the meetings that dealt with a wide range of issues meant that the officials “had to deal with the problems that otherwise we might never have been interested in”.⁸⁵ Still, initially the Polish representatives rarely spoke, unless the matters concerned vital Polish national interests.⁸⁶ As a reflection of the situation in the MFA, they were often not given any instructions and even if they took the floor, their impression was that “unfortunately no-one really took it seriously into account”.⁸⁷ As one of the representatives recalls, he started asking questions of his counterparts on his own initiative and the answers were later put in a report and fed back to the capital.⁸⁸

Frequent participation in the Working Groups did not take place before the summer of 2003, when the Permanent Representation’s personnel tripled. The majority of the newcomers, those to be involved in CFSP-related work, came from the MFA. Even the officials involved in the ESDP came from the MFA’s Department of Security Policy, rather than from the Ministry of National Defence. The Representation was given its

⁸⁴ Interview (no. 1)

⁸⁵ Interview (no. 8, 1, 6)

⁸⁶ Like preparing the draft of the Transatlantic Declaration in December 2003.

⁸⁷ Interview (no. 1)

⁸⁸ Interview (no. 2)

current name in April 2004.⁸⁹ The current participation of its officials in the CFSP is shown in annex 2.

As one diplomat claims, after consultations with other Permanent Representations of the old member states, individuals were quickly made aware of the necessity to engage more staff in Brussels as well as in Warsaw.⁹⁰ The capital did not know the particular needs of the Representation, thus the Permanent Representative and the PSC Ambassador placed a request for additional personnel that was almost immediately met. The majority of staff gained experience in the MFA during the negotiation phase. In December 2004, the Departments of External Relations and ESDP were established.⁹¹ Since then, the Representation has had two sections involved in CFSP duties: the External Relations Section and the ESDP Section. They have been organised along geographical lines and in a few cases according to dossier issues. The first one consists of seven officials, the latter of six. In total, there were 17 Departments within the Representation. This also resulted in staff problems in the MFA itself, since it was now faced with the outflow of more experienced officials to Brussels.

In 2003, the Polish Representation to the EU adapted the rhythm of its day-to-day practices to the work of the EU. A number of preparatory meetings were introduced. The Permanent Representative, his/her deputy and the Representative to the PSC meet at least twice a week, on Mondays and Thursdays. Every Monday at 9:30 there are meetings gathering the Permanent Representative, his/her Deputy, *Antici*, Representative to the PSC, *Martens*, *Nicolaidis*, the Law Counsellor, a Press Officer and Heads of Departments and Units. The preparatory meetings for the COREPER II, take place every Tuesday at 6 o'clock p.m. and for the COREPER I and PSC usually every Tuesday and Thursday.⁹²

⁸⁹ Before, it was known as the Polish Representation to the European Communities based in Brussels. *Decyzja nr 14 Ministra Spraw Zagranicznych z dnia 29 kwietnia 2004 r w sprawie przekształcenia Przedstawicielstwa Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej przy Wspólnotach Europejskich, z siedzibą w Brukseli w Stale Przedstawicielstwo Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej przy Unii Europejskiej (Dziennik Urzędowy Ministra Spraw Zagranicznych nr 4, 2004)*

⁹⁰ Interview (no. 3)

⁹¹ Wewnętrzny Regulamin Stałego Przedstawicielstwa RP przy EU w Brukseli, 8 December 2004

⁹² Zarządzenie nr 4/2003, Stale Przedstawicielstwo RP przy UE, Brussels

The Head of Representation, the Permanent Representative to the EU would take part in the meetings of COREPER II. He would be assisted in this task by a member of the *Antici* group, who is responsible for the organisational matters of COREPER II. There is also a position of Deputy *Antici* in the Polish Representation, filled by a junior diplomat. His/her responsibilities in this function remain rather unclear with the exception of the fact that he/she sits in COREPER II, if either the Ambassador or the *Antici* could not be present. In the Political and Security Committee (PSC) Poland is represented by another Ambassador, assisted in this task by so-called *Nicolaidis*. The deputy Representative to PSC is the Head of the External Relations Section of the Permanent Representation.

The MFA was also affected from the very first day of the active observer period, when it gained full access to the COREU Terminal System (CORTEASY). 16 April 2003 is still remembered by the diplomats as the most memorable day with regard to Polish participation in the CFSP. Some of them experienced true 'shock' in Warsaw, as the number of incoming COREU's amounted to a hundred.⁹³ Prior to this they had only received the official positions with the corresponding question of whether they wished to align or not. That day some of them understood what "child's play it was before to assign all CFSP related issues to just one person".⁹⁴ When Poland became an active observer there were already three officials dealing solely with the CFSP dossier and more dealing with relations with the EU. They recollected "an incredible speed of action" and generally describe this phase as a difficult time, when they were overburdened with work.⁹⁵ An example might be the fact that hundreds of COREU's had to be printed out (no safe electronic network was available) and distributed in hard copy to other interested institutions. This took precious time and caused delays, sometimes of up to two days.⁹⁶ As a result, the answers would reach DUE when it was too late to send any response to Brussels. In sum, electronic mailing systems were introduced to officials that had never used them before, indeed, the Polish administration was not used to the electronic

⁹³ Interviews (no. 2, 10)

⁹⁴ Interview (no. 2)

⁹⁵ Interview (no. 11)

⁹⁶ Interviews (no. 10, 6)

exchange of documents as such.⁹⁷ As one diplomat put it, “CFSP made people learn how to use Microsoft Outlook”.⁹⁸

Another problem concerned the lack of staff, experts and finances. This lack meant that Polish representatives were not able to attend all Working Group meetings.⁹⁹ It was mostly the staff from the Polish Permanent Representation and DUE that were interested in attending the meetings, but territorial and functional departments only later acknowledged the necessity of including the EU in everyday work. Also, DUE itself faced a problem of a lack of experts, as most of the staff that gained experience during the negotiations had left for the Permanent Representation in Brussels or the other EU institutions. This meant that there was a lack of experts that could understand and would be able to explain the decision-making system in the EU, and misunderstandings followed between DUE and other departments. For example, as recalled by one official involved, it took time before other departments understood that the same points appeared on the agenda of the Working Groups and later on the one of COREPER, and it was not a mistake on the part of DUE because responses were required in both fora.¹⁰⁰

Another change within the ministry, similar to what happened in the Representation, was adjusting to the rhythm of work of the EU.¹⁰¹ This meant following the meetings of the various EU bodies, preparing instructions and coordinating Polish positions. Such a situation intensified after joining the EU in 2004. In the initial phase of preparing instructions, it was mostly the territorial or functional departments of the MFA that were responsible for this task. However, there were cases where for months nothing was done on their part. In this case, DUE decided to conduct the preparations, even though nothing was changed in the formal regulation of this matter. There was therefore an urgent need to clearly describe the division of tasks between DUE and the other departments. Meanwhile, either accidentally or by design, DUE was interfering with the responsibilities of other departments, which caused the latter to raise objections.

⁹⁷ Interviews (no. 9, 10)

⁹⁸ Interview (no. 2).

⁹⁹ Interviews (no. 2, 6)

¹⁰⁰ Interview (no. 7)

¹⁰¹ Interview (no. 5)

An interesting innovation in staff recruitment to the Polish diplomatic service was introduced in 2002-2003. The MFA opened the Diplomatic Academy, whose graduates were later employed in the MFA. The first ones started working in 2003 and a large number dealt with EU matters. Apart from the theoretical knowledge gained in the Academy, they also gained experience doing internships in various Polish representations abroad, including the Permanent Representation to the EU. As one of them recalls, it proved a valuable experience for the future work in DUE,¹⁰² especially when preparing instructions and understanding the 'way-of-doing-things' in Brussels. A proposal has been put on the table to introduce at least two-week *stages* for officials, to be carried out in the Permanent Representation in Brussels, as well as training on EU related issues for all diplomats leaving to take a post in any of the Embassies. This is a result of a rising awareness that the CFSP was a vital part of Polish foreign policy as a whole and thus all diplomats should gain some basic understanding of it.

An interesting aspect of the outflow of people to Brussels was emphasised by one of the officials in the MFA, who claimed that the ministry was at risk of losing new and talented people who had learnt the new rules and principles in Brussels. Then they would usually notice the shortcomings of the organisation they worked for at home and most probably leave to work for the European institutions.¹⁰³

Alignment with EU foreign policy

In the observer period, Poland was often asked by the EU-15 to align with its declarations on foreign policy. An official directly responsible for coordinating the process of alignment with the EU policies in the MFA was the European Correspondent. Her/his position differed greatly from the position of his/her counterparts in the member states. It was limited to passing the question sent by the Secretariat General of the Council to the MFA (initially by fax), to the leading and cooperating departments. He/she would then be

¹⁰² Interview (no. 6)

¹⁰³ Interview (no. 30).

responsible for delivering a formal answer to the Council Secretariat. Unlike in the member states, he/she did not hold permanent access to the minister and was not assigned the task of coordination of the whole CFSP dossier. This was reflected in the fact that the Correspondent was initially just at desk officer level whereas later she/he held the position of the Department's Deputy Director.

The personal memories of a former European Correspondent point to the fact that the role required constant demands for input from other officials, often under very strict and short time constraints. The person in this position would soon become very easily recognisable in the ministry. The job required working at various levels, involving other ministries that needed to be consulted, obtaining acceptance from the directors of departments and, in the case of sensitive political issues (such as embargos, sanctions etc.), also meeting with the minister. As one official recalled, there was not much understanding at that time (1998 onwards) on the side of other MFA departments that being a candidate for the EU membership, "Poland should do everything to show the EU and its member states that we were credible, we cared and we were going in the same direction as them".¹⁰⁴ To improve this situation, attempts were made to explain the CFSP to other officials, meetings were organised in DUE and several briefings, sent out within the MFA, attempted to clarify the importance of CFSP.

The member states from the EU-15 offered the Polish European Correspondent some possibilities of practice-oriented training. For example, she was invited in 2000 to visit the FCO in the UK for a week, in the period preceding the General Affairs Council (GAC).¹⁰⁵ This was mainly aimed at sharing the experiences of preparations to GAC, and generally at getting acquainted with the British coordination mechanisms.

During the whole of the period preceding Polish EU Membership, Poland refused to align with the EU positions a total of 16 times. This number seems insignificant, considering the high number of declarations issued by the EU. However, the invitations were sent on

¹⁰⁴ Interview (no. 22)

¹⁰⁵ Interview (no. 22)

a case-by-case basis and it is a challenging task to trace the logic behind choosing the documents that the CEECs were asked to align with.¹⁰⁶ Procedural difficulties notwithstanding, the process of alignment gave rise to political debates, often at a high political level, involving the minister of foreign affairs or even the Council of Ministers. The most important cases were those concerning sanctions against Zimbabwe (18.3.2002), the visa-ban list on Belarusian officials (10.7.1998) and sanctions against Malaysia (19.7.2002). According to an official involved, even in the cases where Poland eventually aligned herself with the EU position, the decision to do so was sometimes extensively debated. One of them related to transatlantic relations and involved aligning with the EU declaration condemning the death penalty in the US. Poland was just about to enter NATO and the minister himself was engaged in deciding how to deal with such a politically sensitive issue.¹⁰⁷ Eventually, it was decided that Poland would align with the document.

In the case of Malaysia, as claimed by the official involved¹⁰⁸ and other press sources, the query regarding alignment arrived in Warsaw at the very moment when Polish government officials were paying an official visit to Malaysia. During the stay, a large arms contract was to be signed. In such circumstances, Polish decision-makers decided not to align with the EU Presidency Statement on Malaysia,¹⁰⁹ driven by its own national interests. The reason for issuing the statement was upholding the verdict against the former Prime Minister of Malaysia and EU's concerns regarding the fairness of the trial. This particular issue was raised by the EU Presidency in six declarations in the period between 1998 and 2003. The CEECs were not invited to align themselves with the initial one (2.10 1998) and the third one (14.4.1999). This shows that the process of asking the CEECs to align did not follow any straightforward logic and consistency. Nonetheless, of other 4 cases, Poland joined 3 times (27.11 1998, 10 .8. 2000, 7.5.2003) and refused once

¹⁰⁶ As noted by Dunay at al. (1997: 333), the CEEs were for example invited to join the two Declarations on the trial of the opposition leader in Nigeria, but left out in relation to the declaration condemning his execution. Similarly, they were not asked to join all positions regarding the same issue of a trial and a verdict on the former Prime Minister of Malaysia.

¹⁰⁷ Interview (no. 22)

¹⁰⁸ Interview (no. 2)

¹⁰⁹ Interview (no. 2)

(19.7.2002). The conclusion is that it was not the policy divergence as much as particular interest of the moment that prevented Poland from joining all the statements.

Also in other cases, it is difficult to understand why Poland, as the only state among the CEEC's, took the decision not to join the Presidency Statement regarding violence before the elections in the Philippines (4.10.2001). Prior to that declaration and afterwards, it did align itself with statements in a similar tone, e.g. on the execution of Philippine citizens (9.2.1999) or moratorium on executions by President Estrada (3.4.2000). The study of the calendar of non-alignment suggests that in one or two such cases the alignment was caused simply by national holidays, for example held on 1 and 3 May, when none of responsible staff was at work in the MFA.

In the case of Belarus, which will be discussed in more detail in the chapters to follow, Poland viewed its policy differently from the EU-15. On the 10 .7.1998, it failed to align with the objectives of the Common Position issued a day before, introducing restrictive measures on Belarusian officials. As recalled by the Polish Associated European Correspondent at that time, Poland did not want to risk any unpleasant consequences from the Belarusian officials that might affect the large Polish minority there. On the other hand, it was believed by the decision makers that alignment would mean the *de facto* isolation of Belarus, which Poland wanted to avoid. Still, a closer look at the numerous declarations that were a subject of CEECs alignment regarding Belarus, reveals that Poland joined all documents but the one mentioned, calling for democratic changes and condemning certain governmental actions.

A direct result of the political dialogue and alignment procedure was a broadening of the territorial interest of the MFA. It was made to consider issues and prepare positions regarding the regions that it was not so strongly involved in before, such as Latin America. This was later strengthened after joining the EU and with attendance at the geographical Council Working Groups.

Post-accession: first experiences with EU membership

EU accession provoked discussion about the future institutional arrangements regarding the coordination of Polish positions and working inside the EU more generally. This also concerned the future of the MFA. There were different changes proposed, including merging the DUE with the Department of Europe. In the end, none of the changes took place as a consequence of accession. The organisational structure of the DUE is shown in annex 3 at the end of this thesis. However, with time, there was a shift in responsibilities from DUE to the territorial and functional departments. Unlike the practice prior to accession and just afterwards, the instructions for the relevant Working Groups are now formulated in those departments and in many cases their representatives attend the meetings in Brussels. Very often, they became the officials responsible for the relations with the EU in the relevant departments.

The major responsibility of the DUE is now to make sure that the instructions are coherent with those presented in other EU bodies. If a conflict between ministries involved in preparing the instructions arises, it is resolved by the Political Director. The coordination of the Polish position lies within the prerogative of the MFA, also for the ESDP Department of the Representation to the EU, as the majority of the officials come not from Ministry of National Defence, but from the Department of National Security in the Foreign Ministry. The Representatives in Brussels, at the level of Council Working Groups, remain in contact with their relevant desk officers from the DUE. The desk officers are in touch also with the territorial departments, who assist them with their knowledge of the region and the Working Group concerns.

Two years after accession, the MFA still experienced certain problems with adapting to the CFSP. Firstly, there remained technical problems with communication. The MFA still did not have a secure system of sending electronic mail. However, the circulation of documents was improved by introducing the COORDINATION system. It has also become common practice that the MFA received documents from its experts in Brussels even earlier than from the system. The representatives had already learnt how and where

to get access to such materials.¹¹⁰ The European System of Exchange of Documents – Poland (EWDP) was being introduced and was designed to encompass instructions from all Working Groups. Nevertheless, it is considered by some as a rather useless tool, not making their work any easier.

It is worth mentioning that some horizontal transfer of knowledge of know-how took place. Several older member states, such as the UK, the Netherlands, Denmark and France, offered to share their experiences in coordinating European policy and in adjusting the Foreign Ministries to working within the Union. Such courses were often sponsored by the EU, for example by the PHARE programme. In Poland, UKIE was responsible for the training programmes. A couple of officials from the DUE were hosted in 2005 by the UK and Austria to assist and learn from the experiences of holding the presidency.

The officials also discovered the importance of informal discussion with other representatives prior to the meetings, often within so-called ‘like-minded groups’. Finally, led by the example of other member states, the officials started to consult the embassies and missions on the issues discussed in the Working Groups prior to the meetings. It turned out to be a very rewarding exercise, as the responses were in most cases helpful and accurate.¹¹¹ The embassies were consulted on certain EU issues relating to the countries they are based in. The requests for consultations come from various ministries, first to the MFA, which then forwards them to the missions. The diplomats posted to various countries in the world have thus become more involved in EU issues. Because of that, the MFA began organising special courses on the EU for officials leaving for posts abroad. In theory, there are now diplomats responsible for each formation of the Council in each mission, so the communication is expected to become faster and more efficient.

¹¹⁰ Interview (no. 9)

¹¹¹ Interview (no. 8)

Nonetheless, there were still several problems with observable adjustment. Other member states were sometimes surprised with the way the new member states, including Poland, supported each other in the meetings, whereas the old member states would do it much more rarely and on the issues of high importance. Some also questioned whether portraying themselves as a new bloc was indeed profitable and useful.¹¹²

To a large degree Polish participation in CFSP remained very reactive. The representatives in the Working Groups or COREPER II would often take the floor to support other initiatives or statements given by other member states. Alternatively, when a sensitive issue for Poland arose, such as NATO or visa issues, they would react to restate their interests. The cooperation between the Working Groups, COREPER and the PSC remained another problematic area. A few diplomats from the older member states pointed out that Poland, like many other new member states, has still not practically solved this problem. This occasionally led to the breaching of informal procedures and of not raising the issues previously discussed and ‘closed’ within the Working Groups at a higher level, or even worse, contradicting the statements made by the representatives in the WG.¹¹³ Such situations are only accepted in extraordinary circumstances, usually concerning vital national interests.

As several officials from the DUE admit, one of the main challenges for their department was convincing their colleagues from the ministry to work in a multilateral, rather than a bilateral system.¹¹⁴ As one of the officials noted, the main problem is now to learn “European thinking”.¹¹⁵ An additional challenge was caused by the high rotation of ministerial officials throughout the whole MFA; once they learnt the basic rules about working within the EU or providing instructions they would usually leave to a post abroad or be transferred.¹¹⁶ The administration was slowly accepting the new modes of day-to-day work, such as communication via e-mail or informal contacts between

¹¹² Interview (no. 14)

¹¹³ Interviews (no. 13, 14, 18, 23, 24). Such contradiction of positions by Polish officials took place in the case of Croatia and Council Conclusions on Ukraine.

¹¹⁴ Interview (no. 5, 6)

¹¹⁵ Interview (no. 9)

¹¹⁶ Interview (no. 9 and 23)

experts. The experts themselves were pushed to take greater responsibility, as the dynamics of EU work do not leave time for passing every decision through the highest ministerial level. Thus, the decision-path was shortened and very often the decisions and responsibilities remained at the lower levels.¹¹⁷

An interesting change occurred in the perception of the 'us and them' paradigm. The EU was no longer an alien organisation.¹¹⁸ It was no longer acceptable to formulate expectations towards the EU to act in a certain way, as Polish officials could now exert influence on the EU actions.¹¹⁹ This change had its aspect also in the verbal dimension and in the method of preparing instructions. They started to look more pragmatic and less like presentations of their own position with a call for action. It also appears that Polish officials and decision-makers tend to perceive CFSP in terms of an opportunity rather than as a constraint on the Polish national foreign policy¹²⁰ - a sea-change from the initial phases of Polish integration to the EU.

Agents of change: the socialisation and learning of Polish diplomats

After discussing change in the MFA in general, this section of discusses the role of individuals in this process. It does so by paying special attention to the learning and socialisation to which officials were subjected in the course of participation in the processes of European foreign policy making. Because both learning and socialisation were more intense in the case of officials sent to Brussels, they are the central focus of this section. Conditionality, as a third mechanism of change, caused change only prior to the accession. It also does not seem to have any relevance at the individual level (as it was related to more systematic institutional change) and therefore is not discussed in this section.

¹¹⁷ Interview (no. 9 and 10)

¹¹⁸ Interview (no. 6)

¹¹⁹ Interview (no. 8)

¹²⁰ Interviews (no. 4, 5, 6)

Polish diplomats became socialised with and by their counterparts from other member states and learnt the 'rules of the game' in Brussels. This change in status was observed by the former Director of the DUE, Paweł Świeboda (2007), who claimed:

“When working in the MFA, I was truly convinced that our role was increasing with every month. When, during the Italian Presidency,¹²¹ I was invited for the first time to attend the meetings of the Political Directors from big member states, I was treated as a guest (...), who just appeared and then we would see what happens. However, at end of my five-year period in the office, in many issues we were much more convincing than other member states and treated with the same respect.”¹²²

A direct result of participation in CFSP meetings has been a growing gap between the officials posted to Brussels and those based at home in Warsaw. This situation also exists in the case of the old member states and is sometimes referred to as national representatives 'becoming Brusselized' or 'going native' and leads to them being known in their capitals as 'traitors' as far as national interests are concerned (Spence, 2002: 24). Interviews have supported this analysis with one of the diplomats interviewed claiming that he perceived the whole process of European integration differently between when he was based in Warsaw and after he had spent some time in the Permanent Representation.¹²³

A view expressed by a few Polish diplomats was that officials in Warsaw did not seem to fully understand how things were done in Brussels, at which levels, how the documents were circulated etc.; thus the Representation often lacked the necessary support from Warsaw.¹²⁴ Because of the complex decision-making system, those based in Warsaw also

¹²¹ The Italian Presidency took place in the second half of 2003.

¹²² The translation from Polish was done by the author. The quotation comes from an interview with Paweł Świeboda, conducted by weekly "Przegląd" in 2007. The interviewee then added that unfortunately, all these achievements seemed to have been wasted recently.

¹²³ Interview (no. 24)

¹²⁴ Interviews (no. 1, 2, 6)

occasionally misunderstood the procedures, which caused some frustration for the Brussels-based diplomats. An example of this is the fact that the majority of issues are normally resolved at the level of the Working Groups and not discussed further at the COREPER II, hence Warsaw should be willing to designate certain negotiations to the level of experts or consult the drafting of non-papers or other documents with them, instead of just consulting the Ambassador.¹²⁵ This rule is apparently still not fully acknowledged in Warsaw.¹²⁶

As one official from the MFA admitted, the most difficult learning process concerned the informal aspects of negotiations in Brussels, as the formal issues were “relatively easy to grasp”.¹²⁷ The diplomats in Brussels also emphasised that the capital’s support in terms of pre-negotiation and discussing issues on the agenda with other capitals was sometimes missing.¹²⁸ Meanwhile, the diplomats posted to Brussels, who experienced the process of socialisation, at the same time started to observe their counterparts and learn about how the things were ‘really done’ in the EU. As expressed by one of them:

“(h)ere everything is changing faster, regarding the mentality of the decision-makers and diplomats. In Warsaw, it is happening slowly, too slowly... we would like them to be on the same orbits as we are, wiser. On the other hand, they are getting frustrated, because they can feel that we are further and further away from them and hence, the lack of understanding appears”.¹²⁹

The rising amounts of e-mail communication sent from the Representation and asking territorial departments for contributions were in extreme cases ignored or treated as ‘unnecessary junk mail’. The only department that initially had shown more understanding and at the same time also faced trouble when working with the rest of the ministry was the DUE. On the other hand, Warsaw was becoming more and more dependent on the information that was fed back to it from the national representatives in

¹²⁵ Interviews (no. 1 and 2)

¹²⁶ Interview (no. 1, 6)

¹²⁷ Interview (no. 4)

¹²⁸ Interview (no. 23)

¹²⁹ Interview (no. 2)

Brussels. At the beginning, such a form of cooperation and dependence was naturally opposed by some of those within the MFA.¹³⁰ It took time before some officials in Warsaw understood that the EU had to be present throughout *the whole* of the MFA. Nowadays, some diplomats in Warsaw are ready to admit: “(w)e are aware that European policy influences the national policy as a whole, so we have to create it together”.¹³¹

One of the most serious challenges for the diplomats both in Brussels and in Warsaw was the matter of instructions. Initially, they often arrived late (after the beginning of the Council meetings) or not at all.¹³² Once they appeared, the diplomats sometimes found them impossible to implement, knowing the realities of the Working Groups and the importance of retaining legitimacy and their own credibility by respecting consensus-building practices. As one of the diplomats in Brussels expressed it: “It is difficult to present an instruction when you know the people around the table and you know what they think about it and then you present an instruction that they will certainly not accept, they will simply ignore it”.¹³³

Seeking a solution to this problem, an idea was considered that instructions could be drafted by the representatives themselves and later revised and accepted by the capital.¹³⁴ However, this solution was not accepted in the end, as a high burden of additional work would be assigned to the representatives, who did not possess Warsaw’s resources, such as reports from the network of embassies, human resources, or an overview of the general strategy of Polish foreign policy. A solution was found through the informal agreement between the two that the instructions would not have to be presented in full by the representatives, if they found solid grounds to justify their decision to the ministry. One of the diplomats assessed the result as follows: “(a)n instruction is not a stiff material, that we are to realise from A to Z. This is expected from us in Warsaw and we feel this

¹³⁰ Interview (no. 2)

¹³¹ Interview (no. 6)

¹³² Interviews (no. 1, 2, 3, 9)

¹³³ Interview (no. 1)

¹³⁴ As a matter of fact, in many old member states, national representatives have a great impact on the final shape of the instructions they receive. They even admitted that sometimes the tougher negotiations are those taking place between Brussels and their capitals.

responsibility”.¹³⁵ Indeed, as observed by diplomats from older member states, relations between the member state capital and its representatives in Brussels remained one of the biggest challenges of the adaptational process, also after enlargement.¹³⁶

With time, both, the representatives and the desk officers in the DUE were able to learn lessons from their own mistakes, which were mostly explained by a lack of experience, and thus able to improve the skill with which instructions were drafted.¹³⁷ As some of them recall, the most common mistakes regarded the degree of technicality and fitting in well into the main point of discussions. The diplomats claimed that while initially Warsaw was mainly sending in new texts, which would almost certainly be ignored, with time they learnt to make corrections and proposals more closely related to the documents that were already being discussed. Such interventions had more chance of success.¹³⁸ Overall, the vast majority of interviewees emphasised that the learning process was still taking place but there was already a clear improvement in the quality of instructions.¹³⁹

In the Polish Permanent Representation to the EU, the diplomats certainly got to know ‘the rules of the game’ better. This could be observed in the way the representatives interacted with other member states’ diplomats to include the mentioning of the massacre in Srebrenica in the Council Conclusions in June 2005, the passages regarding Ukraine in February 2005 or the harassment of the Union of Poles in Belarus in November 2005. It seems that the active observer period certainly helped the Poles to learn the rules of the game and so, as some diplomats recall, the transition to full participation at Working Group level was relatively smooth.¹⁴⁰ The diplomats discovered a certain ‘code of conduct’, which also included informal rules of behaviour. These rules were more difficult to grasp for the officials from the capital, who did not participate in the meetings, or did not do it as often as Brussels-based officials. Consensus building and the

¹³⁵ Interview (no. 3).

¹³⁶ Interview (no. 13)

¹³⁷ As one official claimed, it took a year to see that Brussels was not the place to make speeches to anyone, but to work out common positions (Interview, no. 5).

¹³⁸ Interview (no. 1)

¹³⁹ Interview (no. 23, 24, 25)

¹⁴⁰ Interview (no. 17)

coordination reflex are among the most important behavioural norms. As asserted by one Polish representative:

“This esprit de corps, it really exists. People know each other privately, invite each other to meetings (...) talk on various topics and that leads to the emergence of some sort of community, you can call it a community of thinking or common perception of some problems (...) Meanwhile, in the capital it is perceived in a bit different manner.”¹⁴¹

As one of the Polish diplomats observed, adopting the above norms meant that he was “perceived in a better light and hence my next ideas are taken into account, whereas if I am perceived as a troublemaker, who spoils the atmosphere and asks for the impossible, they are omitted and this is tactics”.¹⁴² It was also noted that the capital did not always understand the need for respecting such informal rules of behaviour.¹⁴³

The way of presenting instructions improved, not only according to the Polish diplomats, but also their colleagues from other member states. They moved from simply reading out all instructions to a more interactive phase, even though a few diplomats from the older member states suggested that they still lacked some self-confidence, and occasionally that the instructions were read-out like a memorandum or filled with information of little interest to the rest.¹⁴⁴ It was also pointed out by one diplomat that the instructions seem to be still very strict and that they might need more flexibility.¹⁴⁵ This however is an issue that characterises several old member states as well and depends on their organisational culture and approach to negotiations.

As stated by one official from an EU institution, who referred to the new member states in general and their manner of addressing their colleagues in the Council meetings: “they make things softer, they gained some confidence and friendship with the other colleagues

¹⁴¹ Interview (no. 1)

¹⁴² Interview (no. 23)

¹⁴³ Interview (no. 23)

¹⁴⁴ Interview (no. 14, 15)

¹⁴⁵ Interview (no. 15)

so they feel confident to present things less radically than their capitals might wish, but at the end they get more results”.¹⁴⁶ Another official, on the other hand claimed that the new member states were still in a process of “finding their feet in how you work in the EU” and pushed their national interest a bit too aggressively.¹⁴⁷

In this way, national diplomats were able to use their expertise and institutional position to influence not only European politics and decision making, but also their foreign ministries (Spence, 2002: 33). They see themselves as the ‘transmission belts’ of every day business in Brussels to their capitals. The socialisation of the newcomers was also observed by the officials in Brussels and some of them emphasised the difficulties. One official noted that before coming to Brussels the national representatives were thinking only “in terms of national interest”, since this is how they were trained to think in the MFA.¹⁴⁸

After enlargement, the number of issues discussed outside of the negotiation rooms increased. Therefore, the newcomers had to establish not only formal working contacts, but also informal channels for the exchange of information with their counterparts. The Poles have joined several informal ‘like-minded groups’ of states and even claim that on occasion they provide a link between these groups and the smaller new member states. As one of the diplomats has recently put it: “If you don’t exchange information, you are nobody”.¹⁴⁹ At the same time, they acknowledged the importance of maintaining legitimacy within the group. From this perspective, adoption of the group’s rules was a tactical move, a sort of negotiation strategy, employed in order to achieve their goals, aimed at strengthening one’s position in the group and raising the chances of success in the future.

Such intensified interactions between diplomats contributed to elite socialisation and in many cases towards thinking in national *and* European terms. Some diplomats were

¹⁴⁶ Interview (no. 40)

¹⁴⁷ Interview (no. 37)

¹⁴⁸ Interview (no. 44)

¹⁴⁹ Interview (no. 25)

initially surprised by the process of socialisation and one, struck by the habit of addressing national representatives by the Presidency using their names rather than countries, considered it to be the wrong way of doing business in an international organisation.¹⁵⁰ Interestingly, the EU was thus perceived as one of many international organisations, comparable to NATO or the United Nations, rather than a *sui generis* institution. Therefore, the standard rules of formal proceedings were expected to be followed.

Conclusions

This chapter has outlined the major changes in the organisation and policymaking processes in the Polish MFA. It was argued that the transformation started prior to EU membership and that the major changes started when Poland obtained the status of active observer to the EU in April 2003. It is remarkable that several of the officials involved referred to the impact of the CFSP on the MFA as 'revolutionary'. In the pre-accession phase (phase I), change was mainly caused by conditionality, in comparison with the active-observer period and the time after accession (phase II), when learning and socialization were important mechanisms facilitating change. The reason for introducing changes in phase I, was initially technical adjustment to participation in CFSP. The adaptational pressures were stronger than in phase II and the process of foreign policy adaptation was strongly connected to the negotiation exercise as a whole.

Referring back to the taxonomy of changes introduced at the outset of this chapter, the conclusions are summarized below.

Systemic change

Systemic change related to fundamental changes in an applicant/member state's structures or constitution. Only a few systemic changes took place in relation to

¹⁵⁰ Interview (no. 21)

participation in CFSP as well as more generally to the EU accession. The Constitution was not amended, but when the new one was adopted in 1997, two articles were inserted because of the forthcoming EU membership. These changes took place quite early in the adaptation process.

Organisational change

The analysis has shown that this type of change occurs over a long time period and is still taking place. Within the MFA, several organisational rearrangements were made. First, the department dealing with the EU was created (DUE), and in the beginning was also responsible for the negotiation exercise (DUEiONA). At a later stage several sections were created within that department and within the CFSP Unit, not to mention a further innovation to the ministerial structure. Within territorial departments of the MFA, the position of desk officer responsible for the CFSP and EU issues was created. All these developments were complimented by a fresh flow of graduates from the Diplomatic Academy established in 2002. Some similar organisational changes were introduced in the Permanent Representation to the EU, probably even more revolutionary and rapid, as it was directly affected by the need to participate in the EU meetings. The two sub-sections were created within the external relations sections, responsible for CFSP issues. The turning point in organisational structure is marked by Poland gaining the status of active observer. The number of staff tripled and internal coordination mechanisms were introduced.

The competences of preparing instructions for the Polish representatives in Brussels stayed initially within DUE. This was often an informal arrangement, stemming from the difficulties in involving the territorial departments in the process of instruction-making. Nonetheless, there is evidence of a clear shift in this area. The role of DUE changed to that of coordinator. Similarly, the MFA's function within the coordination of Polish European policy shifted from 'gate-keeper' to 'boundary-spanner'.

Process-related change

This type of change occurred mostly after Poland became an active observer in the EU (phase II) and was related to its participation in the CFSP meetings and socialisation processes. A coordination system was established to first manage the negotiations and preparation for membership, and then for preparing Polish positions in the Council. Interestingly, a system that was meant to facilitate Poland's EU accession, after an intense political debate, was preserved with only slight changes. The cumbersome coordination system involved the ministries, Permanent Representation to the EU, Polish Embassies, UKIE, as well as both houses of Parliament. Judging from the public discourse and information gathered during interviews, it is bound to be a subject of further changes in the future. Coordination of Polish EU policy required an increase of team-work and information sharing. Both of these processes were rather 'painful' and revolutionary and still present challenges to the institutions involved.

On the technical level, several innovations were introduced in order to facilitate intra-governmental communication and contacts with the Representation, Embassies and EU institutions. The first system used for an information exchange between Poland and the EU was ACN and then COURTESY with access to the COREUs. From the start, Poland faced the challenge of providing a safe electronic network and it seems the problem is still not fully resolved.

The rhythm of work changed substantially and became strictly dependent on the EU working agenda. This includes organising coordination meetings within the MFA and the Permanent Representation, a system of preparing instructions and sending back reports from Brussels, as well as the visits of MFA officials to Brussels. Several officials emphasised that the number of visits to and from the diplomats from EU member states to the MFA increased, as well as the number of technical trips to other EU capitals. On the other hand, Polish diplomats in Brussels, apart from regular meetings in the Council became a part of an informal network and frequently started attending informal meetings and gatherings with their counterparts from other member states.

There was also a change in the style and aim of presenting instructions by the Polish representatives. In the period prior to accession and partly during the active observer period, Poland aimed simply at presenting the Polish stance on certain issues. The substance of instructions was mainly reactive. More recently, officials have expressed a willingness and acknowledged the necessity of formulating proposals for common actions, taking into account other member states' positions and finally, switching to more active policy-making.

Cultural change

As already noted, cultural change is very difficult to detect, especially in such a short time after the accession. Still, some preliminary conclusions can be made. The officials started reflecting upon 'what others think' when formulating the national positions (e.g. drafting instructions or when presenting them). There was also an important shift from bilateral to multilateral work-styles not only as one of 25 member states, but also within the government itself. CFSP became present not only in the DUE, but in the MFA as a whole. After accession, the EU was no longer treated as an 'alien' institution. As discussed in the chapter, this becomes evident from the discourse and mentioning 'us' instead of 'them'. Finally, a generation gap in the MFA seems to be the greatest dividing line that appeared in that institution over recent years. It is mostly young diplomats that deal with CFSP and DUE is the youngest department within the MFA. This affects the work of the ministry.

The empirical research revealed another interesting aspect of Polish EU membership – the growing gap between the officials in Warsaw and those that were sent to Brussels. The latter started learning the 'rules of the game' in Brussels, which sometimes were different to the rules they were used to in the MFA. Hence, national representatives found themselves embedded in two organisational environments: one in the ministry and one in the Council. As a result, a gap in knowledge appeared which sometimes resulted in miscommunication or a different assessment of the best negotiation strategies.

Finally, to put the findings in a broader perspective, some problems experienced by Poland are shared with other new member states. In relation to this, the old member states' representatives most often refer to miscommunication between the capital and the representations in Brussels, a relatively long decision-making path, retaining consistency between different Council Working Groups or using aggressive rhetoric in the pursuit of national goals. Poland was usually named as the new member state with most resources at hand, but also the highest ambitions of playing an active role in CFSP. In the case of a few smaller states, such as Slovenia or Malta, lack of human resources was a considerable problem and these countries were often unable to send representatives to all CFSP Working Groups. A lack of foreign policy traditions and institutions was listed as yet another obstacle, for example in the case of the Baltic states.

The challenges to the role of the Polish MFA as a 'gatekeeper' of the state's external relations is another feature held in common with other member states, resulting from global developments rather than the EU integration processes. For some time now, the Polish MFA has been managing the challenge by accepting its new role of 'boundary spanner' and it engages in more interaction with other ministries where EU contact officials were established. But even this function was called into question during the negotiation period by the creation of UKIE, with the initial aim of coordinating negotiations with the EU.

CHAPTER 4

POLAND, THE EU AND POLICY TOWARDS THE EASTERN NEIGHBOURS

Introduction

After examining the process of Europeanisation on the administrative procedures of the Polish MFA, the thesis now moves on to consider the impact on foreign policy substance. To achieve this, the following chapters examine the policy of the Poland and the EU collectively towards the Union's new Eastern neighbours and whether the adaptational changes in the policy-process and administrative settings, analysed in the previous chapter, are in any way mirrored in policy substance. Therefore, there are references throughout the text to the strategies used by Polish diplomats, the learning and socialisation process they undergo and how they use their newly gained knowledge to promote their national foreign policy goals at the EU level.

This chapter is the first of three that analyse policy substance. The two chapters that follow this one focus on policy towards Belarus and Ukraine, the states central to Polish foreign policy. This chapter is a study in its own right, but at the same time it also provides a contextual background for the two chapters that follow it. It was chosen as a subject of analysis because of its importance for Poland and the fact that enlargement promoted the EU to rethink its policy towards the Eastern neighbours. Polish diplomats and decision-makers were very interested in uploading their ideas to the European level, especially given that EU policy had often been criticised in Poland and Polish national policy diverged from that one pursued by many of the other EU member states. The main methodological challenge faced in this chapter is that not only do official EU policy have to be taken into account, but so too does the bilateral policies and divergent positions of individual EU member states. When examining Polish foreign policy, the self-perception of Polish officials should also be differentiated from the perceptions of third parties, such as the EU officials and representatives from other EU member states. Also, Polish policy

regarding Belarus and Ukraine must be analysed from two different perspectives: from that Poland's take on EU policy towards the two states, but also in terms of Poland's bilateral relations with the two states, as these two perspectives are not always identical. Furthermore, a distinction has to be made between Poland's short, medium and long-term policy goals.

In the first part of the chapter the general policy of the EU towards the East is outlined and the chapter proceeds by examining briefly how the idea of a 'Wider Europe' appeared on the European agenda and was later transformed into the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). The chapter proceeds with some remarks on the impact that enlargement had on the creation of the EU's policy towards its Eastern neighbours. The shifting balance between the member states is explained, as well as the impressions that EU officials and the older member states' representatives have of their new colleagues. This is to provide a context for the analysis of the role that Poland plays in the debate and the policy-making process. Next, the Polish input into the EU debate is discussed, beginning with Poland's ambition to create an independent EU Eastern Dimension. This section also seeks to identify those factors that influenced Poland's position within the EU. As the crucial elements of the policy concerned two of the close Eastern neighbours: (Ukraine and Belarus) policies towards these two states are discussed in more detail in the later part (chapters 5 and 6) of the thesis. However, some overlaps are inevitable, as both states are covered by the ENP (although Belarus is not an active participant).

Another aspect of this study to be noted is the fact that national and European foreign policies are undergoing constant changes and mutually affect one another. Polish foreign policy had to be formally in agreement with the EU's policy and hence some changes were introduced. Informal socialisation and learning processes that altered the 'way-of-doing-things' also, arguably, contributed to changes in national policy. At the same time, Polish diplomats were active at the European level, trying to introduce changes in the way that the EU dealt collectively with its Eastern neighbours. Therefore, it would be very difficult to isolate the effect one level exerts on the other. Europeanisation in this

case is thus understood as a process, even though an attempt to capture changes in policy-outputs on both levels is made.

Implicitly, all three chapters deal with the issue of an anticipated ‘deadlock’ following enlargement which was feared especially in relation to policies towards the East. It was sometimes anticipated that the new member states would bring many different interests to the table, which could either put a halt to the policy or result in a substantial worsening of EU-Russia relations. Poland, being the largest of the newcomers, and the one with the most clearly defined interest in the East, was often at the centre of such speculation and as a result was depicted as a potentially awkward new partner. Nevertheless, it is argued here that after the initial intensive process of socialisation and learning, the Poles adapted, to a large extent, to both formal and informal procedures and that this was reflected in their negotiation strategies with regard to both Ukraine and Belarus. Of course, the story is not entirely one of success and there were also setbacks and moments that caused irritation for their counterparts and EU officials.

The EU’s European Neighbourhood Policy: common solutions to different challenges?

The importance of the EU’s policy towards its neighbours was acknowledged in the European Security Strategy (ESS; Council of the EU, 2003), which included security in the neighbourhood in three of the Union’s stated strategic objectives. It stated that “(n)eighbours who are engaged in violent conflict, weak states where organized crime flourished, dysfunctional societies or exploding population growth on its borders all pose problems for Europe” (Council of the EU, 2003). Regarding the East, it was asserted that it was not in the EU interest to create new dividing lines through enlargement and hence the EU should extend “the benefits of economic and political cooperation (...) while tackling political problems there”. Therefore, increased attention was given to efforts of creating a coherent policy towards the EU’s neighbours. The importance of this issue was further confirmed by developments in Uzbekistan in 2003, Georgia in 2004 and Ukraine in 2005, which proved that on the Union’s doorstep, in the former USSR, there were still

very unstable states and that revolutions could take them in very different directions. What is more, Belarus, a direct neighbour of the EU, is repeatedly called the last dictatorial regime on the European continent by the US administration.

The (new) Eastern neighbours of the EU became the subject of increased interest for the Union in the light of the enlargement that was anticipated for 2004. Beforehand, the policies of the EU in the region were mainly focused on the acceding countries. Beyond its borders, the EU was predominantly concerned with relations with Russia, leaving other parts of the Former Soviet Union largely off the political radar. The prospective of an approaching enlargement also prompted a debate on the Union's final borders and the final goals of the European integration processes. In this perspective, the initiative leading eventually to the development of the ENP, resulted from an attempt to deal with the question of defining the EU's borders and confronting the 'ghost of enlargement'. As clearly stated by Commissioner Verheugen (2003), formerly responsible for Enlargement, the ENP was "distinct from the issue of possible further enlargement. It concerns countries to which accession is not on the agenda". This was a straightforward message that the EU did not perceive these states as potential members regardless, of the fact that many of them did in fact have EU aspirations.

Ultimately, the ENP took a very different form from the initial concept that was brought to the table in 2002 at the initiative of the UK and later also actively advocated by Sweden. It was concerned with developing relations with the EU's future neighbours, but only in the East. The idea was formally noted in the Council Conclusions from 18 November 2002 (GAERC, 2002), which expressed the EU's particular concern about developing stronger ties with Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova. This preliminary concept soon became known as the New Neighbours Initiative (NNI). Its aim was to develop stronger relations with the chosen countries that would be based on "shared political and economic values" (GAERC, 2002). The policy was to adopt a differentiated approach and eventually lead to "democratic and economic reforms, sustainable development and trade, thus helping to ensure greater stability and prosperity at and beyond the new borders of the Union" (GAERC, 2002). Cross border co-operation, the fight against organised crime

and illegal immigration where named as areas where the EU would attempt to cooperate with other international actors, such as the OSCE or the Council of Europe. The candidate countries were to be consulted in the process of developing further strategies towards the region.

The NNI quickly became the subject of discussion within the Council and between the High Representative Javier Solana and the Commissioner for External Relations, Chris Patten. At the same time, the Southern states of the EU were expressing concerns as to whether the forthcoming enlargement would not diminish EU interest and support for their Mediterranean neighbours (Gromadzki et al., 2005: 12). As a result of lobbying undertaken by these states, it was proposed that the NNI initiative could even go beyond the three Eastern EU neighbours and encompass a notion of 'Wider Europe'. As a consequence, the Copenhagen Council in December 2002 also included the Mediterranean states and Russia in the policy. The number of participating countries was further increased in 2004, when Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan were also included. Eventually, a common framework was created to include states that were very different states in terms of culture, history and their political and economic situation. Increasing the number of countries from the initial three completely changed the character of the policy, not least by including a wide range of different states some of which had EU membership aspirations and some of which who did not (Gromadzki et al, 2005: 10).

The first official document outlining the 'Wider Europe' concept in more detail was prepared by the Commission in March 2003 and sent to the Council and the European Parliament. It clearly stated that the initiative was aimed at strengthening "the framework for the Union's relations with the countries that do not currently have the prospective of membership of the EU" (European Commission, 2003). Therefore, countries like Turkey, Romania, Bulgaria and the Western Balkan states were kept out of the framework. This was in line with the view expressed by Commission President Romano Prodi (2002), who claimed: "we have to be prepared to offer more than a partnership and less than a membership, without precluding the latter", and he also repeatedly referred to the concept of sharing "everything but institutions". This reflected the main challenge faced by any

attempt to develop a neighbourhood policy - the necessity to deal with the prospects of enlargement. The main benefit that the EU offered the participating states instead of membership would therefore be “the prospect of a stake in the EU’s Internal Market and further integration and liberalization to promote the free movement of – persons, goods, services and capital”¹⁵¹ (Prodi, 2002).

The concept was developed further and introduced by the Commission in a Strategy Paper in May 2004. It subsequently led to yet another change in the name of the initiative, which from then became known as the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). As argued by a senior official of the Commission, the novelty of the ENP was based on its new strategic framework, which was “an example of our foreign policy being more than traditional diplomacy” (Landaburu, 2006: 3). The novelty of the new foreign policy tool was supposed to lay in its integration of different instruments from various policies, such as human rights, judicial reforms, institution-building or crisis management. The issue of prospective membership re-appeared again, but the main policy line remained unchanged: the neighbourhood policies were directed at countries for which membership was not on the agenda. Even though the discourse was somewhat softened and the notion of the ENP being ‘substitute for enlargement’ was no longer mentioned, the Strategy Paper clearly stated that the EU “emphasized that it offers a means to reinforce relations between the EU and partner countries, which is distinct from the possibilities available to European countries under Article 49 of the Treaty on European Union” (European Commission, 2004a: 3). Thus, some observers immediately raised concerns as to whether such a policy would not result in negative unintended effects, such as fostering the re-integration of the CIS-area under the umbrella of Russia (Emerson, 2004).

Today, there are 16 countries included in the ENP policy in total,¹⁵² with three of them, Belarus, Libya and Syria, not linked to the EU by any current agreement. Russia, initially

¹⁵¹ Currently, a lot of phrases used by the former President of the Commission Romano Prodi, such as “everything but institutions” or “open-closed doors” are avoided in an attempt to change the discourse over the ENP (Interview no. 44, Brussels 2006). In the same manner, there is less talking of “benchmarking” and conditionality and more of “joint ownership” (Kelley, 2005).

¹⁵² These are: Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia and Ukraine.

invited to be part of the program, has refused to participate, in spite of the Commission's assurances that it was "of course much more than a neighbour" and that the EU-Russia strategic relationship would not be abandoned or downgraded in the new framework (Verheugen, 2003). Instead, the EU has formed an official Strategic Partnership with Russia, based on four 'common spaces': economic; freedom, security and justice; external security; research and education. The road maps referring to the spaces were agreed in May 2005.

As already noted by some observers, the ENP framework and its mechanisms are firmly based on the Commission's experiences of enlargement (Kelley, 2005). One of the general principles directly transferred from past experiences with the CEECs is conditionality (Ferrero-Waldner, 2006b; Landaburu, 2006: 3). The incentive is however different: a progressive economic integration and deepening political co-operation. As explained recently, the strongest incentive, which is a stake in the EU's internal market, means that countries will be given the possibility to choose sectors in which they wish to gain such access and later introduce necessary reforms in order to be able to benefit from the offer (Landaburu 2006: 4).

The ENP is implemented through so-called Action Plans, in which the EU sets the standards ('benchmarks') that should be met by its neighbours. They are cross-pillar, which means that the Commission has to coordinate drafting with the Council and the CFSP High Representative. The strategy also emphasizes the policy of 'joint ownership' and the unwillingness of the EU "to impose priorities or conditions on its partners" or "ask partners to accept a pre-determined set of priorities" (European Commission, 2004a). However, at the same time, the document stresses that the ENP was designed to promote commitment to shared values and the Action Plans will "contain a number of priorities intended to strengthen the commitment to these values" (European Commission, 2004a). Among these values are: strengthening democracy and the rule of law, the reform of the judiciary and the fight against corruption and organized crime, respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of media and expression, the protection of the rights of minorities and of children.

The initial text of the Action Plans is drafted first by the Commission, which clearly puts it in a privileged position. The Commission emphasizes that Action Plans differ according to the needs of different states. This has probably been the effect of learning from the experiences of enlargement, that sometimes grouping hinders individual progress (Kelley, 2005). Nonetheless, the Commission has been criticized on various occasions of applying a standard format to the drafts of Action Plans presented to the Council. The review process, based on joint assessments and the regular country reports, also resembles the procedures used in relation to the 2004 accession states (Kelley, 2005).

Financial resources are made available for the ENP through a European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI), which was designed, amongst other things, to support the implementation of the Action Plans for the period 2007-2013. Initially just called the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI), it gained the 'Partnership' component specifically to accommodate Russia in the scheme, after Russia refused to take part in the ENP itself. It is hoped that this new financial instrument will allow for more flexible use of funds, and thus address the criticism expressed currently by a few member states towards TACIS funding for example.¹⁵³ The current Commission proposal amounts to nearly €15bn, but needs to be further negotiated with the member states.¹⁵⁴

There are serious challenges ahead for the ENP. It has been argued that it neither sufficiently confronts the ghost of enlargement, nor seriously addresses problems affecting neighbouring states nor does it achieve coherence in relations with them (Smith, 2005: 767). A common framework was created for managing relations with all neighbours, grouping countries as different as Ukraine, Morocco and Israel. The ENP has also created the outsider-insider cleavage, refusing to give any long term hope regarding the European perspective to those states with the ambition of eventually joining the EU. Some observers criticized the Action Plans, as "it is hard to see how these action plans

¹⁵³ Interview (no. 33); General Affairs Council Conclusions, Brussels, 7 November 2005 (GAERC, 2005c).

¹⁵⁴ By comparison, the budget pre-2006 consisted of €5.3bn MEDA and €3.1bn TACIS with additional EIB lending: €2bn for the Mediterranean and €500m for Eastern Europe.

provide a real incentive for reform” (Smith, 2005: 764). As argued by the EU officials, the negative results of the referenda on the EU Constitution in France and the Netherlands raised the importance of the ENP, which is not dealing with the politically ‘hot’ issue of membership.¹⁵⁵ However, this apparent strength can be also considered as a serious weakness of the policy. The effort of separating politically sensitive issues (high politics) from the every-day technical relations (low-politics) proved to be difficult to implement in practice.

General impact of enlargement on the EU’s policy towards the East

One of the substantial changes on the CFSP agenda after enlargement was the growing importance of the EU’s Eastern neighbours. Prior to April 2004, the Union was not primarily concerned with policy towards Eastern Europe, with the notable exception of Russia. However, with the forthcoming enlargement, the EU had acknowledged the necessity to develop a framework for relations with its future Eastern neighbours. This was the case for example when developing the Common Strategy towards the Ukraine in 1999, which contained a section devoted to EU-Ukraine relations in the context of the 2004 enlargement (European Council, 1999). The Commission also emphasized the concept of ‘Wider Europe’ in the document, and that the “accession of new member states will strengthen the Union’s interest in enhancing relations with the new neighbours” (European Commission, 2003: 3).

The former Prime Minister of Poland, Marek Belka (2005) claimed that “the Eastern neighbourhood of the Union, till recently, had been treated (...) as a domain of the few most important western-European capitals, that were taking care of their special, separate, bilateral relations with Russia and hence remaining in the traditions of their diplomacies for centuries”. This situation has arguably changed with the accession of the new member states,¹⁵⁶ who managed to put the issue on the political agenda. Nonetheless, the change

¹⁵⁵ Interview (no. 44)

¹⁵⁶ The new member states referred to in this chapter are generally understood as the so-called EU-8 and do not include Malta and Cyprus, which are not primarily interested in Eastern Europe.

in attention does not necessarily lead to a change in policy substance. It remains to be seen whether the new member states that are clearly succeeding in influencing the EU agenda, have also exerted any impact on the actual policy outcome.

One of the immediate effects of enlargement has been a shift of balance among the member states regarding their interests and priorities in Eastern Europe. As one EU official observed there are three groups of states when it comes to the East: those that are passionate about it, those that have mainly economic interests and those that have none of these.¹⁵⁷ The last group includes mainly the states from the South-West, such as Portugal or Spain. The bilateral relations of the member states with Russia also affect their overall policy towards the East.

As Eastern Europe is an area of special interest for the new member states, most of them play an active role (more active than in many other groups) in the discussions of COEST – the Council Working Group dealing with Eastern Europe and Central Asia. EU officials and diplomats from the older member states generally emphasize that the new member states brought to the table experience and knowledge about the region. This is an obvious result of their geographical position and historical experiences. At the same time, their emotional attitude towards these countries is often also noted. As one representative claimed:

“the new member states for historical reasons have a different feeling towards the COEST dossier(...) I think there is a certain degree of personal engagement, it is not just that they read out the papers, there is a real wish to convince the rest that this should be the policy choice the EU should be taking”.¹⁵⁸

During informal conversations however, old member states’ diplomats often accuse the newcomers of being too emotional and unable to leave the past behind, whereas the new

¹⁵⁷ Interview (no. 36)

¹⁵⁸ Interview (no. 34)

member states blame the old ones for not having enough knowledge about their Eastern neighbours and being unable to see anything in the East except for Moscow.

In terms of having an impact on policy-substance, there is some evidence of its presence, reflected by the perceptions of officials from the old member states and the EU institutions. Nonetheless, it is still too early to fully evaluate any such effect. One EU official observed that the new member states were already making a contribution when they had status of active observers, sometimes not speaking openly in the meeting rooms, but addressing the officials in the corridors, showing them that they would like changes to be introduced in the future.¹⁵⁹ Another official gave an example of raising the issue of Russian speaking minorities in the Baltic States on the EU forum, which would most probably never have appeared on the agenda before enlargement.¹⁶⁰ More on this topic will be discussed in chapters 5 and 6, specifically in relation to Ukraine and Belarus.

However, it is generally emphasized that this impact could be greater, but more time is needed for the newcomers to build trust, socialize and choose the best strategies. This is clearly connected to the processes discussed in chapter one. It is a matter of a learning process that is still taking place. As one diplomat observed: “they are just pushing things sometimes a bit too far and they should understand that we need to reach a compromise.”¹⁶¹ Another diplomat from another old member state claimed in a similar manner:

“(w)e are still in the transition process, the new member states must still learn how the system is working to use it more efficiently, less rhetoric and national request but more influence, more realism”¹⁶²

which was confirmed by a Commission official:

¹⁵⁹ Interview (no. 40)

¹⁶⁰ Interview (no. 39)

¹⁶¹ Interview (no. 42)

¹⁶² Interview (no. 41)

“I also think that the new member states are still in the process of finding their feet in how to work in the EU and I feel that sometimes they push for national interest to an extent that they perhaps should not (...) of course old member states also press for their national interest, but maybe not so aggressively”.¹⁶³

It has to be noted that such behaviour is probably most visible in this particular policy area, as most of the new member states treat it as something vital to their national interest. As another EU official claimed, in her view this yet uncompleted adaptation was one of the reasons why the new member states were not as effective as they could be in promoting their vision of how relations with the East should be built:

“they have been pushing some concrete issues regarding Russia in a less pragmatic way, because they see things in a different perspective (...) but upon joining the EU they thought ‘we will say lets go right and everyone will go right’... and there is some disappointment that that did not happen. If you compare this with Finland which also has a direct border with Russia and tries to raise the interest of the EU and engage in partnerships on environment, development... (...) they have a different, more pragmatic approach, for example the way they talk to the member states, engaging... so I think there is a learning period going on and the new member states will learn that sometimes they should present their position in a less radical manner, that they will gain from that.”¹⁶⁴

The last statement raises an important issue that divides many new and old member states: their different perceptions of Russia. The particularly stern attitude towards Russia, expressed by some of the newcomers, is sometimes not well-appreciated by other member states, even though they express their understanding of the historical underpinnings of such behaviour. Nonetheless, thinking of the overall EU interest and the problems regarding minorities for example, one EU Official claimed: “... if we are going to be emotional we cannot solve it. And this leads to Russia being more aggressive

¹⁶³ Interview (no. 37)

¹⁶⁴ Interview (no. 40)

towards the EU as a whole”.¹⁶⁵ Some expressed the view that, after joining the EU, the new member states finally feel “kind of safe and they see that Russia cannot harm them, as it cannot be too aggressive towards the EU, it has too much interests with the old member states... so they speak up louder!”.¹⁶⁶ On the other hand, one of the national representatives expressed his belief that enlargement and the policy of the new member states towards Russia changed the balance in the Council, but at the same time, it brought together the states with a traditionally pro-Russian stance, such as Italy, Spain, Germany and even Belgium.¹⁶⁷ This may be considered as a rather unexpected result of enlargement, contrary to more expected polarization of positions and difficulties in achieving consensus with so many different interests around the table.

Before enlargement, Finland was the only country that had experience of Russia as a neighbour and tried to promote a firm approach inside the EU. As one Finnish diplomat commented on the enlargement:

“Regarding the policy towards Russia, there was a change. During the EU-15 Finland tried to remain realistic and after the enlargement the new member states joined the critical mass of realism, so the situation is more balanced at the moment. The hostility towards Russia did not increase.”¹⁶⁸

Indeed, the EU noted some successes regarding its relations with Russia, such as signing the agreement of four ‘common spaces’ in May 2005. Nonetheless, this does not preclude the fact that the discourse used during the meetings has changed and some proposals, that never gain enough support to see the light of day are much sterner in their language than the eventually agreed statements.

¹⁶⁵ Interview (no. 39)

¹⁶⁶ Interview (no. 39)

¹⁶⁷ Interview (no. 38)

¹⁶⁸ Interview (no. 13)

Poland's contribution to the EU's European Neighbourhood Policy

The policy of the EU towards its Eastern neighbours has always been an area of special importance for Polish diplomacy. It was identified as the number one priority for the Polish contribution to the Union's external relations by all the MFA officials that were interviewed. Nonetheless, Poland's attitude towards the ENP has been characterised by a high degree of ambiguity, as it did not reflect the Polish vision of deepening relations with Eastern Europe and the strategic goal of potential membership for Ukraine. This cautious attitude is present notwithstanding the fact that Poland, even before its formal accession to the EU, had been advocating its proposal that the EU should develop a common policy towards the 'new' (Eastern) neighbours. This section aims at exploring the Polish position towards the ENP and explaining the factors that shaped it. It starts with early attempts by Polish politicians and diplomats to promote the idea of an Eastern Dimension prior to Poland's accession to the EU. It then continues with the analysis of the input to the internal EU debate and negotiations over the Union's relations with the East. Finally, some preliminary remarks are made regarding the effectiveness of Polish policy 'uploading' and the Europeanisation process.

The current stance that Poland expresses towards the ENP is firmly grounded in the traditions of its foreign policy. Relations with her Eastern neighbours were among the top priorities of modern Polish foreign policy, as formulated in 1990, after Poland regained its full sovereignty. One of the main challenges to face at that time was redefining relations with the states in the post-Soviet space. The policy choices were made in accordance with the prior concepts formulated in the 1960s by Juliusz Microszewski and Jerzy Giedroyc in Parisian "Kultura", who advocated supporting an independent Ukraine. An active policy towards Poland's Eastern neighbours was perceived as interconnected with Polish-German relationships and the principle of balanced engagement with the West and the East (Barcz, 1992: 72). The Polish political elites soon recognized the fact that better relations with Eastern neighbours could mean gaining a stronger position within Western Europe (Kupiecki and Szczepanik 1995: 75).

After the initial 'dual-track' policy, designed as an attempt to maintain a balance between Moscow and the newly independent states, a new and more active approach was formulated in 1994 (Olechowski, 1994a; 1994b). Its aim was to build up good relations with the states of special significance for Poland: Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, the Baltic States, Kazakhstan and Moldova. Relations with Ukraine was characterised by a strategic partnership of crucial importance, which was later to be reflected in the role of Poland as an advocate for Ukraine's closer ties with the EU. This background has to be taken into account when considering Polish attitudes towards the ENP.

The Eastern Dimension: an unfulfilled Polish ambition

Before EU accession, Poland had already shown that it wanted to be among those states that would shape the EU's Eastern policy. This policy attitude was underpinned by a general feeling among Polish officials and academics about the need to keep the EU's doors open. In 1998, Professor Bronisław Geremek, in his speech inaugurating Poland's EU accession negotiations, called for the creation of an Eastern Dimension. Many politicians and scholars have since spoken in favour of Poland taking the initiative in creating and developing this idea. The Polish National Security Adviser, Marek Siwić, claimed that the Polish contribution to the EU would only be as a player and not as a follower, especially due to its expertise on the former USSR. This could be "the Polish speciality in the EU" and the field where Poland had "no competition in Europe", as stated by Marek Karp, the director of Centre for Eastern Studies.¹⁶⁹ He also revealed the Polish hopes that, in the future, Warsaw could host a special EU office that would support Polish activity towards its Eastern neighbours. Such strong Polish interest in this policy can also be explained by her historical experience and the determination to prevent "the creation, over our heads, [of a] bridge between Moscow and Brussels".¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁹ Polska/Karp: nie mamy w Europie konkurencji, Warszawa 21.02.2003, <http://www.euro.pap.pl/cgi-bin/europap.pl?grupa=1&ID=41424>

¹⁷⁰ The comment made by Jozef Oleksy during the debate over the Polish Foreign Policy held at the Batory Foundation in Warsaw, see: *Polska polityka zagraniczna: kontynuacja czy zerwanie?*, 2004: 77.

It was not long before the Polish government joined the debate as well. It supported the idea of creating the Eastern Dimension, which was explained in the MFA non-paper¹⁷¹ (MFA, 2003a) and later also in a speech of the Minister of Foreign Affairs in February 2003 during a conference on ‘The EU Enlargement and the Neighbourhood Policy’ (Cimoszewicz, 2003), and a day later in Prague. He spoke in favour of the EU having

“a coherent, comprehensive framework of its Eastern Policy. It should be flexible enough to enable individual development of relations with each of the countries concerned without prejudicing their final formula. Poland suggests that this framework should constitute the Eastern Dimension of the EU” (Cimoszewicz, 2003).

Polish officials argued that relations with her Eastern neighbours should be differentiated within the framework of an Eastern Dimension, depending not only on values and the progress of reforms, but also on the aspirations concerning relations with the EU. This was a crucial argument that would allow for adapting a different policy towards the East than the one demanded by the Southern states, who did not aspire to joining the Union.

The government also argued that the assistance instruments should be flexible and even in the case of the “disappointing performance of authorities of the countries concerned, it is in the interest of the enlarged EU and its Eastern neighbours to keep engaged in co-operation at a relevant level and continue its assistance facilitating further reforms” (MFA, 2003a). This argument was clearly designed to accommodate Belarus within the assistance programs that would often be of benefit to Poland as well, such as those focused on managing the Polish-Belarusian border. The Poles proposed that policy should be based on three pillars: an EU one, a member state one and a pillar for non-governmental actors. The operational goals should be included in an Action Plan for the

¹⁷¹ The exact origins of the non-paper are somewhat difficult to trace in the MFA itself. Analysing the public discourse, it rather seems plausible that it was a result of the debate held by various policy centres in Poland, such as the Centre for International Relations and the Centre for Eastern Studies, both based in Warsaw with strong ties to the government.

Eastern Dimension and the Poles claimed they were already working on the concrete projects to be included in such a document (MFA, 2003a).

Figure 4. The main points of the Polish non-paper from 2003:

1. EU relations with the Eastern neighbours should be conditioned by:
 - progress of reforms
 - degree of convergence of the norms and foreign policies
 - their European aspirations
2. Creating one independent framework for relations with Eastern neighbours
3. EU membership should be used as an incentive for democratic and economic reforms
4. Free trade agreements should be concluded with the involved states, starting from Moldova
5. Agreements with Ukraine and Moldova should be upgraded to Association Agreements
6. EU-Ukraine relations should be on equal level to those of EU-Russia
7. Relations with Belarus should be conditional on democratic reforms
8. Energy co-operation should be among the priorities with relations with Russia and Ukraine
9. Assistance should be maintained even in case of the poor performance of the authorities
10. Establishment of the European Democracy Fund or a European Freedom Fund with the objective of promoting democratic values

The main objective of the concept, as formulated by the Polish government, was to enable the East European partners such as Ukraine and Moldova (but potentially also Belarus) to join the European Union when they were willing to and when they were ready and able to fulfil the membership criteria. Polish officials stressed that "Europe does not end at the EU's Eastern borders, nor will it end there after enlargement" (Cimoszewicz, 2003) and did not hesitate to admit that "Poland is a strong advocate of the European aspirations expressed repeatedly by Ukraine and Moldova" (Cimoszewicz, 2004). The document was entitled: 'Europe enlarged but open', which reflects the central motivation behind these early Polish initiatives. This strategic goal will remain unchanged and, despite the shifts in strategies, provided the basis for the Polish initiatives regarding the ENP, once inside the EU. In this respect, in spite of the failure to upload the Eastern dimension idea, the Polish policy did not change in any substantial way. Therefore, the postulates of the non-paper are worth closer examination and are shown on figure 4.

Undoubtedly, a blue-print for the Polish attempt to advocate the new EU dimension was the Northern Dimension advocated by the Finns since 1997.¹⁷² It was mainly aimed at developing closer relations with Russia, but also states like Iceland and Norway (Browning and Joanniemi, 2003: 466). This initiative was perceived in Poland as very successful (Buras and Pomorska, 2006). It was seen not only as a useful tool to manage urgent problems in the region, but also a way of 'uploading' a national foreign policy agenda to the European level. This was perceived, in turn, as a good opportunity to upgrade the country's role in the EU. Initially, Poland interpreted the Northern Dimension as a potential competitor to Polish ideas but after joining the EU one could observe a pragmatic shift in Polish thinking. The Poles soon began to cooperate with the Finns regarding their common goal of raising the importance of the region on the EU agenda, as well as at the level of concrete regional projects. As declared by minister Cimoszewicz (2003): "the Eastern Dimension would be complementary to the Northern Dimension of the EU. I believe that it can use the experience of the Northern Dimension as well as other policies of the EU towards adjacent regions".

The non-paper, as admitted later by some Polish diplomats, was not pragmatic enough, as the Poles lacked valuable inside knowledge on how the EU functioned. It was argued by some academics that the Polish proposal for an Eastern Dimension, in spite of some apparent similarities to the Northern Dimension, would only contribute to re-bordering Europe and create a clear division between insiders and outsiders (Browning and Joanniemi, 2003). This was due to the fact that the Polish initiative was aimed at the Eastern neighbours alone and did not create a common platform between them and the EU members or prospective members, most notably Poland itself (Browning and Joanniemi, 2003: 471).

The lobbying action of the Polish authorities in support of the Eastern Dimension resulted in failure. The most important ideas were not incorporated into the documents outlining the ENP. Hence, after joining the Union, the idea of an independent dimension was soon

¹⁷² One example is the institutional arrangement of the proposal and the use of an Action Plan. This draws from the Action Plan for the Northern Dimension (2000-2003), which was accepted in June 2000.

temporarily abandoned by Polish diplomats. As admitted by a national representative from an old member state: “I don’t know what happened with the concept of ‘Eastern Dimension’ once proposed by Poland”¹⁷³. This was confirmed in conversations with Polish officials and statements by the politicians. As regards specific points formulated in the non-paper, some of them, such as promoting the European perspective for Ukraine and Moldova were temporarily ‘put on the shelf’ until there would be a realistic possibility of achieving such goals.

Polish attitudes to ‘Wider Europe’ and the ENP

After enlargement, it became evident that Eastern Europe became a number one priority and “the most important strategic challenge for Poland” (Cimoszewicz, 2004a) regarding its contribution to EU external relations. Polish diplomats were assigned the goal of putting the problems of the region onto the EU agenda, as the Union was criticized for being ineffective towards Belarus, unable to solve the Transdnistrian conflict and of not doing enough to decrease the democratic deficit in Ukraine. Taking into account the description of the ENP provided in an earlier part of the chapter and the Polish ideas relating to the policy towards the Eastern neighbours, it becomes apparent that the two differ substantially. Therefore, the Polish attitude towards the Commission’s initiative has been wary from the very beginning. At the same time, because of the ‘misfit’ between the actual ENP and the Poland’s vision, this policy area provides an excellent testing ground for the ‘uploading’ capabilities of the Poles. As relations between the EU and its Eastern neighbours were developed through the ENP framework, it soon became a central element in the lobbying game for the shape of the future policy. The states listed in the Polish non-paper (MFA, 2003a) remained the focus of Polish diplomacy in relation to the ENP.

The Poles have continued to emphasise that they possess the necessary expertise which they are prepared to share with their EU partners. This was repeated in the Foreign Minister’s *exposé* in front of Parliament in 2006 (Meller, 2006). The EU officials and

¹⁷³ Interview (no. 13)

diplomats from older member states generally emphasize that Poland brought experience and knowledge about the region to the table. At the same time, the emotional attitude of the newcomers towards these countries is also often noted.

The Polish attitude towards the ENP has been shaped by several factors. Firstly, the ENP did not correspond to the ideas presented earlier by Poland as the idea foundation for an independent Eastern Dimension. Most notably, it mixed together the states with and without membership aspirations, which endangered the long-term strategic goal of Polish diplomacy, defined as integrating *all* Eastern neighbours, especially Ukraine, into the European structures.¹⁷⁴ The Poles continuously advocated a differentiated approach that would be conditioned by the convergence of the third countries' values and foreign policies with those of the EU. This was used as an argument against a single framework for the South and the East. The instruments and incentives used in the ENP were, from the beginning, perceived as insufficient to bring about any substantial democratic change. A powerful incentive could thus be provided by a European perspective - as one of the Polish officials put it: "it worked in our case and is working in the Balkans".¹⁷⁵ Finally, Poland found itself at the centre of constant tensions within the EU between the states primarily interested in the East and those advocating the Union's engagement in the South, both under the ENP framework.

The initial idea behind the November 2002 NNI initiative, involving just three states, was much closer to Polish foreign policy than its successor, the ENP. As reaffirmed by an official from the Polish MFA: "the ENP is now far from the ideal that was presented in 2002".¹⁷⁶ In spite of this, the development of the policy and the initial Action Plans were officially welcomed as "the first steps in the right direction".¹⁷⁷ In this respect, Poland wished to interpret the ENP as a phase that would eventually bring the Eastern neighbours closer to the EU, but which would not stop there but also lead to potential membership. This was a very different perception from the initial assumptions behind the

¹⁷⁴ Interview (no. 26)

¹⁷⁵ Interview (no. 26)

¹⁷⁶ Interview (no. 26)

¹⁷⁷ Interview (no. 26)

ENP, which was supposed to be a policy that did not tackle the membership perspective at all and was even perceived by some as a substitute for enlargement. Such a Polish vision was also in stark contrast with the interests of some of the older member states that did not wish to discuss any further enlargement to the East.

The EU's attempt to develop a 'circle of friends' on its Eastern borders was warmly welcomed by Warsaw. Nevertheless, Poland has been instrumental in putting the membership perspective issue high on the ENP agenda. Minister of Foreign Affairs Stefan Meller (2006) stated in his annual address to the parliament in January 2006:

"We will seek to ensure that the emerging Eastern Dimension of the Union's Neighbourhood Policy draws the countries involved closer to the Union. At the same time, they should not be doomed to the role of 'eternal partners'. At least some of them – the ones with a pro-European orientation and advanced internal transformations – should be given the prospect of membership, however distant it may be".

The reluctance on the part of the EU to grant some countries involved in the ENP the membership perspective (in line with the principle of differentiation) has been a major point of concern for the Poles. As one Polish official put it: "the fact that the neighbourhood policy does not tackle the integration aspirations of the respective countries from outside the EU is its weakness" (Cieszkowski, 2004: 108). While the European Commission sets a common goal for the neighbouring regions - the development of welfare and a friendly neighbourhood, Polish priorities are much more ambitious.

The problem of potential membership is a direct consequence of the fact that the ENP is aimed at the East as well as the South. Hence, it was criticized by the Poles for mixing states with and without European aspirations. While Ukraine or Moldova are, as indicated above, clearly perceived by the Poles as potential members of the EU in the distant but foreseeable future, this perspective is certainly not granted, and not only by Poland, for

countries like Libya or Algeria. Hence, the ENP is not only of limited use for the Polish long-term foreign policy goal of promoting Ukrainian EU accession but in political terms it could even be a threat to it as it locates Ukraine in the group of countries excluded from EU membership (Buras and Pomorska, 2006).¹⁷⁸

As it will be explained in detail later, Polish diplomats undertook some initiatives aimed at granting Ukraine a membership perspective and finally referring to the possible future accession. Such efforts were intensified after the Orange Revolution, but failed in the light of insufficient support around the EU Council table. Poland has continued its unofficial efforts to push for something more than just a repeated acknowledgment of the Ukrainian European aspirations. The issue was brought to the table by the Poles again in 2006, in the context of preparing a new enhanced agreement between the EU and Ukraine.¹⁷⁹

As one Polish diplomat believed, 2006, the year the new PCAs were negotiated with the countries involved in the ENP, was a real test for Polish diplomacy.¹⁸⁰ But the Poles have criticised the one-framework concept as an ineffective instrument because of the highly sensitive issue of prospective membership. They wished to advocate a more privileged treatment for the countries in the East, on the grounds that they had already established their willingness and ability to align with EU norms and policies. The desirability of using one *common* framework was questioned in the light of the inability to find *common* solutions regarding technical matters on a wide range of issues related to visa facilitation, free trade areas, the flow of capital or finally the European perspective. This was in line with the differentiated approach that the Poles had argued for and could lead to a revival of the independent Eastern Dimension.

Furthermore, there has been a visible tension between the Polish preference for the Eastern Dimension of the ENP and the interests of the Mediterranean countries, focusing their activities on the South. Most importantly, Poland has felt uneasy with the

¹⁷⁸ The Ukrainian case will be explored in a greater detail in one of the following sections of the chapter.

¹⁷⁹ Interview (no. 45)

¹⁸⁰ Interview (no. 45)

distribution of the financial means to the East and to the South. While the South-Mediterranean countries received €2.4 billion in the period 2000-2003 from the MEDA programme, and €41 million from the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights, the Eastern partners were given only - respectively - €1.3 billion (TACIS) and €19 million (Cieszkowski, 2004: 111). In this respect, the ENP was used by the Polish diplomats as a platform to shift some funding from the South to the East. This was done during the negotiations over the new financial instrument, the ENPI. The Poles, supported by the Germans, played an active role in the negotiations over the ENPI and the division of funds between the South and the East. During the negotiations in COREPER II, there was a clear difference of interests between the French and the Polish delegation. The Polish stance was against the proposed geographical financial breakdown, advocated by France. It has been reported that the argument was used (introduced to the discussion at the level of COREPER by the German delegation) that such a solution would go against the principles of the ENP as one framework.¹⁸¹ Having achieved that, it is difficult to find any other practical reasons for the Poles to support the ENP in their efforts to bring a new impetus to the relations with the East, as continuing them in the current framework simply meant further “stagnation”.¹⁸²

During the negotiations over the ENPI, the line taken by Polish diplomacy was based on the ideas presented three years earlier in the non-paper. They argued again that extraordinary circumstances should be taken into account when distributing funds for support of civil society, democratisation, and promotion of respect for human rights. This was related to the situation on Belarus. Therefore, the Poles argued for the possibility of delivering aid without the co-financing by the beneficiary state.

The position of the Polish government has been in line with a broad consensus within society and among the political parties. There are a number of policy centres and foundations, involved in advocating the Polish stance and maintaining the debate in Poland, but also in Brussels and the EU member states. The most active ones are the

¹⁸¹ (Interview no. 45).

¹⁸² Interview (no. 45)

Batory Foundation, the Polish Institute for International Affairs (PISM), the Centre for International Relations (CSM) and the Centre for Eastern Studies (OSW) in Warsaw. Nonetheless, they are all closely tied to the decision-makers and the government, hence, the policies advocated are similar to those we have already identified as the Poland's official stance.

The major points characterising the ENP and the Polish policy have been included in figure 5.

Figure 5. Poland and the ENP (comparison of ideas)

	European Neighbourhood Policy	Polish stand towards the ENP based on the Eastern Dimension and the subsequent Polish ideas
Participating states	16 (South and East)	Restricted to Eastern neighbours
Membership prospective	Not included (no reference to art. 49)	Granted as soon as the states are ready as a strong incentive, without the EU internal reform as a pre-requisite
Incentives for reform	The major one: "a stake in the internal market"	Economic but also political, including membership
Granting the aid	Linked to conditionality	Advocating a weaker link to governments' performance
Ukraine	Part of the ENP	"Loses out" and deserves a more privileged treatment; optionally exclude it from the framework (unofficial), reference to art. 49
Belarus	Relations frozen, practically excluded from the ENP	Include in the framework

Conclusions: The first examples of policy 'uploading': Europeanisation in progress?

Based on the above, some preliminary conclusions may be drawn regarding the promotion of Polish policy goals in the EU. They will be examined in greater detail in the next two chapters which focus on Ukraine and Belarus. The Poles began on a quite unsuccessful note with the failure to upload the idea of an Eastern Dimension. Their

action begun not only before Poland joined the EU, but even before it became an active observer. Hence, the diplomats were not really given any chance of participating in the internal EU negotiations and were significantly ill informed about the formal and informal proceedings. The lobbying action behind the Eastern dimension was to a large extent conducted via formal channels. The Polish non-paper was distributed to high-level EU officials and national diplomats. There was practically no opportunity to influence the EU agenda from the position of an 'outsider', so the agenda-setting mechanism of policy 'uploading' was not used. In addition, the attempt to follow the Finnish example was ineffectual. As shown above, the formulation and promotion of the Eastern Dimension, in spite of its apparent similarities, missed some of the important elements of the Northern Dimension.

The situation changed once Poland joined the negotiation tables and Polish diplomats discovered the rules of the 'Brussels' game'. It is worth mentioning that notwithstanding the general scepticism towards the ENP, the Poles have not undertaken any substantial action in order to undermine or obstruct the policy, for example by using their veto power. Arguably, this is related to the Europeanisation processes described in the previous chapter. The diplomats in Brussels realised that a negative attitude, without any substantial proposals backed by a wide consensus, would be badly perceived and might damage Poland's long-term credibility. Therefore, they chose to cooperate with the European institutions in order to keep the problems of the region high on the EU agenda and at the same time adopted a strategy of 'small steps'. According to one external observer, this has contributed to an 'Easternisation' of the CFSP (Lang, 2005: 1). As one diplomat explained, it was better to build-up a positive image of Poland and its contribution to external relations.¹⁸³ This has been also the recent strategy chosen for advocating the membership perspective for Ukraine (see next chapter).

¹⁸³ Interview (no. 45)

CHAPTER 5

POLAND, THE EU AND POLICY TOWARDS UKRAINE

Introduction

Ukraine has been the most important strategic partner for Poland in the East. For this reason, the Poles have been especially active in their dealings with the EU with regard to the Ukraine both before and after accession. Before accession, despite agreeing on the common strategy on Ukraine in 1999, the member states were not particularly concerned with developing stronger relations with that country. After enlargement, Ukraine started to appear much more often on the political agenda and the High Representative for the CFSP, together with the Presidents of Poland and Lithuania, marked the EU's presence in the region during the Orange Revolution. In spite of Polish diplomatic efforts, the potential of membership, which became a core of the EU-Ukraine relations, has remained a topic explicitly avoided in Brussels and currently kept strictly off the negotiating table.

The aim of this chapter is to investigate the Europeanisation of Polish foreign policy in the case of Polish and EU relations with Ukraine. First, the chapter provides some insights into the policy of the EU towards Ukraine. This will then allow for the subsequent analysis of the Polish position on the matter and role that Poland played in shaping the policy of the Union. The first section starts with a brief outline of EU-Ukraine relations. It focuses on two factors that seem most important at the moment: the divergence of interests among the member states and the recurring problem of the gap between Ukrainian expectations and what the EU is actually willing to put on the table. A more detailed account is then given of the most important Polish initiatives undertaken within EU circles to attempt an 'upload' of Polish policy objectives. The cases chosen include Polish participation in the Orange Revolution and the subsequent advocacy of a strong European response to these events. Finally, the chapter moves on to examine the role of Poland in more recent developments, such as the decision to grant the Ukraine

Market Economy Status (MES) or the initial internal negotiations regarding the future New Enhanced Agreement and the Free Trade Area (FTA). On this basis, some conclusions are offered regarding the Europeanisation of Polish policy towards the Ukraine.

The policy of the EU towards Ukraine

The origins of EU-Ukraine political relations go back to 1991, to the time when Ukraine gained independence.¹⁸⁴ The first EC declaration on Ukraine was released on 2 December, calling for constructive relations with the EC and mentioning the democratic referendum. The subsequent negotiations on the Agreement on Partnership and Cooperation (PCA) between Ukraine and the EU started in March 1993, and in October a Commission's Representation in Ukraine was opened. The issue of prospective membership became a sensitive focal point of the relations. This resulted in an immediate gap between the aspirations expressed by the Ukrainian side and the reluctance on the part of the EU to express anything specific about potential membership. Arguably, not much has changed with regard to this problem and it still produces tensions between the partners.

Subsequently, the 'Wider Europe' concept, discussed in the previous chapter, received a mixed response from Ukrainian officials, as it "unnecessarily limited [the EU-Ukraine relations] by the cooperation characterizing contacts with countries having no European prospects" (Perelyhin 2003: 13). The idea was thus criticized for mixing together the states that did not seek EU membership with those that, like Ukraine, expressed such aspirations. One of the Ukrainian politicians called it "restricting" rather than "widening" Europe (quoted in Kuzio, 2003: 6). The Ukrainians had hoped for a more privileged position, taking into account their clearly expressed aspirations to develop closer relations with the EU. The lack of a positive message regarding membership led the Ukrainian authorities, with President Leonid Kuchma in the lead, to play a somewhat 'risky game'.

¹⁸⁴ The parliament of Ukraine declared independence on 24 August 1991. This was later confirmed in a national referendum held in December the same year with the result of 90.3% in favour (Kuzio, 2000: 1).

On the one hand, they used a strategy of attempting to blackmail the EU by saying that by not providing any clear signal on possible membership the EU might force Ukraine to turn back towards Russia. On the other hand, they tried to play over the Commission's head by discussing the negotiated documents with some individual member states and creating confusion at Council meetings and complicating the negotiation procedures.¹⁸⁵

The most important agreement between the EU and Ukraine, the PCA, was signed in June 1994 and came into force, after considerable delay, in March 1998. At the same time, the first meetings of the Joint EU-Ukraine Committee took place in 1995, and in July the Ukrainians opened their Mission to the EC. The Action Plan on Ukraine was adopted by the Council on 6 December 1996 and the first EU-Ukraine Summit¹⁸⁶ took place in Kiev in September 1997. In June 1998, Ukraine officially announced its intentions to become an Associate State to the EU, being the first state from the former Soviet Union to express such a wish. This declaration was acknowledged by the EU, which welcomed 'Ukraine's European aspirations' and 'pro-European choice' in the EU Common Strategy on Ukraine, adopted during the Helsinki Summit on 11 December 1999. The strategy also spelled out three main objectives for the long-term partnership: emergence of a stable, open and pluralistic democracy in Ukraine, governed by the rule of law and based on a market economy; cooperation between Ukraine and the EU on the maintenance of stability and security in Europe and the wider world; an increase in economic, political and cultural cooperation and cooperation in the fields of justice and home affairs (European Council, 1999). This fell short of Ukrainian expectations, since they were hoping for explicit recognition of their European choice and also a possible offer of prospective membership (Marples, 2000: 363; Wolczuk, 2004: 6). Furthermore, the EU developed a strategy towards Russia, very similar in terms of content, in order to emphasise its equal treatment of both countries (Kuzio, 2003: 19).

¹⁸⁵ Interview (no. 44)

¹⁸⁶ Such bilateral meetings take place once a year between the President of Ukraine and the EU Presidency, the President of the European Commission and the EU High Representative for CFSP. The institutional framework of the EU-Ukraine relations also includes annual Co-operation Councils at the level of ministers and Commissioners, Co-operation Committees at the lower level of senior civil servants and the Sub-Committees at the level of experts.

The relations between the EU and Ukraine were disturbed again after 2000, when the so-called Gongadze case¹⁸⁷ cast a shadow over President Kuchma. To make things even worse, in 2002, Ukraine was accused by the US of selling radar equipment to Iraq, which prompted the US to suspend its \$56m aid. In relation to this development, Javier Solana emphasized the need to distinguish between the leadership of Ukraine and the Ukrainian people, admitting that “Ukraine is a fundamental country for the stability of Europe and we cannot close our eyes on that”.¹⁸⁸

In January 2004, the negotiations over the Ukraine Action Plan started in Kiev,¹⁸⁹ but six months later the Commission threatened that if Ukrainian elections were not to meet international democratic standards, it could well be removed from the ‘first wave’ of seven countries to sign the Action Plans (Kelley, 2005). The talks finished in September, but due to the election crisis, the Action Plan was only adopted by GAERC in December and published by the Commission that same month. It included a list of ‘things to do’ for the next three years, envisaged cooperation with regard to foreign and security policy, Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), non-proliferation and disarmament, conflict-prevention and crisis-management. It was adopted by both sides on 21 February 2005, after the Orange Revolution at ministerial level during the EU-Ukraine Cooperation Council.

In May 2004, the Commission issued a Strategy Paper outlining the ENP and a Country Report on Ukraine. It emphasized that “accession is not currently on the agenda for EU-Ukraine relations”.¹⁹⁰ This again prompted criticism that the Union, although recognizing the European choice of Ukraine, did not “move to the next stage by accepting that Ukraine and other countries of the western CIS are eligible under Article 49 of the TEU to join the EU” (Kuzio, 2003: 5). In the discourse used by the Commission with regard to

¹⁸⁷ Heorhiy Gongadze was a journalist who was killed in September 2000 and his death soon became a symbol of the pressure exerted by the Kuchma government on the free media. Some weeks after his death tapes were revealed suggesting the involvement of the Ukrainian President himself in the plot to kill the journalist (source: Radio Free Europe, <http://www.rferl.org/>).

¹⁸⁸ BBC News, “Solana seeks Ukraine as a special case”, 30 September 2002, (BBC, 2002).

¹⁸⁹ The Common Strategy was not prolonged for 2005.

¹⁹⁰ “EU-Ukraine relations: from co-operation to integration”, Press Release, Delegation of the European Commission to Ukraine, Kyiv 25 November 2004.

the ENP and the prospect of membership, a new phrase appeared: “we offer a privileged form of partnership now, irrespective of the exact nature of future relationship with the EU” (Landabaru 2006; Ferrero-Waldner, 2006b). This issue explains the criticism coming from the Ukrainians towards the new policy – their country was grouped together with countries without any membership aspirations, such as Libya, Syria or Tunisia.

Meanwhile, the EU was present in Ukraine during the crucial moments of its Orange Revolution that took place between November 2004 and January 2005. The events were prompted by allegations of fraud, during the elections held in November 2004, on the part of Leonid Kuchma, the president in office, and his candidate for the presidency Victor Yanukovich. The counter-candidate, Victor Yushchenko, questioned the validity of the elections and called for civil action from the Ukrainian people. This started massive demonstrations in support of the ‘Orange’ candidate, in various Ukrainian cities. The EU rejected the outcome of the second round of the presidential elections and subsequently sent its CFSP High Representative, Javier Solana, to accompany the Presidents of Poland and Lithuania to assist the mediation between the two sides. As claimed by President Kwaśniewski (2004), the EU presence was prompted also by the EU-Russia summit, taking place in the Hague just before the events in Ukraine. He believed that the EU was stunned by the inflexible position of Russia and hence, it was easier for him to convince Solana, who was initially reluctant, to become involved in events (also confirmed in: Wilson, 2005: 138).

The role of the two Presidents and the High Representative was mainly to prevent the use of force and help to negotiate the process to organise the repeat of the presidential elections. The situation became more sensitive, as Russia officially accepted the outcome of the elections. Nonetheless, President Putin still sent his representative (Boris Gryzlov, the Speaker of the Russian State Duma) to take part in the talks. Overall, the mission ended in success, greatly contributing to the peaceful resolution of the conflict, which was expressed in the following words: “the EU intervention was effective because it occurred in an early stage, because it was unexpected, and because the Poles led a consensus that, with America’s support, even spanned the Atlantic” (Wilson, 2005: 140).

Looking at the EU's response to what had happened in Ukraine, it is difficult to find any revolutionary changes after these events at the level of day-to-day relations. Many states in the West did not welcome the revolution with "open arms" (Wilson 2005: 190). The Action Plan, negotiated with the previous government, was adopted in its unchanged form by the EU on 21 February 2005. The same day the EU-Ukraine Cooperation Council took place and the Action Plan was also signed by Ukraine. In addition, the EU made a political gesture towards the new Ukrainian government. On the same day, during the GAERC meeting, the ministers decided to agree on the Conclusions, which included a ten-point plan regarding future relations with Ukraine (GAERC, 2005b). The text was based on a joint letter that was sent on 24 January by the High Representative and the Commissioner for External Relations and ENP Benita Ferrero – Waldner, addressed to Jean Asselborn, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Luxemburg, who was holding the EU Presidency at that time. The GEARC Conclusions more or less repeated the ten points. Germany kept its reservation at the level of the Working Group (COEST) and COREPER (16 February), regarding visa facilitation and the re-admission agreement. It also emphasized that the EU was prepared to move quickly with aspects of the Action Plan, but the pace of progress depended on the Ukrainians themselves. From the new elements that were offered to Ukraine after the revolution, one may be singled out as particularly interesting for the CFSP – the possibility to align with some EU statements. However, important as it is for the Ukrainian side, the EU has offered such possibilities to a wide range of countries and in practical terms, it cannot be treated as a revolutionary offer.

In 2005, the Commission listed its priorities towards Ukraine in the ENP framework under four categories: political reform (including fair and free elections in March 2006), combating corruption and engagement in solving the Transdnistriian conflict, trade and economic reform (WTO accession, improving the business climate and ensuring macroeconomic stability), justice, freedom and security (launching negotiations on visa facilitation and continuing talks on a readmission agreement) and sectoral issues (such as cooperation in the area of energy and nuclear safety) (European Commission, 2005: 10). At the same time, the Commission prepared a draft assessment of the implementation of

the Action Plan which was to be discussed by the Council. An important step forward, emphasized in the assessment, was the fact that the Ukrainians allowed for complete media freedom, freedom of expression and introduced a 10-point plan for solving the Transdnestrian problem.¹⁹¹ The language used was generally positive, even though there were many areas where the Ukraine needed to make much more progress, such as in fighting widespread corruption and fulfilling the requirements to join the WTO. This, however, requires a political will from the Ukrainian Parliament to adopt the necessary legislation. Nonetheless, as an EU official claimed, for example in the field of CFSP, there has been definite progress – the Union was discussing with Ukraine the question of Belarus, Moldova and Russia, they agreed to international monitoring of the Transdnestrian border, and participation in ESDP missions.¹⁹² Agreements were signed on crisis management missions and on the exchange of classified information and the EU assisted Ukraine in destroying Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) ammunition stockpiles (Solana, 2005).

The structural factors and the institutional setting in which negotiations are conducted by the EU also exerted an influence on the final outcome. It is the Presidency, the Council Secretariat General and the Commission, who represented the interests of the 25 member states, having obtained a mandate from the Council. This usually does not allow for much room for manoeuvre during the negotiations. As an EU official claimed:

“Each time we want to make a concession, we have to come back and go to the Council and it is almost as if we represent the interests of Ukraine. (...) Sometimes we are willing to compromise, but at the same time you know you have to come back and sell it to each member state and each of them has electorate at home where it has to defend it.”¹⁹³

This may be interpreted as both a strength or a weakness of the institutional setting. At the negotiation tables, an argument that something ‘won’t fly’ in Brussels has been used

¹⁹¹ Interview (no 37)

¹⁹² Interview (no. 40)

¹⁹³ Interview (no. 40)

as an instrument to exert pressure on the negotiating partner. On the other hand, the document that is a result of negotiations between 25 member states is not very flexible and in this sense the EU is indeed in a different position to that of the Ukrainian government, which has more room for flexible changes. Apart from this, it is the EU and not the Ukraine, who prepares the first draft, and this puts it in a privileged position.

The argument recently raised in the academic debate is that nothing less ambitious than EU membership can be an efficient tool when dealing with Ukraine (Smith, 2005: 768; Wolczuk, 2004, 2005; Zagorski, 2004: 94). Similar criticism is directed by some academics and diplomats towards the Action Plan, which for the critics “is currently not a motivation strong enough to deepen EU-Ukraine relations” (Gromadzki and Suszko, 2005: 11) and thus “will not serve as a sufficiently firm anchor for Ukrainian reform” (Wolczuk, 2005: 4). This is related to some basic underpinnings regarding the rule of conditionality, which assume that it will only work if the incentives are viewed by the elites of the targeted country as a valuable alternative, one strong enough to make them embark on the often risky road of reforms (Kubicck, 2005: 274). The issue of the desirability or the nature of incentives and the conditions that should be used by the EU in its relations with Ukraine, has become a central point of the debate in Brussels, even if it is sometimes explicitly avoided at the formal meetings.¹⁹⁴

With the future of EU-Ukraine relations in mind, some observers argued that assessing the progress that Ukraine makes might be problematic. This is primarily due to ambiguity as to who is supposed to be carrying out certain actions envisaged in the plan, uncertainty to how such progress should be judged and the lack of a clear timetable (Smith, 2005: 764-765). As demonstrated by Smith (2005: 765), the plan reflects to a large extent the EU's self interest.¹⁹⁵ This issue had been raised before by Ukrainian politicians as an

¹⁹⁴ One of the national representatives said the issue was so sensitive, that he has never sat in a meeting where a delegation would explicitly refer to the membership aspirations of Ukraine. However, certain states express their preference for being restrictive and not entering any new commitments (Interview, no. 33).

¹⁹⁵ Nonetheless, the argument that the Action Plan lacks ‘joint ownership’ because the EU insisted that Ukraine concludes readmission agreements and consults the latter on the possibilities for long-haul transport capacities is not necessarily reflected in practice. As claimed by two EU officials it was the Ukrainian side who insisted on including the reference to the latter in the text and the EU barely managed

example of Ukraine's ability to contribute to European security (see: Perelyhin 2003: 16). The Ukrainians argued for the short time frame for review of the Action Plan, as they hoped for reconsideration regarding their potential EU candidature (Kelly, 2005).

There seems to be some confusion regarding the incentives used in the policy and their purpose, which brings chaos to the discussions. The view expressed by numerous actors in Brussels is that the whole debate is based on the wrong assumptions. As one diplomat put it:

“I don't feel comfortable with the basic point of departure of talking about incentives to any third countries, as I feel that the rule of law, democracy, the respect for human rights is something that any stable Western government should work towards irrespective [of] whether they have any incentive. And I don't even know if the EU would like to have a member in which the respect for those would be dependent on these incentives, every country has to realize the value of them for themselves”.¹⁹⁶

There are also those states, like Poland, who remember the experiences of the CEECs and the success of applying the principle of conditionality, supported by strong 'carrots'. They argue that the EU could foster domestic changes in Ukraine and the easiest way to do this would be to give a clear signal regarding the membership prospect, even on a long-term basis. A position somewhat in the middle is taken by those, who believe that there are also different incentives that the EU might successively employ, such as visa facilitation or free trade agreements. An example is set by the main incentive offered in the ENP, which is a stake in the internal market. This also seems to be a position closer to the technocratic approach of the EU institutions that often stress that the time has come for Ukraine to do its 'homework' and conduct or necessary reforms. Apart from progress in areas such as freedom of media and expression, or in the dialogue relating to foreign policy and the commitment to solving the Transdnistrian problem, a lot still has to be

to 'water it down', as the Ukrainians insisted on including a phrase on EU-Ukrainian negotiations of the conditions for an agreement (Interviews no. 40 and 44).

¹⁹⁶ Interview (no. 33)

done concerning issues like fighting corruption, improving the climate for business or fulfilling the conditions to join the WTO.

The different positions outlined above might not, however, be as distant as it may seem. As one EU official noted, it all depends on what type of reforms are considered. As regards any broad democratic changes, the majority of the EU member states would agree that the Ukraine should be willing to introduce them by itself. Having said that, it is a different matter how these reforms would be shaped. If the EU wishes to influence them in a way that they would bring Ukraine closer to EU laws, standards and norms, then the use of incentives is also well argued for. For example, the EU values cooperation with Ukraine in the area of external relations, especially regarding its regional dimension or would like to foster common positions on international developments, such as those recently unfolding in the case of Iran.¹⁹⁷

Preferences of the member states regarding the prospect of Ukrainian membership of the EU

The EU is not a unitary actor in the area of CFSP and national foreign policies remain divergent. Therefore, in order to understand and analyse any policy of the Union towards any third country, it is indispensable to have a closer look at the individual member states, their priorities and interests. It is a commonly shared view by many Polish politicians and scholars alike that relations with Ukraine are often conditioned by the member states' bilateral contacts with Russia. This was captured by President Kwaśniewski, who said: "Previously there was a dilemma in many countries (...) Moscow or Kiev? And some Western capitals have definitely chosen Moscow, regarding Kiev as a sphere of influence, (...) but of secondary importance" (Kwaśniewski, 2004). This was echoed by the former Prime Minister, who claimed that there are some European leaders who would say in private: "when we are talking about the Ukrainian issues, you have to remember that for Russia, Ukraine is Russia" (Belka, 2005). On the other hand, it seems that apart from Poland and Lithuania, "most EU states have no well-

¹⁹⁷ Interview (no. 46)

defined historical attitude to Ukraine” (Wilson, 2005: 191). It will be analysed below whether the division is indeed so straightforward. There are some clear differences in priorities, as well as in short and medium policy goals. This is, however, notwithstanding the general consensus on the importance of promoting democracy and stability in the country, as a long-term, prevailing aim. As usual, the disagreement lies in the details and the means to achieve this goal.¹⁹⁸

The prospect of membership for Ukraine has recently been kept off the negotiation table, after some efforts to promote it in the immediate aftermath of the Orange Revolution. Some member states, including Poland, are very interested in having Ukraine as a prospective EU member for several reasons.¹⁹⁹ Firstly, they would like to push the EU border further towards the East, as no country wishes to administer an EU external border. This is also connected to the geopolitical implications of preferring Ukraine inside the EU, rather than as a ‘buffer state’ between the EU and Russia. Secondly, some member states, due to their historical experiences, feel more sympathetic to what had been happening in Ukraine and believe that prospective membership could provide a strong incentive to help the Ukrainians implement the necessary reforms. Among them are the new member states that still remember their own experiences with the transition after 1989 and the policy of conditionality used by the EU.²⁰⁰

There are also states that generally agree with the broad goal of future membership, but still “are not ready to push for it”.²⁰¹ They include for example some of the Scandinavian countries. There are also member states that admit it is almost inevitable that “in 50 years Ukraine becomes a member, but it is our job that we don’t allow it in now, (...) we cannot sell it to our electorate and it will give us a headache with other neighbours, like

¹⁹⁸ One of the obstacles to a coherent policy towards Ukraine seems to be the conduct of a dual-track policy by many member states, which behave differently within the EU to how they behave in bilateral relations with Ukraine. Even though the issue of prospective membership is currently kept off the table, as there are no chances of achieving unanimity, some EU officials admit that Ukraine still receives encouragement to ask for a membership from some member states’ politicians.

¹⁹⁹ Interview (no. 40)

²⁰⁰ Still, even in this case the prospective membership was not promised in the documents, such as the Association Agreement.

²⁰¹ Interview (no. 40)

Georgia, Moldova, Belarus”.²⁰² The Southern member states²⁰³ are at the moment the most reluctant to discuss any further enlargement directed eastwards. One representative expressed his concerns that if Ukraine joined the EU, after the recent enlargement, this would further disturb the North-South balance inside the EU.²⁰⁴ However, in this respect the further enlargement to Turkey is considered as a remedy by some. One representative expressed his “shock” that the new member states would start pressing for Ukrainian membership so soon after they joined the EU themselves.²⁰⁵

Poland is perceived as one of the most energetic supporters of closer relations between Ukraine and the EU. As some delegates from the old member states admit, together with Lithuania, it has played a key role in keeping Ukraine high on the EU agenda, since they started participating in CFSP.²⁰⁶ Poland usually attempts to cooperate with the ‘like-minded’ states, which include its Visegrad partners: Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary, the Scandinavian and the Baltic States (especially Lithuania), United Kingdom, Ireland and Portugal. Sweden, supporting the Union’s greater engagement in the Eastern region and its democratization, is one of the prospective partners for Poland when advocating Ukrainian future EU membership. At the moment, however, Swedish diplomats see such a development as a very distant prospect and do not wish to discuss it in any detail.²⁰⁷ Portugal is also sometimes listed as being among the eleven member states in favour of developing a stronger relationship with Ukraine, because of its new community of workers from that country (Wilson, 2005: 191). Nonetheless, some diplomats claimed they did not observe this in practice, during the negotiations in the Council, at least not at the level of experts.²⁰⁸

There have been Polish – German initiatives undertaken to date, such as a joint Polish-German non-paper presented by the two ministers of foreign affairs to their EU

²⁰² Interview (no. 40)

²⁰³ The Southern States are sometimes referred to as the “Roman Empire” or “Club Med” and include France, Italy, Spain, associating Belgium, Portugal and Greece on some matters (Interview, no. 43).

²⁰⁴ Interview (no. 38)

²⁰⁵ Interview (no. 16)

²⁰⁶ Interviews (no. 36, 37, 38, 39, 40)

²⁰⁷ Interview (no. 26)

²⁰⁸ Interview (no. 45)

counterparts in October 2004 or the Polish-German cooperation when Javier Solana and Benita Ferrero - Waldner spelt out their ten-point plan (which was discussed earlier in the chapter, p. 152). Informally, the German diplomats have encouraged the Poles to play a more active role in lobbying for the Union's involvement in the East.²⁰⁹ Nonetheless, there are still differences between the two neighbours regarding, for example, visa facilitation issues or their relations with Russia.

Undoubtedly, the negative results of the referenda on the Constitutional Treaty in France and the Netherlands also contributed to an overall reluctance to raise the issue of prospective membership for Ukraine. As one EU official directly expressed it, "they clearly took the enlargement off the table for the foreseeable future".²¹⁰ For example, former President of France, Jacques Chirac, already announced that any future enlargement of the EU would have to be the subject of a referendum in that country. One national representative claimed that the current political stance of many member states towards Ukraine is the result of being "super-tired of enlargement".²¹¹ In the light of an evident lack of chances to achieve an agreement, the strategies of some newcomers, like Poland and Lithuania, indeed changed. They have played an active role in promoting Ukraine to Market Economy Status (MES),²¹² they advocated the Union's support for Ukrainian WTO membership as well as prompt establishment of the Free Trade Area (FTA), they added 10 points to the Action Plan after the Orange Revolution and, more recently, lobbied in favour of adding new elements to the new enhanced agreement.

Finally, the role of the EU institutional actors: the Commission and the Council Secretariat General (DG E) must be acknowledged, as the institutional settings provide them with some substantial powers.²¹³ The Commission has the privilege of drafting the

²⁰⁹ Interview (no. 45)

²¹⁰ Interview (no. 44)

²¹¹ Interviews (no. 42)

²¹² With the reservations regarding this issue coming from Italy, France, Spain and Belgium, a compromise was finally agreed and the final text referred to the Commission granting the MES as opposed to the EU as such. Apart from the interested new member states, a greater role was also played by the British Presidency that pushed to achieve a consensus and closing the matter and the Commission.

²¹³ In addition, it should be noted that some preliminary empirical evidence points to the general increase of the coordinating role played by supranational actors in CFSP after the enlargement. This results, to a large extent, from a greater number of actors around the table.

agreements (or Action Plans) and to the extent that it has to ask the approval of the Council for any new versions, such a drafting right puts it in a stronger position than it is usually the case in foreign policy in its traditional meaning.²¹⁴ Furthermore, together with the Council Secretariat General, it conducts the negotiations with the Ukrainians, bound by the mandate granted by the member states. The approach of these actors is technocratic, underpinned by the basic belief that via the necessary, often incremental changes, Ukraine will inevitably come closer to the EU and fulfil the membership criteria. An example of this stance was the position taken by the Commission, after the Orange Revolution. It refused to re-negotiate the Action Plan with the new government, on the grounds that the reforms were already there, regardless of which government was in charge of implementation. Hence, the Action Plan was signed without any alterations. As a rather political gesture, without any crucial changes introduced, the main incentives were emphasized in the 10 points spelled out in the text of the GAERC Conclusions in February 2005 (GAERC, 2005b).

The last point to be made with regard to the different policies of the member states is that occasionally different views are presented by their representatives on a bilateral basis. This is a potential threat to the effectiveness of the EU and has been pointed out as a problem - particularly by officials from EU institutions. For example, in the official declarations of the new member states, there is a clear advocacy of prompt Ukrainian accession. Moreover, the French foreign minister expressed his support for granting Ukraine the status of a Free Market Economy at precisely the time that his representative in the Council was halting an agreement on this matter.²¹⁵ The issue of coherence is further complicated by the fact that there are often diverging interests within the member states themselves, depending on the ministry involved, for example, the Polish MFA may have a different view regarding any possible agreement with Ukraine than the Ministry of Agriculture or Internal Affairs. Overall, however, it has been noted by several members

²¹⁴ As one representative put it, the fact that the Commission is in charge of drafting the agreement is beneficial, since if it was up to the member states, there is a high chance there would be no draft at all (Interview, no. 45).

²¹⁵ As reported in the interviews this happened when the French Foreign Minister Philippe Douste-Blazy claimed, while visiting Kiev, that Ukraine fulfilled the criteria to receive the MES. Reported in media coverage of the visit, for example: <http://www.finanznachrichten.de/nachrichten-2005-11/artikel-1981733.asp> or http://www.eubusiness.com/East_Europe/051111145119.lvke0z9g

of the COEST Working Group that the consensus on technical matters is progressively achieved without major obstacles.

This section of the chapter introduced the general policy of the EU towards Ukraine and outlined the main differences between the member states regarding certain issues in the EU-Ukrainian relations. This was necessary in order to place Poland in the picture and identify any changes its membership might have caused ('uploading') on the one hand and the impact that the EU's policy had on the Polish approach to Ukraine ('downloading') on the other. This is done in the following section of this chapter.

Poland and the EU's policy towards Ukraine

Polish policy towards Ukraine is determined by the fact that the latter is Poland's immediate neighbour, thus, as in the case of Belarus, Poland's view of EU-Ukrainian relations differs from those of some other member states. Ukraine has always played a special role in Polish foreign policy. Its importance was emphasized by politicians and scholars, especially in terms of its geopolitical location (see, for example, Samuel Huntington's thesis in "Clash of Civilizations", 1996, or Zbigniew Brzezinski in "The Grand Chessboard", 1997). In fact, Polish policy towards Ukraine was predominantly built upon these geopolitical assumptions and the perceived necessity to counter-balance Russia in the region, or of "repelling neo-imperial tendencies (real or perceived) on the other side of its eastern border" (Lang, 2005: 1). This thesis was evident in a recent claim by President Aleksander Kwaśniewski (2004), who stated, using quite direct language, that Russia was re-claiming its geopolitical role in the world, "but why should it also re-gain 50 million Ukrainians?". He also added that this was not only the Polish perspective, but that it was also shared by the United States. At the same time, it has been pointed out that any potential alliance between post-communist Poland and Ukraine would include the population of more than 80 million people (Prizel, 1995: 114).

The relations between the two neighbours suffered from a lack of dynamics at the beginning of the 1990's. Even though the Polish Prime Minister Hanna Suchocka

announced in August 1993 that the 'strategic partnership' with Ukraine was one of the priorities of Polish foreign policy (Menkiszak and Piotrowski, 2002: 221), in practical terms trade and economic cooperation lacked clear progress (Pavliuk, 1999: 193). Additionally, Poland was at that time seeking NATO membership and trying to improve its relations with Moscow. This contributed to a growing distance between the two neighbours, as any closer engagement with Kiev could hamper Poland's strategic goals (Menkiszak and Piotrowski, 2002: 189-190). Until 1994-1995 Polish policy towards Ukraine mainly featured formal declarations, lacking any true substance (Wolczuk, 2001).

However, after the stagnation of 1993-1994, relations between the two neighbours gained a new impetus in the mid-1990's. Around that time, a 'Polish doctrine on Ukraine' emerged, which was based on a few underlying elements. Poland recognised Ukraine as a key state for stability in Eastern Europe and acknowledged its importance as a transit state for gas and oil supplies. Thus, it was to support its NATO and EU accession (Herranz and Natorski, 2006: 7). In practical terms, this policy led to successful lobbying for Ukraine's membership of the Council of Europe (1995) and participation in the Central European Initiative of 1996 (Pavliuk, 1999: 194). At the same time, on various occasions, Russia expressed its discontent with Polish involvement in Ukrainian affairs.

When the relations between the EU and Ukraine suffered because of the policy pursued by Kuchma (especially the Gongadze case in November 2000), Poland still maintained good contacts with the Ukrainian regime and attempted to weaken any authoritarian actions in the last year of Kuchma's office. This was in line with the principle that Poland needed to retain proper relations with its strategic partner, regardless of which party was in power. Thanks to those contacts, the successful mediation of Polish politicians, in particular President Aleksander Kwaśniewski, was possible during the Orange Revolution. Furthermore, the vital role of Polish politicians during the events proved their importance to Ukrainian foreign policy (Wilson, 2005: 192; Schneider and Saurenbach, 2005:3).

The overall relations between the two neighbours have been captured by a phrase used in the Joint Declaration by the Presidents of Poland and Ukraine from 1996 (quoted in Pavliuk, 1999: 199): “The existence of an independent Ukraine helps to consolidate Polish independence, while the existence of an independent Poland helps to consolidate Ukrainian independence”. The same document identified the relations between the two states as a ‘strategic partnership’. In March 2005, the Polish MFA offered to provide expert assistance to Ukraine, aimed at establishing democratic institutions, by using Polish experiences in this field (Rotfeld, 2005). Intense Polish-Ukrainian consultations took place regarding international issues, for example joint participation in a Kosovo mission²¹⁶ and sending troops to Iraq (Herranz and Natorski, 2006: 8).

Polish interests regarding Ukraine in the EU

Considering Polish policy within the EU with relation to Ukraine, one can see that the main ideas were already expressed in the MFA’s non-paper from 2003. Nonetheless, in the period of three years (2003 – 2006), there was a shift in the positions and strategies adopted by the Polish diplomats during the internal negotiations in the Council. In the very beginning, starting from the end of the active observer period, Poland was eager to speak about the necessity of giving Ukraine prospective membership. This became especially intense after the Orange Revolution in December 2004. As shown in the previous chapter, that period was characterised by intensive (institutional) learning and socialisation. It is argued here that the failure to ‘upload’ the most important goals in the beginning of 2005, despite the positive role that Poland played in the events in Ukraine, contributed to changes in Polish strategy. Combined with Polish diplomats discovering the rules of consensus and information-sharing during the period that Poland was an active observer, it caused a pragmatic shift in the Polish approach. Such change is visible when comparing the negotiations over the declaration following the revolution with the negotiations over the ten points added to the Action Plan (January 2005) and the

²¹⁶ 530 Polish soldiers and 260 Ukrainian ones formed a battalion that contributed to the NATO-led mission in Kosovo (Pavliuk, 2000: 15).

negotiations over signing a New Enhanced Agreement (which began in February 2006). These will be discussed later in this chapter.

Advocating EU membership for Ukraine

The long-term strategic goal of endorsing Ukrainian EU membership underlines Polish policy inside the EU. Support for Ukraine's EU aspirations was indicated in the most recent Polish National Security Strategy (MFA, 2003b), which stated that "[i]n recognising Ukraine's importance for the European security and supporting its European aspirations, Poland will make its best to fill with real substance the formula of strategic partnership with that country". This is closely related to 'upgrading' the level of EU-Ukraine relations. Even prior to joining the EU Poland, in its non-paper of 2003, had been advocating the intensification of the EU-Ukraine dialogue to the level that the EU had with Russia. As an official from the Polish MFA claimed: "It is true that Russia wished to be treated differently and we have no problems with that. But, we would not like to see a country such as Ukraine being treated worse, when it comes, for example, to regional or economic policies".²¹⁷ The non-paper also identified an important strategic goal of Polish foreign policy: facilitation of prospective Ukrainian EU membership and for the time being proposed that the existing agreement with Ukraine be upgraded to an Association Agreement. As stated by the former Minister of Foreign Affairs: "without such a prospect [Ukrainians] would be devoid of perhaps the strongest possible incentive to pursue further difficult reforms" (Cimoszewicz, 2003). As will be shown later, this goal was first advocated and then 'shelved' until the right occasion, which was identified as the negotiations over the new enhanced agreement and the PCA in 2006.

The official Polish position states that Ukraine should be allowed to negotiate its entry to the EU "as soon as it is ready to do so."²¹⁸ Poland does not consider the condition of the Union's capability to accommodate the new member as necessarily, contrary to, for example, the position of France. As Polish diplomats argue, such a condition was not

²¹⁷ Interview (no. 5)

²¹⁸ Interview (no. 26)

required when the decision of Polish accession had been taken, and the internal reforms in Ukraine could always follow the political decision to enlarge the EU. The membership prospect of Ukraine is considered as potentially a very effective incentive for internal reforms and the example used frequently to support this is the fact that such strategy worked in the case of the CEECs and the Western Balkans. It is also argued that the reforms have already started in Ukraine, especially relating to the democratization of the public sphere, and the freedom of the media. Taking into account such Polish positions, it becomes apparent that the introduction of the ENP, grouping Ukraine with the states without membership aspirations, was not warmly welcomed by the Poles. This is why any possible end or substantial transformation of the ENP, allowing for more privileged relations with Ukraine, would be appreciated by the Polish side.

It should also be mentioned that Poland has been conducting something of a 'dual' policy towards its Eastern neighbour. MFA officials and diplomats within EU circles presented different positions to those often expressed by high-level politicians in bilateral relations. Bilaterally, Poland is portraying itself as a very strong supporter of Ukrainian EU membership. For example, the newly elected President Lech Kaczyński, during his visit to Ukraine between 28 February and 1 March 2006, declared that he would advocate on behalf of Poland Ukrainian interests in relation to NATO and the EU.²¹⁹ He has also expressed his support for the 'Orange Coalition' in the forthcoming parliamentary elections²²⁰ (the EU, in principle does not support any concrete parties or persons, just democratic processes and fair elections). At the same time, in the internal meetings within the Council, Poland accepted for the moment that the prospect of Ukrainian EU membership would not be raised in any formal discussions. As such, it is also not trying to exert pressure to put this point on the agenda. Polish diplomats acknowledged that it is not in the long-term interest of the state to present radical positions that have no chance of being accepted by the other member states. This may serve as a proof of Europeanisation as regards behavioural norms, but does not support the argument of

²¹⁹ „L.Kaczyński: Polska rzecznikiem Ukrainy”, PAP, Gazeta Wyborcza on-line, 28.02.06, www.gazeta.pl

²²⁰ EuroPAP: Wizyta Prezydenta Kaczyńskiego na Ukrainie, 01.03.06, www.euro.pap.pl.

change in the case of a vital national interest. In sum, national adaptation takes place here but rather in terms of a shift in strategies than a shift in perceived interests.

The initially strong Polish statements regarding future Ukrainian EU membership were provocative to some other EU member states. This led to the Presidencies merely noting the radical position that did not follow the consensus, and which would then be “forgotten”.²²¹ It was acknowledged by the Polish decision-makers that there was strong opposition to such proposals within the Council. They repeatedly made attempts to refer to European norms and interests. As one Polish diplomat explained: “Here, in the institutions, there is a specific language being used, which is not the case in bilateral relations.”²²² At the same time, the Poles started to promote their ideas regarding Ukraine at various different levels of the decision-making process in the Council (from the lower experts’ level of COEST to the higher levels of the Ambassadors in COREPER II and the Ministers in GAERC), bilaterally (for example assigning the task to Polish embassies in the EU member states or during the talks of the Minister of Foreign Affairs with the Commissioner for external relations or High Representative Solana) or other multilateral organisations (e.g. within the regional organisations such as the Visegrad Group). Still, it seems that these efforts were always primarily aimed at the ‘like-minded’ countries that were already positively responding to Polish initiatives. The discussions with the countries of different preferences were still not given enough importance and attention.

Visa regime: an example of circular Europeanisation

Even though visa issues have traditionally been treated as part of third-pillar policies in the EU (now partially communitarised), they are very closely related to foreign policy and often used as its instrument. Hence, an important change in the overall Polish-Ukrainian relations was due to Poland’s obligation to introduce a new, stricter visa regime once it joined the EU. Prior to the accession the movement of people between the two states was visa-free. The border-regime had to become more restricted due to the

²²¹ Interview (no. 23)

²²² Interview (no. 23)

entry requirement of harmonising the visa policy with that of the EU. In this perspective, the introduction of visas for Ukrainian citizens in October 2003 was seen as having potentially negative consequences for Polish-Ukrainian relations and hence the Poles delayed introducing the measure (Herranz and Natorki, 2006:12-13).

Subsequently, one of the major Polish goals to be 'uploaded' to the EU level was the facilitation of this visa regime with Ukraine, which was perceived as an instrument of the "Europeanisation of Ukraine" (Herranz and Natorki, 2006: 14). As claimed by one Polish diplomat, Poland was trying to convince its European partners that Ukrainian citizens should be allowed to benefit from at least as much consideration in visa regimes as the Russians (EuroPAP, 2005). Some Polish experts argued that the EU should have already introduced free visas for Ukrainians in the aftermath of the Orange revolution (Żurawski vel Grajewski, 2007: 82). This is yet another example of Poland trying to counterbalance EU - Russia relations with the EU - Ukraine relationship.

The example of the visa regime shows the circular nature of the process of Europeanisation. First, even though it was perceived as harmful for Polish foreign policy, Poland had to introduce adjustments to its visa regime. This action was caused by strong adaptational pressures from the EU, as any non-compliance could endanger or at least delay the whole project of EU accession. However, as soon as Poland joined the Union, it started a campaign in order to 'repair the damage' and to reduce the costly misfit. The first successes in this field were noted in April 2006, when the EU decided that the member states were free to exempt Ukrainians from the Schengen visa fees.

Working with the EU at the time of the Orange Revolution

The unexpected events in Ukraine, prompted by the presidential elections in November 2004 proved to be the first real test of whether Polish decision-makers would decide to take part in events on just a bilateral basis or whether they would go to Ukraine 'with Europe'. It ought to be recalled that Europeanisation is usually least expected in relation to countries or issues of special national importance for the member states. There are

examples of ‘ring-fencing’ (not involving the EU in the matters) or in other words, retaining the issues as ‘*domaines réservés*’ (Manners and Whitman, 2000: 11 and 266). This could be expected to happen with Polish-Ukrainian relations and particularly in relation to the way that Poland chose to deal with the Orange Revolution. Such ‘ring-fencing’ would be an argument against the Europeanisation of Polish foreign policy. This section of the chapter analyses whether one can find traces of Europeanisation in the case of the Orange Revolution. It is discussed here in two parts. The first one provides a brief background of the role played by Poland and the EU. The second part refers to the European response to the developments in Ukraine. It analyses the diplomatic initiatives undertaken by Poland in order to influence the final outcome of the EU’s policy.

For more than a decade, Poland had established good contacts in Ukraine, including advisors to political parties and therefore had access to reliable and updated information from the region. President Aleksander Kwaśniewski was asked to facilitate the talks by both sides of the ‘Orange’ conflict on 23 November 2004 (Kwaśniewski, 2004). He went to Ukraine at the request of President Leonid Kuchma and Victor Yushchenko, with a three-fold mandate: finding the right formula to repeat the elections, conduct a political dialogue and achieve a full renunciation of the use of force (Kwaśniewski, 2005). Incidentally, Kuchma owed Kwaśniewski a favour, as the latter continued to talk to him during the infamous Gongadze-gate (Wilson, 2005: 138). Later, the Polish President made a famous phone-call to Javier Solana and convinced him to get involved in Ukraine.²²³ The High Representative held emergency meetings with the member states to learn about their approach to the situation. Generally, as one official claimed,²²⁴ Solana is trusted by the EU member states and hence his participation in the mission was a kind of assurance for the member states of a balanced approach. Apparently, some representatives feared that the new member states would chose to act less as mediators instead favouring one of the parties involved.

²²³ Interview (no. 40)

²²⁴ Interview (no. 40)

During the events, Solana was very careful not to be perceived as a mediator, but as a facilitator for discussions. Together with the two Heads of States from the new member states, Kwaśniewski and the President of Lithuania, Valdas Adamkus, Solana played an important role in the negotiations. Many Polish politicians became involved in Ukraine, in support of Yuschenko, like the former president and Nobel price winner Lech Wałęsa, who delivered a passionate speech to the Ukrainian crowds on 25 November and is also believed to have played a conciliatory role in informal talks (Wilson, 2005: 138).

In his account of the events, Kwaśniewski (2005) emphasised the importance of the personal contacts he established among the Ukrainian politicians from both sides involved in the conflict. He was reported as saying: “During the nine years of my presidency, I got to know all those personalities. (...) They were convinced that I was the only one who was able to solve the conflict” (Normann, 2007: 171). He claimed that thanks to this, he was able to request that the miners be allowed to walk through the city of Kiev. This is confirmed by the account of the events given by Wilson (2005: 139), with a comment that the Polish president was able to call practically any Ukrainian politician, due to his excellent contacts in that country. During the revolution, Kwaśniewski held phone conversations, seeking and ensuring the support of George Bush, Jacques Chirac, Gerhard Schroeder, the President of the European Council, at the time Jan Peter Balkenende, and Tony Blair.

Aleksander Kwaśniewski provided an important answer to why he decided to play a more moderate role and why Poland made such a great effort in order to engage the EU High Representative Solana in Ukraine. He asserted:

“The Polish contribution, conducted without any restrictions, could lead to the situation when the world would consider the idea of re-running the elections as the Polish action. This is why it was so important to involve Adamkus, Solana and the representatives of Russia and the OSCE in the mediation”.

He also gave another explanation:

“I was trying to give the whole affair a European significance and not only a Polish one. For Poland it was risky to take sides in a conflict with Russia here, Poland over there, Ukraine in the middle, with the splendid isolation of the EU. Therefore, without any delay, I started talks with the High Representative Solana, our MEPs exerted pressure and he understood he had to act” (Kwaśniewski, 2004).

In light of the above, the willingness to ‘internationalise’ the events in Ukraine and involve the EU, may be understood in different ways. First, the involvement of the EU was perceived as a ‘legitimising’ factor for Polish national foreign policy. As the EU became involved, the Polish action could no longer be perceived as the mere pursuit of Polish geo-strategic goals. The Poles used the EU as an ‘extension’ to pursue a policy strategic to its national security. At the same time, however, they intended to raise their profile within the EU.

As Kwaśniewski explained (2005), even though some member states were irritated that Poland supported the Ukrainian case so strongly, at least they appreciated that Poland was “not just one of the new member states that was busy only arranging its offices in Brussels – they also knew how to behave in this new environment”. Such perception was confirmed not only by external observers (e.g. Schneider and Saurenbach, 2005: 3) but also by a diplomat from a much lower level of decision-making, the Polish expert from the Council Working Group (COEST). This clearly shows that ‘uploading’ was an important matter for the Poles in the case of Ukraine and the Orange Revolution. The EU was perceived by decision-makers as an important forum in which to raise the problem, instead of just dealing with it at the national level and this is an important element in the Europeanisation process. It also proves, once again, that Poland had great ambitions to be an important ‘player’ in the EU’s policy towards the East.

The expert from COEST also claimed that Polish participation during the Orange Revolution gained him some credit within the group and he found it easier to communicate his ideas, which would usually gain increased attention.²²⁵ On the other hand, Poland was criticised by some of the smaller member states, such as the Visegrad partners, who complained that they were not consulted by President Kwaśniewski on his activities in Ukraine (Roth, 2007a: 102). This demonstrated the weakness of Poland as a prospective leader of a coalition of states, advocating for example EU membership for Ukraine and it may be seen as a potential obstacle to effective Polish ‘uploading’.

Establishing the working link between working within the EU and developing their own national policy may well have reaffirmed the already prevailing belief among the Polish officials that the CFSP should be treated as an opportunity for national foreign policy. In this regard, as asserted by Geoffrey Edwards (2006), “the Orange Revolution in Ukraine was a turning point, leading many CEECs to take the CFSP and the High Representatives seriously”.

European response to the Orange Revolution

After the success of the Orange Revolution, the EU welcomed the election of the new President and stressed its “full support for President Yushchenko and the Ukrainian people”, claiming it was “pleased at the extensive and ambitious political reforms” (GAERC, 2005a). Still, it became apparent that “a large part of the EU (...) seemed determined that nothing had changed” (Wilson, 2005: 190). When drafting the text, first at the level of the Working Group (COEST) as usual, some representatives wanted to express gratitude to the parties involved, like the High Representative Solana and the relevant international organizations. The Polish delegation wished to have the name of President Kwaśniewski mentioned as well, which in turn prompted other delegations, like the Lithuanians, to have their representatives included in the text. The Poles raised the issue at the higher level of COREPER II, which was not well received by several other

²²⁵ Interview (no. 23)

delegations and EU officials.²²⁶ As one of them claimed: “I think it would have probably been wiser not to push for any names there. Poland never pushed for a lie, it is true, but probably it would have been better if they had played a bit less. (...) I would imagine you learn with time and another time there would be a different reaction”.²²⁷ Eventually, the references did not appear in the final text.

As a direct aftermath of the Orange Revolution, the Poles and Lithuanians tried to pursue their long-term strategic goal and bring the issue of prospective membership for Ukraine to the EU table. As early as December 2004, the Polish Prime Minister Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz called for making a clear membership offer to Ukraine (Roth, 2007b: 57). However, the idea still had too few supporters within the EU and therefore could not be implemented. Even though most reactions to the Polish role were positive, there were those who accused the Poles yet again, of “revanchism in Europe” (Normann, 2007: 171) and “acting under the US influence”, as the President of the European Parliament put it in private (Wilson, 2005: 190).

The Action Plan with Ukraine had been negotiated before the Orange Revolution took place. The new government, therefore, was reluctant to sign it for at least two reasons. Firstly, because it had been negotiated by the old government and secondly, because they were hoping to include the clause relating to prospective membership. Polish diplomats were actively promoting an idea that the EU should change the Action Plan and create the so-called ‘Action Plan PLUS’ and so deliver a stronger message to the Ukrainians. As claimed by President Kwaśniewski (2005) in January: “The Action Plan has to be more courageous and contain a date when the EU could start talks about the prospective accession of Ukraine”. Nonetheless, the Commission took a firm stand that there would be no re-negotiations taking place, as the reforms included in the Action Plan had to be introduced by any government in power. Polish diplomats claimed that they had played an active part in convincing their Ukrainian colleagues that they should agree to what was being put on the table, as there was nothing more to be gained at that moment. This is

²²⁶ Interviews (no. 18 and 40)

²²⁷ Interview (no. 40)

another aspect of the Europeanisation of Polish foreign policy and the new role for its diplomats, acting as advocates for European approach towards third countries.

In its Conclusions the Council used a phrase that had often been used in the past and it acknowledged “Ukraine’s European aspirations”, welcoming “Ukraine’s European choice” (GAERC, 2004b: 14). It did not go as far as was suggested in the joint German-Polish-Lithuanian document from January (Gromadzki et al, 2005: 15). Nonetheless, Poland was satisfied that the phrase was finally kept in the text, even though this was in cautious language. Some reservations were expressed by the delegations of Spain, Portugal and France. Polish proposals went even further, proposing the building of deep and intensive relations with Ukraine. However, even this position did not find initial support among the other member states, and was finally moved to the end of the text. The last point of the Conclusion was also added after the Polish input and referred to providing assistance to Ukraine through the relevant instruments “in order to help to pursue the reform process”. Overall, the ten points were not very innovative when it came to substance and each of them was connected to the Action Plan itself.²²⁸ The significance of adopting the points was rather political, a gesture on the part of the EU towards the new Ukrainian President.

The ‘small steps’ approach and negotiating the New Enhanced Agreement

After the failure to launch a powerful European response to the Orange Revolution, Poland has accepted that prospect of Ukrainian EU membership was off the table and it seemed that the strategy of ‘small steps’ and active promotion of medium-term goals prevailed. The strategic goal of future Ukrainian EU membership, as defined in the non-paper from 2003 (MFA, 2003a), still remained unchanged, but the Polish side did not want to irritate its European partners and was waiting for the right moment to bring the issue back to the discussions. As one EU official expressed it:

²²⁸ Even though some authors would disagree with this claim. They argued for their relative significance and called for including them into a long-term framework (Gromadzki and Suszko, 2005: 14).

“those pushing for membership for Ukraine noticed that if they come to the meeting and say let’s grant membership then nothing happens; but if they come and say, let’s engage in building up a free trade area, let’s try to do enhanced agreement, slowly, slowly, things move ahead”.²²⁹

This proves that there has been a shift in the strategies, caused by unsuccessful previous initiatives and a Polish acknowledgment of the prevailing rules of negotiations and lobbying for one’s interests in Brussels. Once again, one can observe Europeanisation in the domain of behaviour rather than strategic goals of national foreign policy.

Meanwhile, at the beginning of 2005, the following main aims could be identified in the strategy of Polish diplomacy: promoting the strengthening of the political and security dialogue between the EU and Ukraine; support for granting Ukraine MES status as soon as possible; launching negotiations on the FTA and the new agreement that would in time replace the PCA, and advocating visa-facilitation. The FTA, according to the Polish view, should slowly prepare the Ukrainian side for participation in the common market.

One of these points, granting Ukraine MES status, was successfully concluded at the end of the British Presidency in December 2005. The efforts of Poland, alongside other new member states, were also supported by the active position of the UK Presidency and the Commission, who pushed for achieving consensus and a prompt closure. At the last stage of the negotiations, reservations were made by the delegations of Italy, France, Spain and Belgium. A compromise was agreed so that the final text would refer to the EU and not the member states granting MES status. The Polish representative remained in close contact with Warsaw, convincing the capital that such a consensus was worth accepting.²³⁰

²²⁹ Interview (no. 40)

²³⁰ Interviews (no. 23 and 45)

At the beginning of 2006, the talks at expert level in COEST focused on the issue of negotiating a new, enhanced agreement with the Ukrainians. As stated in the Council Conclusions from 21 February 2005, the EU would

“initiate early consultations on an enhanced agreement between EU and Ukraine, to replace the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement at the end of its initial ten-year period, as soon as the political priorities of the Action Plan have been addressed” (GAERC, 2005b).

As it happened, the Ukrainian parliamentary elections in March lived up to the international standards and thus opened the way to negotiations on the new agreement.

The document, as usual, was to be drafted by the Commission. Even before it was put on the table, the member states expressed their ideas and doubts as to its future nature. The Poles took a very active part in the discussions. The Polish representative was the first one to speak of the possibility of calling the new document an Association Agreement. The bottom line of Polish diplomacy was at least to achieve a reference in the text to article 49 of the EU Treaty.²³¹ Once again, the Poles decided to give up on the more straightforward push for European membership in the negotiations, considering the political atmosphere was not right and thus, the possibilities of consensus on the matter close to zero.²³²

It soon turned out, that even a modest proposal was difficult to argue for²³³ and did not receive much support. Apparently, in such circumstances, the bottom line was lowered even further, and the Poles wanted to make sure that there would be no wording in the new agreement pointing to the fact that enlargement was not on the agenda. They also raised an argument that if the EU did not offer anything new to Ukraine, the latter could refuse to sign the document altogether. The FTA was included in the PCA, so the new agreement would not be adding this important new element. They also insisted that the

²³¹ Interview (no. 45)

²³² Interview (no. 45)

²³³ Interview (no. 46)

new agreement contained the commitment to common values, such as democracy and rule of law, good governance, respect for human and minority rights, as well as a market economy and sustainable development.

Nevertheless, the issue of prospective membership did come up at this early stage of the talks, but it was brought up not by the Poles but by a delegation of another new member state (Slovakia). It was not only not backed by the Poles, for the reasons explained above, but also caused some mild irritation among the Polish diplomats, as the initiative was perceived as potentially harmful for the long-term goal and unnecessarily irritating for some other member states. This indicates a very clear shift in strategies, bearing in mind the fact that the long-term interest of bringing Ukraine to the EU remained unchanged. Another issue raised by the Poles, also in bilateral talks with the Ukrainian side, was the necessity to 'get out of the ENP', as the framework did not live up to the expectations of a country with European membership aspirations. The Action Plan was thus criticized for not containing enough substance.

Conclusions: first successes with policy 'uploading' in the case of Ukraine

Since Poland joined the EU, policy towards Ukraine has remained the focal point of Polish interest in the East. As a matter of utmost importance for the country's security and bilateral relations, one could doubt whether this policy would ever become a subject of Europeanisation processes. There are examples in the literature of the policies which have been 'ring-fenced' by the member states as special relationships or policies that simply should not be raised within EU circles (Manners and Whitman, 2000: 11).

The Ukrainian case has shown the shift in the strategies and the behaviour of Polish diplomats. In the beginning they spoke strongly in favour of Ukrainian membership, but quickly discovered that this was not the right 'way-of-doing-things' in the Council. Their radical positions were not 'taken on board' by the Presidencies. Therefore, instead of pushing for the policies that were unacceptable to some EU member states (like the

membership perspective for Ukraine), they found the ways to build coalitions of 'like-minded states' but also to cooperate with the institutions. As one of the diplomats stated:

“We have now learnt that there is a general line that is presented by the Secretariat General. Also the Commission has its internal plan regarding Ukraine. Now, the game is to convince the other states not to put a halt to these plans. Our role is to support the institutions that are acting in our interest and not to sell our foreign policy as a separate dossier”.²³⁴

This was only possible after the enlargement and could partly explain the failure to launch the Eastern dimension (or at least its main ideas) with more success earlier.

Polish participation in the Orange Revolution was notably the biggest success of its Eastern policy to date. However, the aftermath remains a mixed record for the Poles with a rather disillusioning experience of not being able to convince their partners to grant Ukraine the prospect of membership. It was also a painful lesson of the way in which foreign policy is made in Brussels – as long as there were states opposing any Polish initiative, it would not have any chances of success. At the same time, events showed how the CFSP was perceived by the Polish elites and how they tried to use it in pursuit of national policy goals. The public discourse reveals the belief that the European platform can provide legitimacy and sometimes also 'weight' to the national policy. Even though, as shown by the example of Ukraine, it comes with the cost of compromising one's own goals, the trade-off was perceived as worth accepting.

²³⁴ Interview (no. 23)

CHAPTER 6

POLAND, THE EU AND POLICY TOWARDS BELARUS

Introduction

This chapter continues the analysis of the Europeanisation of the substance of Polish foreign policy. In order to identify change and possible Polish influence on EU policy towards Belarus, the chapter begins with an analysis of the policy that the Union and its member states have pursued towards Belarus. It emphasises the following two aspects: a historical outline of the relationship and an analysis of the policy goals that the EU member states have been able to agree on, as well as those where divergence still persists. This serves the objective of providing the context to the more detailed analysis of the Polish role in EU relations with Belarus that follows in the second part of the chapter. This is where the changes that Poland had to introduce prior to enlargement (national adaptation) are discussed followed by an analysis of the stance that Poland took towards the EU's Belarus policy once it became a member of the EU. The focus in the second part of the chapter is on a few chosen examples: the official EU policy on contacts with the Belarusian government discussed in November 2004 including the question of a visa regime for citizens of Belarus; the issue of harassment of the Union of Poles in Belarus (UPB) in 2005 and the EU response to the unsatisfactory (from a democratic perspective) Presidential elections in Belarus in March 2006. By so doing, this chapter attempts to determine the impact that Polish representatives made on EU policy and also whether there were any significant changes in their behaviour or the strategies that they pursued during the period in question.

The Policy of the EU and its member states towards Belarus

Since the 2004 enlargement, the EU has become a direct neighbour of Belarus but is not linked to it by any formal agreement. Such a situation poses an evident challenge for the

EU, which has recently described the promotion of security in its neighbourhood amongst its top three strategic objectives (ESS, 2003). Prior to 2004, Belarus remained largely off the EU political radar, but this changed once the new member states made their presence felt in the Council. Increased attention was given to the effort to create a coherent policy towards the EU's neighbours. In the case of Belarus, the EU's interest has been strengthened further by the fact that significant energy supplies from Russia to the EU are delivered through Belarusian territories.

Nevertheless, in spite of the EU's ambitions to promote democracy as a "force for good" (Council of the EU, 2003), its policy has had arguably no substantial effect on Belarus and neither conditionality nor the restrictive measures that have been introduced have had any real impact. In this case the EU's famous 'power of attraction' does not seem to work. Instead, the EU found itself at an impasse without an exit strategy, facing "the challenge of fostering the conditions for democracy in a climate hostile to its fundamental principles" (Ferrero-Waldner). As Dov Lynch (2006: 156) has put it: "[t]he problem with our attempts to influence political developments in Minsk is that Alyaksandr Lukashenka could not care less". The current domestic conditions in Belarus are also advantageous for the president, as, in spite of the measures undertaken by the EU, Belarus has recently experienced economic growth, 11% in 2004 and 8% in 2005, mainly as a result of the low prices of oil and gas imported from Russia (Gromadzki and Vesely, 2006: 13).

The (lack of) EU-Belarus relations

After Belarus gained independence in 1991, bilateral relations with the EU progressed with the negotiation of a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) in 1995. Nonetheless, the document never came into force due to the internal situation in Belarus. President Alyaksandr Lukashenka has exercised authoritarian power since 1996, when he called a referendum on amending the constitution to change the country's political system and strengthen the presidential power (for more see: Burger and Minchuk, 2006). Consequently, in 1997, GAC Conclusions introduced restrictions on the EU-Belarus relationship, which meant suspending the ratification of the PCA, with any bilateral

contacts at ministerial level to be established only through the EU Presidency or Troika (GAC, 1997).²³⁵ Since that time, the EU has been pursuing a policy of “declarations” (Lynch, 2005b: 97). This usually involved expressing displeasure with for instance the way in which the elections are conducted or how the opposition was treated.

A serious crisis between the EU and Belarus began the following year, in April 1998, when a number of Western ambassadors were evicted from their embassy buildings because of what the Belarusian authorities called, ‘technical reasons’, meaning the so-called need for repairs. Some observers speculated that Lukashenka did not wish to have foreign ambassadors living so close to himself and other government officials (Burger and Minchuk, 2006: 30). This action was considered by the West as a violation of the Vienna Convention on diplomatic relations. As a result, in June, 13 diplomats from the EU member states were called back to their capitals. To make things worse, Lukashenka ordered the tearing down of the diplomatic enclosures and removed diplomatic seals from the ambassadorial residences. In response, on 13 July 1998, the EU, together with the US, introduced a visa ban on the President and 130 other officials, which lasted for seven months. It was only lifted in February 1999, when the crisis was resolved.

Since the EU-Belarus relations were formally suspended in 1997 and the EU expressed its ‘deep concern’ over the arbitrary arrests of opposition party members (GAERC, 1997), it has repeatedly used political shaming in its various declarations, condemning the actions of the Belarusian government and calling on it to embark on democratic reforms. Over the years, the discourse has become much stronger. However, there are serious doubts regarding the actual effectiveness of this declaratory policy and one of the diplomats interviewed expressed scepticism regarding the significance of the Council Conclusions for the Belarussians themselves.²³⁶ Considering the fact that the Council Conclusions are unavailable in Russian or Belarusian and that an information black out is exercised by the government, Belarusian civil society does not even recognize their

²³⁵ Troika represents the EU in external relations, falling under the scope of the second pillar and consists of the Foreign affairs Minister of the country holding the Presidency, the High Representative for CFSP and the Commissioner in charge of external relations and the ENP. The Presidency can also be assisted by a representative of the forthcoming Presidency.

²³⁶ Interview (no. 42)

existence. Still, even if they were widely known, the EU is perceived by a large part of the population as an association of states which are already unfriendly to Russia and Belarus (Lynch, 2005: 102), with recent opinion polls showing that more than 48% of respondents believe the West is 'hostile' towards Belarus.²³⁷ In this sense, the policy of the EU might be reaffirming negative attitudes in Belarus.

The first presidential elections under the changed constitutional law were held in Belarus in 2001. According to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe / Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODHIR), they did not meet the standards of democratic conduct, but were won by Lukashenka with a surprisingly strong support from the population. He claimed to have won 75.66% of the votes and this was enough to avoid the need for a second round of voting (Burger and Minchuk, 2006: 31). Subsequently, in 2002, the EU introduced a new element to its relations with Belarus, the so-called 'benchmark approach'. It was based on the policy-line set in 1997, but was designed to reward any small steps that Belarus took in the direction of democratic change (Lynch 2005b: 109). However this too proved to have little impact.

Relations between the EU and Belarus worsened further in the same year, when in September Lukashenka expelled OSCE monitors from Belarus. The EU Council noted in its November 2001 Conclusions that most of its member states were prepared to introduce another visa-ban on President Lukashenka, the Head of Presidential Administration, the Prime Minister, Chairman of the Committee of State Security and four other officials. The ban was subsequently implemented by 14 out of 15 member states. Portugal did not introduce the measure, as Lukashenka was about to attend the OSCE meeting in Lisbon (BBC, 2001). This instrument was lifted in 2003, when a new OSCE office was established in Minsk.

²³⁷ Meanwhile, president Lukashenka remains the most popular politician in the country, gaining the support of ca. 60% voters at the last elections, according to the independent polls. The data was gathered by the Independent Institute of Socio-Economic and Political Studies (IISEPS).
<http://www.iiseps.org/ecomment1.html> and <http://www.iiseps.org/edata06-041.html>

The first parliamentary elections under the 1996 constitution were held on 17 October 2004, together with the referendum on the limits of presidential term.²³⁸ They were both proclaimed by the EU to be neither free nor fair (GAERC, 2004a). A month later, the Union announced the introduction of a visa-ban²³⁹ in response and emphasised once more that the official bilateral contacts would be established solely by the Presidency, High Representative or the Troika, whereas other ministerial-level meetings would be kept to a minimum. Poland played an important role in the discussions over these Council Conclusions, arguing successfully for minimising, but not abolishing, meetings with the Belarusian officials at ministerial level. This will be discussed in the second part of this chapter.

With the development of the ENP, the EU had to make a decision regarding the place of Belarus in the new policy framework. On the one hand, it should be logically included, being one of Union's neighbours, without any membership possibilities in the foreseeable future. On the other hand, these relations had been frozen and the EU was not eager to re-establish them without any changes in the regime. Eventually, it was decided that Belarus would in theory be eligible to participate in the ENP, but this was dependent upon the practical execution of the EU demands for free and fair elections. The ENP Strategy Paper (European Commission, 2004a: 11) established that the EU long-term goals²⁴⁰ would be reinforced through the ENP, but only after fundamental political and economic reforms would Belarus be able to make use of the program. The Council Conclusions (GAERC, 2004a) from 22-23 November 2004 called on President Lukashenka and his government to "reverse their present policies and to embark on fundamental democratic and economic reforms to bring the country closer to European common values". This was

²³⁸ The question that was put in the referendum was the following: "Do you allow the first President of the Republic of Belarus Alyaksandr Hryhorevitch Lukashenka to participate in the presidential election as a candidate for the post of the President of the republic of Belarus and do you accept Part I of Article 81 of the Constitution of the Republic of Belarus in the wording as follows, 'The President shall be elected directly by the people of the Republic of Belarus for a term of five years by universal, free, equal, direct, and secret ballot'" (as quoted in Burger and Minchuk, 2006: 32). The outcome, according to Belarussian election commission was 86.2% in favour of the amendment (Ibid.).

²³⁹ The actual decision on extending the list of persons with travel restrictions was adopted in a Common position by GAERC in its Conclusions from 13 December 2004 (GAERC, 2004b).

²⁴⁰ In the Paper the goals are spelled out as "for Belarus to be a democratic, stable, reliable, and increasingly prosperous partner with which the enlarged EU will share not only common borders, but also a common agenda driven by shared values" (Commission, 2004a: 11).

later repeated in the Council Conclusions of 7 November 2005 (GAERC, 2005c), 30-31 January (GAERC, 2006a) and 10-11 April 2006 (GAERC, 2006b), which stated that “the EU wishes to have closer and better relations with Belarus (...) once the Belarusian authorities clearly demonstrate their willingness to respect democratic values, human rights and the rule of law”.

The first Country Strategy Paper on Belarus was adopted by the European Commission on 28 May 2004 (European Commission, 2004b). It listed long-term strategic goals in its relations with Belarus, namely seeking a democratic, stable, reliable and increasingly prosperous partner “with which the enlarged EU will share not only common borders, but also common agenda driven by shared values” (European Commission, 2004b: 3). This also clearly represents the emphasis put by the EU on the values, which will condition any future EU-Belarus relationship. It also anticipates EU support for Belarus in a number of policy areas, provided there is an improvement in the overall EU-Belarus relations.

The extent of the conditionality is sometimes criticized by the neighbouring states, such as Poland or Lithuania, for being ineffective with a more active approach being called for. As pointed out by Dov Lynch (2005), the policy lacks effectiveness due to a lack of sufficient incentives that could spark change. Also the alliance between Belarus and Russia is proving to be a powerful alternative to the offer of an improved relationship with the EU. As one official claimed, the EU:

“took the position of not accepting any undemocratic changes and minimizing the official contacts. (...) The idea that once something changes there we will start cooperation did not work out and still, the EU did not develop any instruments to change this situation”.²⁴¹

The Union has also responded to the most recent presidential elections that took place in Belarus in March 2006. The election campaign was different from the previous ones, in

²⁴¹ Interview (no. 5)

the sense that the authorities undertook several restrictive measures even before the onset of the campaign and sent anyone who received funds from external partners, such as US or the EU, to prison (Marple, 2006: 100). The elections were pronounced by the OSCE/ODIHR International Election Observation Mission (IEOM) as failing to meet the OSCE standards for free elections. GAERC referred to the undemocratic conduct of the Presidential elections and “condemned” (the wording was repeated three times) the use of violence by the government against the opposition, the mistreatment of the detainees and the actions towards EU citizens (GAERC, 2006b: 10). The EU reintroduced the ‘visa-ban’ on the President and the officials responsible for the violations of international standards (GAERC, 2006). In total, the ‘visa-ban’ list consisted of 31 names and the EU emphasized that it could still be extended.

In addition to the ‘visa-ban’, the Union introduced financial restrictions and froze all funds and economic resources of individuals responsible for the violation of international standards during the elections. The decision was adopted in May 2006 and in practical terms meant freezing the bank accounts of Lukashenka and another 35 officials.²⁴² Nonetheless, as many observers and even some diplomats themselves admit, the decision was very unlikely to have any practical effect and could be seen as merely symbolic. The Council decision, despite the initial reluctance of some of the member states, was also prompted by the earlier threat by some EU officials that further restrictive measures would be implemented. However, because the action was predictable, as some observers pointed out, it gave the Belarusian officials plenty of time to transfer their funds to a safe location.²⁴³ These restrictive measures have had so far arguably no or little real impact on the situation. As one EU official described it:

“It is the kind of problem we have with Belarus. We undertake these policies, which we know we have to take, because they don’t respect human rights. But in

²⁴² Common Position 2006/276/CFSP.

²⁴³ <http://service.spiegel.de/cache/international/0,1518,417069,00.html>

the end we know they are not going to react to them (...) we have manoeuvred ourselves into the position that we have no exit strategy.”²⁴⁴

In its approach towards Belarus the EU has tried to combine various instruments from different policy fields. In the conduct of coercive diplomacy both, positive incentives as well as restrictive measures were applied, which were reflected in the official ‘two-track approach’ policy. On the one hand, official bilateral contacts were limited to the Presidency, the CFSP High Representative, the Commission and the Troika. On the other hand, three assistance programmes were implemented to support democratic change, civil society and independent media.²⁴⁵ The instruments that have been used so far by the EU are included in figure 6.

Figure 6. The instruments used by the EU in relations with Belarus

- (1) political / declaratory shaming of the regime
- (2) restrictive measures
 - a. visa ban
 - b. freezing of assets
- (3) conditionality: the PCA and the ENP as positive incentives
- (4) support for the civil society
 - a. political support for the opposition
 - b. travel facilitation
 - c. support for the NGO’s
 - d. EU assistance programs
 - e. media broadcasts

It is a condition of the effectiveness of coercive diplomacy that the conditions set for the targeted country are realistic and are perceived as urgent. Such an EU approach is also based on the prior assumption of a strategic action by a targeted country, based on a cost-benefit calculus. Apparently, there is not enough at stake for the Belarusian government officials to react to the EU actions. The Union has demanded *fundamental* changes in the policy of the authorities, but arguably these demands were not backed by a powerful enough threat. It would be wishful thinking to expect Lukashenka’s regime to

²⁴⁴ Interview (no. 39)

²⁴⁵ This approach was reflected in the Council Conclusions from November 2004 (GAERC, 2004a).

dramatically change its course because of the visa ban adopted by the EU. Hence, as pointed out by some observers, the EU restrictive measures have been perceived rather as a purely symbolic political gesture, targeted mainly at the EU domestic audience. In addition, they have been used by the Belarus regime as a tool in its propaganda against the 'West'.²⁴⁶

There is currently no official Commission Delegation to Belarus in Minsk, but the Delegation in Kiev has represented the EC in Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova since September 1993. Even though, opening a delegation in Minsk is high on the Commission's agenda, there are obvious objections on the part of the Belarusian government. The principle of conditionality, that the EU normally uses towards Belarus, was 'turned around' when the latter granted an agreement for opening the Commission's regionalized Delegation in Minsk, subordinate to the Delegation in Kiev, on the condition that bilateral relations were 'normalized'.²⁴⁷ This proposal was turned down by the EU, and the result was a stalemate.²⁴⁸

The EU has undertaken a number of initiatives aimed at supporting civil society (opposition) in Belarus. It has been financing programs such as the European Humanitarian University (EHU), reopened in Vilnius, after it had been closed down by the authorities in July 2004. It has also made an attempt to support independent media broadcasts, as the regime dominates the media and uses it for its own propaganda, exerting repression for those not complying (more: Centre for Eastern Studies, 2005: 21). In autumn 2006, the EU launched regular radio news broadcast by *Deutsche Welle* and supported the programs aimed at providing other independent media services, such as satellite TV (Tapiola, 2006: 68). The Commission emphasizes that whatever the EU does in its relations with Belarus, in areas such as media broadcasts, the substance must be perceived as the balance of positions of all member states. Any bias and politicized views

²⁴⁶ For example, in response to the recent sanctions and freezing of assets and some further restrictions by Canada and the US, Lukashenka threatened to ban Western flights over Belarus, referring to the necessity of showing that the Belarussians were a proud people.

²⁴⁷ Interviews (no. 31, 37)

²⁴⁸ Interestingly, the majority of respondents to the opinion polls declared that they either did not care about this development or did not consider it as a good idea, with almost 40% supporting the opening.

<http://www.iiseeps.org/edata06-041.html>

are to be avoided.²⁴⁹ The majority of the Belarusians admit they do not have enough information about the EU and express their willingness to learn more.²⁵⁰

EU aid to Belarus has so far been delivered through the TACIS program. The EU has been delivering a few partnership programs in relations to Belarus, the most important ones being Tempus, Lien, City Twinning and the Civil Society Development Program (CSDP). The latter one covered areas, such as: media, institutional twinning and NGO's (European Commission, 2004b). In 2000-2001 and 2002-2003 TACIS funded two programs supporting civil society, each with the budget of €5 million (Jarabik, 2006: 86). In 2003, the "Belarus Action Program" 2003 allocated €6 million under TACIS²⁵¹ for the programs to be implemented before December 2007. The funding was increased after the elections in 2004 to €12 million in 2005 and 2006 (Jarabik, 2006: 90).

A criticism of the TACIS program, also expressed by Polish diplomats, is that it requires the agreement of the Belarusian authorities. Similar problems arise when the EU attempts to channel aid to NGOs in Belarus. According to the law in force they have to register their bank accounts with the Belarusian authorities. This may result in a quick end to any project funded by the EU by a simple refusal to register an NGO. This challenge has recently been partly solved by giving money to NGOs that are not formally located in Belarus. This may be conducted using another fund, administered by the Commission, the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR). Only recently did Belarus become a priority state within this programme, which does not require the approval of the regime in Minsk.

²⁴⁹ Interview (no. 31)

²⁵⁰ <http://www.iiseeps.org/edata06-042.html>

²⁵¹ The TACIS program was launched by the European Commission in 1991 and provides assistance to 12 countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

The position of the member states on the EU's policy towards Belarus

Diplomats from the EU member states and the EU institutions generally agree on the limitations of what the EU can realistically achieve in its relations with Belarus.²⁵² This is partly because, whereas there is an agreement regarding broad policy-goals, the differences still persist on the means and instruments to achieve it. Arguably, as long as there is no majority in the Council, the EU is locked in an impasse.²⁵³ Therefore, the chapter now turns to identify the points on which there is a general consensus within the Council, regarding medium and long-term goals. Then it proceeds by pinpointing the issues where no agreement has been reached so far because of different member state interests. The Polish position will be discussed here, but a more detailed analysis of Polish interests will follow in the next part of the chapter.

There is general consensus among the member states regarding the very broad long-term policy goals towards Belarus. They were spelled out in various EU documents, such as the ESS (Council of the EU, 2003) or the ENP Strategy Paper (European Commission, 2004a). The ESS defined building security in the neighbourhood as one of the Union's strategic objectives. This should be achieved by promoting "a ring of well governed countries to the East of the European Union" (Council of the EU, 2003: 8). The document also expressed a desire to tackle political problems and extend the benefits of economic and political cooperation (Council of the EU, 2003: 8.). On a number of occasions, the EU has called on the Belarusian government to "reverse their present policies and to embark on fundamental democratic and economic reforms to bring the country closer to European common values" (GAERC, 2004a).²⁵⁴ The clear desire to foster democratic change in Belarus was also expressed by one of the Senior Advisors to High

²⁵² This should not be considered as something exclusively subscribed to the EU. Other international players, such as the US, also aiming to "democratise" Belarus, have also been faced with similar challenges and often admitted there is not much that could be done at present, when any military intervention is clearly ruled out (for the US position see e.g. Shepherd, 2006).

²⁵³ Interview (no. 36)

²⁵⁴ This was later repeated in both the 7 November and the 30-31 January 2006 Council Conclusions, stating that "the EU wishes to have closer and better relations with Belarus (...) once the Belarusian authorities clearly demonstrate their willingness to respect democratic values, human rights and the rule of law" (GAERC, 2006a).

Representative Solana, who claimed that the aim of the EU was to “support the Belarusian population in assuming control of its own destiny, through the establishment of the democratic process” (Tapiola, 2006: 70). Nonetheless, the formulation of these goals remains very vague, which can be illustrated best by the EU expressing its commitment to a process that would lead Belarus to playing “a meaningful role on the European continent” (GAERC, 1997), whatever this rather broad phrase may mean.

As far as there is consensus on the fundamental goal, there is less agreement among the member states when it comes to the short-term goals. Indeed, it is easier to detect what the EU would *not* like to be perceived to be doing and this can be gauged against the rhetoric used by the US administration. Most member states would be reluctant to subscribe to the strong US approach, which openly speaks about the time for regime-change and describes Belarus as the “last dictatorship in Europe” or an “outpost of tyranny” (BBC, 2005). President Bush, after signing the Belarus Democracy Act in 2004, has directly said that there was “no place in a Europe whole and free for a regime of this kind” (quoted in Shepherd, 2006: 71). The discourse used by the American administration is in clear contrast with the recent speech by Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner (2006a) in which she refers to the need for “changing mindsets, not regimes” and to the preference of the EU for coercive diplomacy.

In practice, there appear to be three alternative EU approaches towards Belarus and most discussions revolve around them. They are: further isolation, engagement and no change in the current policy. Some of the new member states from Central Eastern Europe, like Poland or Lithuania, tend to be vocal and outspoken in their perception of the EU’s policy towards Belarus, even described by some as ‘aggressive’. The newcomers have often argued for stricter isolation of the regime and blame the Commission for ineffective and inflexible management of some of its instruments.²⁵⁵ Still, one EU official described a more general feeling that the regime change would take the EU “down a dangerous path, in contradiction with some of our values”²⁵⁶ and hence there was not much the EU

²⁵⁵ Even a more radical approach is presented by the Members of the European Parliament.

²⁵⁶ Interview (no. 44)

could do. Others argue that it is the population of the country itself that has to decide that 'enough is enough'. This, arguably, leaves the EU with temporary agreement over what goal it does not want to work towards, but little alternative, considering diverging views of the member states. As a diplomat from a new member state described the situation: "there are two ways: a radical one or cooperation with the regime and we have to make a choice, because the in-between does not bring any results."²⁵⁷ In the case of some new member states, among them Poland, one can observe a tension in any attempt to define the main lines of the policy towards Belarus. On the one hand, Polish diplomats admit themselves they should avoid isolating the neighbouring country for practical reasons. However, on the other hand, for political reasons and in order to avoid accusations of cooperation with undemocratic regimes, sometimes the political discourse seems more radical than some would wish.

Nonetheless, there are actors who argue for maintaining precisely this 'in-between policy'. The position of some member states, generally supported by the Commission, is that the approach should be based on restrictions imposed on the Belarusian authorities and at the same time the provision of support for civil society movements. This policy is known as a 'two-track' approach. Its proponents argue against providing support to any particular opposition leader, as advocated by other (mainly new) member states, on the grounds that democracy cannot be forced from outside and "democratic change is a long term project which requires sustained commitment from us all" (Ferrero-Waldner 2006a; Lynch, 2005b: 105). This approach thus foresees change as a longer-term process. It depends on developing the middle class in Belarus by developing people-to-people contacts. In practical terms, the proponents argue for continuation of the policy pursued so far.

Finally, there is another idea sometimes brought up in informal talks between officials in Brussels about further engagement with Belarus. Because of the current political situation after the undemocratic conduct of the presidential elections, it is generally accepted that the time is not currently right for any formal proposals towards increased engagement.

²⁵⁷ Interview (no. 32)

Nonetheless, there are requests made, for future Presidencies to launch a discussion on possible future changes in the EU-Belarus relationship.²⁵⁸ As one Swedish diplomat claimed, while pressure on the regime should be sustained, “the attention should be shifted towards young Belarussians, including the officials at different levels of administration, as they possess the knowledge that may be useful in times of changes” (Jan Henrig in: Wągrowka, 2006: 8). The difference still persists on issues such as who should be involved in the dialogue (which level of officials). The proponents, including some Polish diplomats, argue that only by socializing the mid-level administration or engaging in a dialogue with the officials and politicians, can the EU exert any effect on the actual policy conduct. The critics of this argument point out that any engagement would be equal to legitimizing the undemocratic actions by the authorities and stand in opposition to the EU values.

Finally, some of the new member states, like Poland or Lithuania, have been very actively promoting the easing of travel restrictions for Belarusian citizens. This, in turn, is a sensitive issue for some other member states, like Germany or France, who for domestic reasons prefer to avoid discussions over migration issues.²⁵⁹

It is important to bring Russia and the US into the picture of the EU-Belarus relations. This issue is valid for this research, as Poland has a strong opinion regarding this very sensitive subject and has been occasionally called ‘anti-Russian’ or criticised for its excessive representation of American interests. Among the old member states, there are proponents of exerting pressure on Minsk through a closer dialogue with Moscow and those who object to any involvement of Russia in the relationship and question the motives behind such actions. Additionally, some observers point out that the policy of several member states and even the EU in general is conditioned by the ‘Russia factor’. In this respect, cooperation with both countries has been named in discussions over the effectiveness of the EU policy as a potentially strengthening factor, but also a possible

²⁵⁸ Interview (no. 45)

²⁵⁹ For example, during the negotiations on Council Conclusions of January 2006, Lithuanians strongly insisted on visa facilitation for Belarussians and re-opened the issue at COREPER. Poland was the only other state that openly supported these ideas, even though they did not have the chance of gaining enough support (Interview no. 37).

constraint. Recently, there has even been a proposal on the table to insert the formal need to cooperate with both Russia and the US in promoting democracy in Belarus in the text of the Council Conclusions.²⁶⁰ It did not achieve enough support around the table and there are still dividing lines regarding who the EU should coordinate its actions with and to what extent.

The issue of supporting democratic changes in Belarus has been raised at EU-Russia Summits, but the latter has repeatedly refused to discuss the matter, on the grounds that Belarus is an independent state. Some diplomats and academics have argued that the idea is not very practical, since Russian and European interests in Belarus are divergent, if not actually clashing (Lynch, 2005: 114). After the Orange Revolution in Ukraine, Belarus is perceived by Russia as a symbol of its influence - its 'last outpost' in the West. Even though Russia might also be interested in sparking changes in Minsk, as it can be argued that it is in line with Moscow's economic interests to 'open-up' the regime in Minsk for the world economy, it is definitely not interested in any change determined by the West.

Any ideas of cooperation with Russia are also treated with the utmost caution by the new member states, especially by Poland and Lithuania. Their relations with Russia have already deteriorated after their mutual engagement in the events in Ukraine. Some Russian officials have also accused these countries of exerting a negative influence on the overall EU-Russia relationship (Kubosova, 2006). Furthermore, the close links between Russia and Minsk and the subsidized gas deliveries are often pointed to as an indirect reason for the failure of the EU's policies. In other words, as long as cooperation with Russia is perceived in Belarus as an attractive alternative to anything that the EU can offer, coercive diplomacy will be faced with major challenges. Additionally, the current strategic dialogue between Russia and the EU, and the European dependence on Russian gas supplies, are strong reasons why neither of the sides would want to risk worsening relations.

²⁶⁰ Interview (no. 41)

Finally, the role of the US has to be noted briefly again. There is still no consensus among the member states regarding the role that the US should ideally play in the EU-Belarusian relations. There are member states, like Poland, calling for coordination of the EU policies with the US, as well as those arguing for cautiousness, pointing at the differences in the US overall approach. Belarus, being a relatively small and distant state, has managed to get a high place on the agenda of the Bush administration, as its case was linked to the issues of arms sales to 'rogue states' (Shepherd, 2006: 71). In spite of the evident differences in the discourse, there have been efforts to coordinate European policy with that of the US and even a text of a joint *demarché* regarding the March 2006 presidential elections was agreed upon.²⁶¹ The intention was for Robert Cooper, Director General for External and Political-Military Affairs of the Council and Dan Fried, US Assistant Secretary of State for Europe to present it together to Belarusian authorities on 31 January 2006. Nonetheless, the Belarusian authorities did not issue visas for them to enter Belarus simultaneously. In this situation, the joint visit was cancelled and the *demarche* was presented by the US and the local EU Presidency separately. Subsequently, the EU and the US published an official statement on relations with Belarus on 3 February 2006.²⁶² They repeated that the elections should be conducted in a free and fair manner. Both claimed that they would judge the results and respond accordingly. Nonetheless, it remains to be seen what action could be taken in such case.

Generally, the EU and the US' ambitions for Belarus are very similar, but the style of diplomacy, the language and means are different. For example, the assistance to Belarus differs as the US is the biggest donor for civil society programs and it supports democratisation in a much more direct way than the EU (Jarabik, 2006: 86). Some EU officials noted the negotiations over the common *demarché*, mentioned above, as successful, simply because the EU was able to find a common language with the US. It was pointed out, that the US is sometimes used as a point of reference for the EU to underline its distinctive, softer approach to Belarus. On the other hand, despite the

²⁶¹ Apparently, due to these differences in approach, as reported by some practitioners, the negotiations over a short text of a *demarché* were quite difficult regarding an attempt to find a middle way between the strong language of the US and a milder EU approach.

²⁶² http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/sg/88279.pdf (23.02.06)

differences in the discourse, the EU seems to have followed all the steps that had already been taken by the US, just at a slower pace.

After this short outline of the different views of old and new member states with regard to the EU's approach to Belarus, the chapter proceeds with a more detailed analysis of the Europeanisation of Polish foreign policy in relation to that country.

Poland and the EU's policy towards Belarus

There are several factors that underpin the Polish stance towards Belarus and which distinguish Poland from many of its EU partners. First of all, Poland holds direct borders with three post-Soviet states (Ukraine, Belarus and Lithuania) as well as the Russian enclave of Kaliningrad. This has a profound impact on the policy lines towards them. In the case of Belarus – direct neighbourhood requires sustaining some form of cooperation in areas such as border management, human transit, ecology and security.²⁶³ The condition for effective border management is cooperation with the Belarusian border control authorities. Secondly, there is a large Polish minority in Belarus and that itself requires the Polish government to retain contacts with the Poles in Belarus. In 1989, approximately 417,000 people declared Polish nationality in Belarus and in 1999 the number went down to an estimate of 396,000 (Eberhardt, 2005). Finally, economic cooperation is quite substantial despite the political tensions. Therefore, Polish Eastern policy predominantly aims at supporting the sovereignty of the former Soviet republics, reforms and modernization “in line with the European scenario”.²⁶⁴

Political relations between Poland and Belarus were launched in March 1992. Shortly after gaining independence, the Belarusian nationalists expressed territorial claims towards Poland in relation to the region of Bialystok (Michta 1992: 73). To make things worse, because of its internal political situation, Belarus soon became internationally isolated. Earlier attempts by Polish politicians to enter a closer relationship with the

²⁶³ Interview (no. 27)

²⁶⁴ Interview (no. 27)

neighbour, in order to become its 'window to Europe', provoked strong reactions from Russia (Hyde-Price 1996: 161-163). In 1996, Poland initiated a joint statement by the Presidents of Poland, Ukraine and Lithuania, calling for the government of Belarus to solve the political crisis with constitutional methods and to respect human rights. At the same time, the government adopted a strategy of 'critical dialogue', criticising the disrespect for human rights, but maintaining political dialogue with Minsk (Menkiszak and Piotrowski, 2002: 233). Meanwhile, a number of Belarusian officials accused Poland of spying or interfering in internal affairs. In 1998, this issue led to the Belarusian ambassador being recalled to Minsk. Later the same year Poland broadcast Radio Free Belarus on its territory, which caused strong protests from the Belarusian authorities.

Some Polish diplomats have argued that there was no force that could legally influence the internal Belarusian situation; hence, it is difficult to discuss the effectiveness of the Polish policy. However, Poland has a number of programs directed at Belarus. The first one is aimed at putting an end to the information blockade and introducing free media, such as radio. The Polish government decided to commit PLN 950,000 for this project.²⁶⁵ The challenges, as reported in the interviews, were that whereas Poland could broadcast on the long waves (LW), not many people listen to this frequency any more. Broadcasting on short wave would, in turn, require a lot of transmitting devices, whose placement would be illegal and broadcasting would breach international law.²⁶⁶ The Polish Radio *Racja*, which can be translated as 'righteous', began its transmissions at the beginning of 2006, two hours every day. At the same time the radio funded by the EU (*Deutsche Welle*) also started broadcasting. Apart from supporting the idea of an alternative radio, Poland promoted the idea of providing training for Belarusian journalists. Support has also been given to academia and Polish universities welcomed students from the European Human Studies University from Minsk.

²⁶⁵ Interview (no 27)

²⁶⁶ Interview (no. 26)

Promoting the policy within the EU

Polish policy prior to accession was divergent from the official EU stance. Therefore, following from the conceptual assumptions made earlier, one would expect after the initial (coercive) adaptation, attempts to ‘upload’ the policy goals and influence the European policy so that it would converge with national policy. The Poles have always treated the EU’s approach to Belarus in an emotional fashion, repeatedly criticising the EU for not doing enough. As claimed by one MFA official:

“apart from the political gestures since 1997, the EU has not decided to arrange relations with Belarus so that both sides would be satisfied. Instead, it took an approach of not accepting the undemocratic changes over there and reducing contacts to a minimum. (...) If you see the earlier TACIS programs, they did not bear any significance for the country development”.²⁶⁷

According to many Polish officials, a crucial factor influencing the EU’s policy towards Belarus is its interconnection with Russia. According to some Polish diplomats²⁶⁸ and experts (Żurawski vel Grajewski, 2005: 91), many of the EU member states have treated their policies towards Belarus, as a function of their policies towards Russia. The Poles see it as a mistake and a constraint on the EU’s policy, which remains very passive. Meanwhile, the perception of security in Poland revolves around the role of Russia in the region. The Poles have been raising concerns that any potential instability in Belarus may create a conflict of interest with Russia.²⁶⁹ In this respect, the increasing interest of the member states in Belarus is in line with Poland’s perception of its security interest. On the other hand, advocating actions such as “condemning the Russian government for the support it gives to the dictatorship in Belarus, thereby forcing Moscow to incur a political price for promoting this undemocratic regime” (Żurawski vel Grajewski, 2005: 94), provoked some member states and EU officials to label the Poles as ‘anti-Russian’. This can be very harmful and undermine day-to-day lobbying by Polish diplomats in the

²⁶⁷ Interview (no. 5)

²⁶⁸ Interview (no. 27)

²⁶⁹ Interview (no. 26)

Council. In addition, some Russians perceive the conflict between Poland and Belarus as a 'Western crusade' against their country (Lindner, 2005: 3) and are very vocal in expressing this view to their European partners.

The general belief that the policy towards Belarus should be conducted as independently as possible from relations with Moscow is complemented by the wish to encourage the EU to play a more 'pro-active' role in Belarus. One of the most well-known Polish experts has repeatedly criticised EU policy for being merely reactive to the policy of Lukashenka, which puts the latter in a comfortable situation. Instead, it was suggested that something should be done without waiting for a move from the Belarusian side (Gromadzki in: Wagrowska, 2006: 9). However, very often, such analysis lacks an original input regarding any concrete steps that the EU might undertake and instead simply repeats the actions that are already in place, as pointed out by one of the national representatives of an old member state in Brussels.²⁷⁰

The most important issues that Polish diplomats have attempted to promote in the EU are: providing stronger support for political opposition, including specific persons; introducing more flexible instruments for financing aid programs; increasing people-to-people contacts, especially through visa facilitation for Belarusians travelling to the EU; expanding the visa ban on the authorities and those involved in election frauds, as well as those involved in the repressions of the Union of Poles in Belarus (UPB). They also insisted that the EU needed to implement long-term planning in relation to its neighbour.

But these goals notwithstanding, there seem to be some clear tensions in the Polish position towards Belarus and some of the goals are contradictory on occasions. This may be a result of a competition between the centres of policy-making inside Poland, which became visible directly after the victory of Lech Kaczyński in the Polish Presidential elections. The policy towards the East became a subject of rivalry between the MFA, and particularly its Department of Europe and the DUE, as well as the President's chancellery. However, a more plausible explanation may be observed when one looks at

²⁷⁰ Interview (no. 41)

relations in a longer perspective. On one hand, the Poles are eager to retain some form of formal contact and avoid isolating the neighbour, but on the other, there is strong pressure for 'punishing' the undemocratic regime and not compromising on human rights. The latter tendency was strengthened especially after the undemocratic conduct of elections in Belarus in 2006. This will be discussed further below.

Isolation or engagement?

Prior to accession, in the active observer period, Poland did not align with the EU's common position regarding non-admission of Belarusian officials to the EU member states in June 1998.²⁷¹ The decision to not align was taken in the Polish MFA after a debate at the highest levels of decision making, involving the minister himself.²⁷² There were just a few cases of non-alignment and occasionally they were caused simply by the procedural reasons or holidays in Poland. Nonetheless, the case of Belarus is different in this respect. It was a sign of Poland's special approach to one of its neighbours with a considerable Polish minority, but can certainly be better understood if we bear in mind that in 1998 Poland was chairing the OSCE. In such circumstances alignment with the EU position could have undermined Poland's efforts to engage Belarus in international dialogue and foster the development of democratic structures. During the Polish chairmanship, the OSCE Mission was established in Minsk. Nevertheless, as the Polish representative to OSCE admitted himself, the results of Polish actions in this field were rather disappointing (Nowak 1999). In the following years, Poland always saw it to be in its national interest to regard Belarus independently from Russia and therefore it undertook efforts to stop the international isolation of Minsk (Ksiazek, 2003). After a closer look at the numerous declarations regarding Belarus that were a subject of the CEECs alignment with the EU, it turns out that Poland joined all but the one mentioned above.

²⁷¹ Common Position of 9 July 1998 defined by the Council on the basis of Article J.2 of the Treaty on European Union, concerning Belarus, 98/448/CFSP.

²⁷² Interview (no. 2)

Another case of policy adaptation took place in the area of formal contacts between the officials. It was EU policy that contacts at the ministerial level would be avoided, whereas, as admitted by Polish diplomats, this was not respected by the Polish side before joining the EU.²⁷³ Nevertheless, after the accession this rule had to be fully implemented as part of the *acquis politique*. The practice of holding informal meetings at higher political levels was sustained for some time, before it was completely stopped.²⁷⁴ Still, Poland retained its view that official contacts were profitable in the case of such a centralised country and especially in the case of a neighbouring state. Therefore, the Poles began a diplomatic campaign to change the EU's policy and soften its approach. As one diplomat expressed it, Poland felt as if it was in a similar position regarding Belarus as was Spain regarding Cuba.²⁷⁵ Polish officials clearly saw the practical advantages of retaining formal contacts, but at the lower level²⁷⁶ and developing cooperation with medium level officials and local authorities. As one of them explained: "in a country that is based on hierarchy, without the ministerial contacts you cannot get anything done".²⁷⁷ This was a pragmatic approach driven by the necessity to cooperate, for example, with border control authorities. The 'uploading' efforts brought results when the Council Conclusions from 22-23 November 2004 were negotiated (GAERC, 2004a). Poland argued against abolishing ministerial contacts completely and instead minimizing them, which was accepted by the other member states. The text said in its final version:

"Bilateral contacts of the European Union and its Member States with President Lukashenka and his government will be established solely through the Presidency, SG/HR, the Commission and the Troika. Other contacts with the President Lukashenka and the members of his government, including multilateral contacts and contacts necessary for transborder relations, will be limited to the minimum" (GAERC 2004a; underlined by the author)

²⁷³ Interview (no. 5)

²⁷⁴ Interview (no. 5)

²⁷⁵ Interview (no. 1)

²⁷⁶ Interview (no. 26)

²⁷⁷ Interview (no. 1)

The Poles were especially content with the last sentence and considered it to be their own achievement, an example of one of the first successful actions. They were also determined that official contacts were an issue where they would continue to exert pressure on the EU because of their special importance.²⁷⁸ This case shows a clear circular nature of the Europeanisation process. First, Poland had to adjust its policy conduct to EU requirements, which created a misfit between its own strategies and the ones pursued by the EU. As a result, once inside the Union, Polish diplomats made repeated efforts to reduce the misfit and introduce change in the Union's approach.

In order to avoid the isolation of Belarus, Poland has also repeatedly expressed its view that it should be a prospective beneficiary of all the Union's assistance programs. When negotiating various initiatives regarding funding, Poland always insisted on inserting the clause that would allow for such assistance 'under special circumstances', particularly when the recipient state does not fulfil all the necessary criteria and is unable to co-finance the project. Related to this, the Poles tried to promote the establishment of a European Democracy Fund that would manage assets available for support for democracy and civil society in the ENP states. Poland also supported a prompt establishment of the Commission's delegation to Belarus in Minsk.

Another important issue that the Poles have tried to advocate in Brussels was fostering people-to-people contacts, preferably by means of visa facilitation. In this case Poland has a strong ally in neighbouring Lithuania. During the negotiations on the Council Conclusions of January 2006, the Lithuanian delegation strongly insisted on visa facilitation for the Belarusians and decided to re-open the issue in COREPER, after a failure to achieve consensus at the level of a Working Group. Poland was the only other state that openly supported these ideas, even though they had no practical chance of gaining broad support. In the end, the issue was not included in the text, but was to be discussed in the TACIS Working Group dealing with visa-issues. As commented by an EU official, the fact that they were pushing so much, in spite of lack of support meant

²⁷⁸ Interview (no. 1)

that “they haven’t really learnt and in the long run this is going to hurt them”.²⁷⁹ The official was referring to the informal rules of consensus-building, respected among the member states and related to that the importance of legitimacy within the Council environment. Nonetheless, the fact that the issue was moved to the other Working Group was considered by some as at least partial success in terms of agenda-setting.

On the other hand, Poland has argued for extending the list of Belarusian officials on the so-called visa-ban list. In November 2004, it proposed introducing tougher sanctions on the extended list of selected persons which added those responsible for frauds in the referendum.²⁸⁰ Nonetheless, the EU did not accept these proposals. In effect, the Polish visa-ban list was longer than the EU one, which was related to the repression of the Union of Poles in Belarus. Recently, one of the Polish experts affiliated to the MFA’s think-tank spoke in favour of extending the visa-ban list to approximately 400 names (Kucharczyk, 2006: 180). In contrast to the restrictions on the officials, as mentioned above, Polish diplomats have argued for the visa facilitation regime for Belarusian citizens.

Council Conclusions November 2005 and the Union of Poles in Belarus

The Poles have always treated the issue of solidarity within the EU very seriously. Once a member, their expectation was that the other member states and the Commission would provide them with support in the case of conflicting situations with third parties. In practice, this did not seem to happen automatically. On the contrary, bringing bilateral problems into the EU forum was not always appreciated. This may be illustrated with the example of harassment of the Union of Poles in Belarus (*Związek Polaków na Białorusi*, UPB) and the way the problem was successfully elevated by Polish diplomats to discussions in the Council of the EU in the autumn of 2005.

²⁷⁹ Interview (no. 37)

²⁸⁰ Interview (no. 26)

The UPB is an organization with around 20,000 – 25,000²⁸¹ members, all Poles living in Belarus, and was set up in 1990. Since 2005, the UPB has entered into a phase of conflict with the government, which did not recognise its authority. It became subject to repression exerted by the Lukashenka regime and was one of the few incidents contributing to the worsening of Polish-Belarusian relations in recent years.²⁸² The Polish elites saw the necessity of involving the international environment into, what can be well-perceived as a bilateral conflict. As explained by one of the best known Polish experts on Belarus, it was:

“crucial to make this issue an international case. Reducing it only to bilateral relations means pushing Poland on the outsider’s position in the international relations, when in fact, the repressions towards the UPB are nothing else but continuous restricting of the civil freedoms in that country” (Kazanecki, 2005).

Raising the case within the EU was thus perceived as a good opportunity to pursue this goal, but, as will be explained later, some of Poland’s EU partners did not share the view that bilateral relations should be reflected at the EU level. Therefore, it became a challenge for Polish diplomacy to portray the events and the issue as something important for EU-Belarus relations and respect for human rights in general, rather than a bilateral issue of abusing the rights of the Polish minority in Belarus. This was realised soon enough by the Polish diplomats and officials, who realised how important the discourse and deliberation were in the case of negotiations within the Council.

Already in July, the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs sent a letter to Jack Straw, the then President of the EU Council of Ministers. Copies were also sent to the High Representative Javier Solana and the Commissioner for External Relations Benita Ferrero-Waldner. The letter drew attention to the harassment of civil society in Belarus

²⁸¹ The number of members, which may seem relatively low compared to organisations in other countries, is quite extraordinary in the case of Belarus. UPB is one of the biggest NGOs in that country, where any independent structures with a few thousands members are very rare (Kazanecki, 2005).

²⁸² Already in 1998, Belarusian Head of Security Service accused Poland of spying in Belarus (BBC, 1998). These constant accusations were repeated on public TV, in which he accused Polish officials and NGOs of plotting against the Belarusian government.

and in particular of the UPB as well as the expulsion of three Polish diplomats. It emphasized that there were no ethnic grounds for the behaviour of the Belarusian authorities and the whole issue had to be considered as a political matter.²⁸³ The Polish MFA issued a statement claiming that “(t)he cause of the crisis lies not in difficulties or problems in bilateral relations but in actions taken by the Belarusian authorities against their country’s own citizens” and it was the position of the UPB as the largest independent NGO which was “the main reason why the attacks were launched against it”.²⁸⁴ In this respect, Minister Adam Rotfeld suggested raising the issue during the ministerial meeting in September.

In the course of drafting the text of Council Conclusions for that meeting in COEST, the Poles wanted a stronger reference to the oppression of civil society and in particular they wanted a mention of the UPB in the text. However, it is not a common practice in the EU to mention national minority issues, which are normally resolved in bilateral relations by individual member states. Therefore, the initial response of the Presidency was negative. The Poles subsequently argued in the Council that the case should not be considered by the EU as a minority issue, but should rather be seen in a broader context of a human rights violation by Lukashenka’s regime. Polish diplomats decided to launch a broad lobbying campaign, in support of the case. After every PSC meeting, the EU representations were sent an account of recent events in Belarus accompanied by a request for support. Initially, the Poles wanted to insert a clause referring to the broader repression of the UPB.²⁸⁵ The final version of the adopted Council Conclusions’ text read:

“The Council will continue to monitor the situation in Belarus closely and will revert to it in January 2006. It also underlines its concern at the harassment of civil society organizations, including the Union of Poles in Belarus. The Council states its readiness to take further appropriate restrictive measures against the

²⁸³ *Information on the letter of Adam Daniel Rotfeld, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland on the situation in Belarus*, Warsaw, 27 July 2005; <http://www.polishembassy.ie/bialorlistRP.htm> (14.03.06)

²⁸⁴ Polish-Belarusian relations: Statement of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 28 July 2005; <http://www.polishembassy.ie/belarus.htm> (07.03.06).

²⁸⁵ Interview (no. 26)

responsible individuals in the event of failure to uphold international standards, in particular commitments made in the OSCE context” (underlined by the author).

The EU officials and some representatives of other member states stressed that the word ‘including’ was inserted in the text to make sure that the UPB was only used as an example. They affirmed that Polish diplomats emphasized that the UPB was the largest NGO in Belarus and therefore could be used as an example. The negotiations took some time, as the majority of the member states and the Commission still did not wish to single out anyone in particular. Some expressed doubts as to whether the insistence on including it in the text was not closely connected to the domestic political situation in Poland after the Parliamentary and Presidential elections.²⁸⁶ Other representatives pointed out that an important role was played by Polish diplomats in Brussels, as they knew when to signal to Warsaw when would be the right time to stop pressing in order not to lose everything. There were also suggestions from non-Poles that the whole affair was a price the EU had to pay for the domestic politics of the newly elected Polish government.

The presidential elections in 2006 and the EU’s response

Poland attempted to exert significant influence on EU policies in the case of the presidential elections in Belarus in March 2006. The ‘uploading’ of national prerogatives began even before the elections took place. A substantial difference in the policies of Poland and the general line adopted by the EU (but certainly not by individual member states in their bilateral relations) was that the EU, in principle, supported democratic changes and civil society instead of providing support for the opposition or any particular party or person. The difference of views on this matter became apparent on the occasion of the visit of Alyaksandr Milinkevich²⁸⁷ to Brussels on 31 January 2006, before the Presidential elections. On the same day, the GAERC meeting was taking place in the Council. Lithuania and Poland worked together to organize the visit on that day, in the hope that this would be seen as a symbolic EU support for Lukashenka’s opponent.

²⁸⁶ Interview (no. 43)

²⁸⁷ Aleksandr Milinkevich is a leader of the United Democratic Forces in Belarus and was Lukashenka’s most serious contra-candidate in the presidential elections in March 2006.

Therefore, in advance, they asked permission of the Austrian Presidency to use one of the Council rooms to hold the meeting on Monday morning, 31 January.

Such a move was not warmly welcomed by some old member states. Some representatives claimed that the EU forum was being used in a very inappropriate way by Poland and Lithuania. Therefore, they decided not to send their Foreign Ministers to the meeting, but instead lower-ranking officials. Also the Council officials were confronted with the dilemma of how to react in such a situation in order not to violate the principle of not expressing support to any individuals prior to elections. Eventually, it was decided that the High Representative Javier Solana would meet with the Belarusian candidate, but separately from Milinkevich's meeting with the member states. The meetings were kept low-key and did not receive much media coverage. The whole situation showed clearly the divergent approaches to the situation in Belarus as well as to notions of how to deal with it. It is also worth mentioning that in the case of the 2006 Belarus and Ukrainian elections, Polish politicians clearly supported Milinkevich in Belarus and the Orange Coalition in the case of Ukrainian elections.

In the aftermath to the elections, the Poles argued in favour of an immediate imposition of restrictive measures for those involved in what were seen as fraudulent electoral practices. However, this approach did not find support among many of the other member states. The deputy foreign minister of Poland was himself involved in arguing in favour of the sanctions. However, in his own account of the GAERC meeting in March, he admitted that none of the other foreign ministers objected to the idea, but they "said that we should not act in a hurry" (PAP, 2006). The Poles also started an immediate initiative aimed at extending the visa-ban list to the President and other regime officials.²⁸⁸

A few months after the elections, in June 2006, the Commission returned to the Council to discuss the withdrawal of the General System of Preferences (GSP) for Belarus,

²⁸⁸ As claimed by the Deputy Minister Komorowski: "I don't see the possibility that Lukashenka came to ski in Zakopane. (...) It is widely known that the Belarussian elites adore coming to Zakopane." He also expressed his hope that other European states would adopt a similar approach and Lukashenka will not be able to ski in the Alps (PAP, 2006).

because it held that the regime was not respecting the rights of the workers' unions and the ILO Convention. On this issue, the Polish position was against undertaking further restrictive measures, as they could be regarded as attempts to isolate Belarus even more and undermine the consistency of the EU's approach to different states. Poland was supported by a few other new member states, but it was not enough to influence the policy outcome. It was decided that the issue would become a subject of voting in the GSP Committee and in spite of several member states voting against, the overall recommendation was positive.

Conclusions: a special case of circular Europeanisation?

This chapter illustrates the circular process of Europeanisation. First, Poland had to adapt its policy to that of the EU, but after joining the negotiation table, it immediately tried to change the EU policy. It can be argued that in doing so, Poland tried to reduce the difference, or what some Europeanisation scholars called a 'misfit', between the EU's policy and their own. In their attempts to 'upload' their policy goals to the EU level, the Poles used different strategies, which changed with time. An important role was played by the Brussels-based diplomats, who socialised with their counterparts from different member states in the Council and learnt what behaviour was acceptable in the group. This was visible for example in the case of the UPB when it came to selecting the discourse to use in order to increase the chances of success.

Regarding the influence of the 'uploading' efforts, the impact of the Poles on the overall policy of the EU towards Belarus is difficult to determine. Nonetheless, some EU officials are quite positive about it and one of them stated that "it is fair to say that we would not have a policy towards Belarus, whatever that could be, if not for the fact that we have the Poles and Lithuanians sitting on this side of the table".²⁸⁹ A similar statement was made by another EU official, who claimed that before the enlargement there was a 'complete stalemate' in relations with Belarus, whereas later the situation started to change.²⁹⁰ Analysing the exact policy output does show that Belarus appeared more often

²⁸⁹ Interview (no. 44)

²⁹⁰ Interview (no. 37)

on the political agenda and the EU started to deliver responses to the events taking place in that state. That seems to be a natural consequence of extending the EU border and becoming a direct neighbour of the regime. It was shown in this chapter that Poland played an important part in re-focusing the EU's attention.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

This thesis has examined the process of Europeanisation of Polish foreign policy. It has used the Europeanisation approach in order to understand the interactions between Polish and EU foreign policy and it has focused on three different dimensions of changes. First, the way in which national (Polish) foreign policy and its institutions were transformed by participation in the EU's CFSP. Second, the way in which Polish diplomats have projected national foreign policy goals onto the EU level. The third dimension, 'crossloading', even though identified on a few occasions, turned out not to play a major role in the Europeanisation process under examination. Nevertheless, there is clear evidence that the first two dimensions are useful ways of thinking about the interactions between the national and the EU levels of foreign policy. The thesis has also identified three mechanisms of change: conditionality, socialisation and learning which are used to examine in more detail exactly how membership of the EU interacts with member state (Polish) foreign policy.

Unlike most studies of Europeanisation to date, this thesis examined both policy process and policy substance. The chosen case studies focused on procedural changes in the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and then on policy towards Poland's immediate eastern neighbours, Ukraine and Belarus. It has been clearly demonstrated that accession to the EU has exerted influence both on the procedures and substance of Polish foreign policy. It has had a profound impact on the organisation and every-day working procedures of the Polish MFA and engagement with the EU's CFSP has also prompted Polish decision-makers to pursue many national foreign policy objectives at the EU level.

This chapter summarises the main findings of the thesis and refers back to the analytical framework offered in the first chapter. The conclusions are divided into two parts. Firstly, some reflections are offered regarding the analytical framework, the nature of the Europeanisation process and the main mechanisms behind change: conditionality, socialisation and learning. Secondly, the conclusions refer to the new empirical data gathered in the study, giving some new insights into the process of the Europeanisation of Polish foreign policy.

Methodological and conceptual conclusions

This section discusses the most important aspects and findings of this research regarding the methodology and conceptual framework. Firstly, some views are offered on the possible contribution of this research in terms of linking procedural and substantive foreign policy change in one research framework. Then, the main findings regarding the three mechanisms that were identified behind change are presented, with the emphasis on their role in different dimensions of the Europeanisation process. Finally, before the empirical conclusions are summarised, this section is concluded with some thoughts on what this study can tell us about the relationship between national and EU foreign policy interests.

The Europeanisation of foreign policy procedures and substance: searching for a link

The methodological framework was not an attempt to make a theoretical contribution to the literature as such, but some issues related to the analytical framework, its concepts and results are worth highlighting. One of the most important is making a distinction between adaptation and Europeanisation as this proved to be a useful way of approaching the study of interactions between the national and the EU level.

This study has looked at the Europeanisation of policy process and policy substance. Methodologically, this proved to be a challenging task, as to date the academic literature

on Europeanisation as well as on foreign policy has been rather fragmented and studies on institutions and procedures (e.g. Allen and Oliver, 2004, 2006a, 2006b; Goetz, 2001a; Harmsen, 2000; Hocking and Spence, 2002; Page and Wouters, 1995; Wessels et al., 2003) have usually been disconnected from the research on policy substance (e.g. Bomberg and Peterson, 2000; Checkel, 2001; Favell, 1998; Howorth and Menon, 1997; Torreblanca 2001; Manners and Whitman, 2000). This has resulted in a situation where different research designs have been used to study each aspect separately. Studies of the Europeanisation of institutions, such as the MFAs, have looked to the organisational theories or to new institutionalism, while those that focus on policy substance have often used (or adapted) Foreign Policy Analysis and various other IR theories. Therefore, it has been difficult to draw comparative conclusions and establish any clear links between the Europeanisation processes of these two domains.

In the case of procedures, the framework of analysis is usually much more structural than in the case of policy substance which tends to be more agent-oriented. This is due to the fact that the change in procedures usually takes place after the lessons learnt are communicated from the agents (diplomats in Brussels) to the capital and after they are properly institutionalised. Hence, the individual level bears only limited significance for understanding procedural change, but the two levels: individual and structural are interconnected with one another. In the case of policy substance this division is not that straightforward. It seems that the agents (at a number of different levels of policy-making) may have a considerable impact on policy substance. This differentiated approach presents further complications when trying to combine the study of foreign policy process with the study of foreign policy substance in one research project, with one coherent framework. Nevertheless, this study has looked into the Europeanisation processes as far as both procedures and substance in relation to Polish foreign policy are concerned and has attempted to establish some links that are presented below.

First of all, the **definition and nature of change** in both process and substance should be clearly established. In the first case, explored in chapter three, change was defined in several different dimensions: organisational design, policy process and finally also in

institutional culture. In the case of policy substance, as shown in chapters four, five and six, change was more subtle and more difficult to define and determine. It has been operationalised as change in official discourse on policy, detectable in the documents and public speeches. In addition, some informal aspects were taken into account, such as the informal statements made by policy makers or 'non-papers' presented to the EU partners. The methodological challenge of determining a clear change in policy substance can be partly explained by what Hill and Wallace (1996: 7) call, a "two-audience problem". It has been observed that when diplomats report their EU-related activities to their governments, they tend to overestimate their own input to the debate and downplay the concessions made in order to reach a compromise. This was confirmed by the empirical work in the course of this study. Even diplomats at lower levels were eager to emphasise the Polish input to any EU documents or initiative. This tendency was generally observed more often in the case of officials stationed in Warsaw than those who had been posted to Brussels for some time. Hence, the information from these sources had to be checked against the perceptions of the other member states' diplomats who would sometimes provide different accounts of events.

Establishing causality between participation in the CFSP and changes at the national level, or in other words, 'isolating the EU effect', has also been an exercise of a different nature in the case of both procedures and substance. In relation to the procedural changes, these could be traced back more easily to the EU, even though some of them were also connected with broader processes, such as globalisation. For example, while the creation of the posts of the Political Director or the European Correspondent was clearly related to participation in CFSP, the changing role of the Polish MFA and the shift towards coordination tasks, rather than 'gatekeeper' tasks (which were discussed in chapter three) may well be connected to the wider processes of globalisation (see: Hill, 2003; Hocking and Spence, 2002 etc.). Meanwhile, in the case of policy substance, the number of intervening variables is so large (both domestic and international), that one has to be very careful to avoid overestimating the Europeanisation effects. This study has not set its focus on evaluating the outcome of Europeanisation, but rather examined it as a process. Hence, some of the above difficulties were avoided.

Another issue related to procedures and substance is the dynamics of change and any possible connections between changes in both. In other words, does the Europeanisation of one domain 'spill over' automatically to other domains? Is the Europeanisation of one a precondition of change in the other one? Or does it lead to a more efficient change in the other, in other words 'facilitate' it? The empirical evidence gathered in this study points to the fact that a very basic adaptation of foreign policy procedures is necessary to initiate changes in foreign policy substance. This is because the member state needs certain institutional arrangements in order to be able to interact and participate in the CFSP. This involves for example using electronic forms of communication, installing the ACN (later CORTESY) or implementing a system of preparing and sending instructions to national representatives in the Council. Furthermore, the more institutional change follows and the better the member state adjusts (Europeanises) its institutions and institutional practises (procedural downloading), the stronger the influence it may have on the substance of EU policies (substance uploading). In other words, the better the state understands the 'rules of the Brussels game', the better and more effective a player it usually becomes at the EU level. On the other hand, while the uploading brings some results and the EU policies can be transformed by a member state, its national policy is also being subjected to change at the same time.

While a logical conclusion to draw from the above is that the Europeanisation of institutions facilitates policy uploading, it does not necessarily bear the same effect for policy downloading. The Europeanisation of procedures is not automatically mirrored by the Europeanisation of policy substance, especially its downloading dimension. A member state may use its Europeanised institutions to strategically promote its policy goals at the EU level, while national foreign policy at its core remains largely unchanged. In this case a member state would use the EU arena instrumentally, for promotion of its national foreign policy goals. The uploading in the case of policy substance is possible only after a member state becomes an active observer inside the EU and may be

successful *only* if the procedures were already Europeanised to some extent (measuring the degree of Europeanisation has not been possible given the scope of this research).

One of the differences between the Europeanisation of procedures and substance in this study seems to be marked by the relevance of different dimensions of the Europeanisation process to both procedures and substance: for the procedures it is the process of adaptation (downloading) that is in the focus of research and is easily detectable. For the policy substance, it is the opposite – a member state more easily engages in policy uploading, which can also be of strategic importance for the national policy-making elites.

Explaining change: conditionality, socialisation and learning

With the growing body of scientific evidence that EU membership in general and participation in Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) in particular have had an important influence on the national foreign policies of the member states and on the way in which they are conducted, there is an urgent need to develop a more sophisticated analytical framework for analysis of these phenomena. Such a framework would not only allow us to study whether or not change in CFSP or in national foreign policy occurs, but also *how* it does so. Europeanisation, while being a useful way of approaching the subject, does not really offer much in terms of understanding the nature of the processes. In other words, it does not allow the researcher to go much beyond establishing whether ‘Europe matters’ or not. This is why, for a better understanding of *how* Europe matters, it seems important to combine the Europeanisation approach with other concepts, drawn from a wide range of theories, such as rational choice or social constructivism. The study identified three main mechanisms behind change: conditionality, learning and socialisation and the main findings on how they can be usefully combined with Europeanisation are presented below.

Conditionality plays an important role in facilitating change before accession, when an applicant state is involved in entry negotiations. The relations between the applicant state

and the EU are asymmetrical and Europeanisation is limited to and best described as national adaptation. However, the results are easily detectable, especially in the case of the policy process. High adaptational pressures and strong incentives cause initial changes: reforms in the MFA and formal alignment with the substance of the European foreign policy. However the depth of such changes may be disputable and most of such changes are continued after accession, but, as this study has clearly shown, change is later caused by the other two mechanisms: socialisation and learning.

Socialisation has played a significant role as a mechanism of change since the beginning of the period when an applicant state becomes an active observer. This is a time when the internal EU meetings are opened up to participation of the candidate states. It has been discussed in this study as a process of adaptation of certain rules of behaviour and 'ways of doing things' within a specific group. Researching the Europeanisation of procedures and policy substance, the thesis focused on procedural (behavioural) norms. Unlike substantive norms that concern actors' deep beliefs, the procedural ones relate to the formal and informal norms that guide actors' behaviour in the Council, such as habits of coordination, seeking consensus or using an agreed language. The empirical evidence has shown that these rules were adapted strategically and no strong evidence on internalisation of any norms could be derived from the empirical data. On the other hand, the move from unilateral national foreign policy-making to a more consensual multilateral style in the EU can also be considered as an important norm that was adopted by the actors (Polish diplomats and decision-makers).

The study tried to demonstrate how Polish diplomats became socialised to the procedural norms within the Council and how they went on to apply them in practice. The evidence points to the fact that the change in their behaviour came as a result of a rational process and was a strategic move, aimed at achieving certain national objectives. This does not necessarily exclude any deeper socialisation of norms, that may well occur in the future, but simply reflects the lack of any evidence in this matter. This may be due to the fact that the study focused on Poland, a newcomer to CFSP decision-making and the time that its diplomats spent in the Council, becoming socialised by their EU counterparts, has

been relatively short. On the other hand, considering the high rotation of national representatives (two to three years in the Working Groups and usually one or two years more in COREPER), even the old member states do not remain in one group for longer periods.

Learning, for its part, has been understood as a rational process that involved changes in beliefs or practices. Some evidence was provided about different types of learning: learning by doing and learning from others. The significance of learning seems to be most important after the 'active observer' period and is concerned mainly with procedures. In this study, learning was observed as a (circular) process, with feedback loops, in which the following stages were established: individual learning of the representative in Brussels; sending the report to Warsaw; possible institutionalising of lessons in Warsaw; sending instructions to the representatives in Brussels. If the lessons learnt are not properly evaluated and institutionalised, then there is a high probability that they will be 'lost' when the representative leaves his/her post in Brussels.

This study in particular has shown the important role that the representatives in Brussels play in the Europeanisation and learning processes. They are the first ones who are subjected to socialization and (social) learning. This leads to a situation whereby they are 'trapped' between the capital (Warsaw) and Brussels, becoming embedded into two different (organizational) environments: one of their ministries and one of the Council. An interesting question may be posed for future research: due to this 'entrapment', do they 'unlearn' the rules previously learnt in the capital? Or do they act as real 'change agents' and attempt to change the organizational structure at home?

The study has also shown that there is much more evidence of simple rather than complex learning. The shift in strategies concerning lobbying for a future Ukrainian membership (from direct talk of membership to the less ambitious 'small-steps' approach) is one example of such simple learning. Complex learning would imply change in beliefs and calculations of national interest. It is probably too early to detect any direct evidence in the case of Poland. The fact that Polish diplomats do not speak formally

inside the Council about the need to give Ukraine the promise of membership does not prove that there was a shift in Poland's understanding of its national interest. Quite on the contrary, there is evidence that this strategic goal has not changed, but that the lessons were learnt regarding the 'way-of-doing-things' in Brussels.

The distinction between the processes of learning and socialisation in the case of foreign policy procedures is blurred and not clear-cut. Socialisation is interlinked with social learning and can even be perceived as a strategic action by the agents. In such case both processes are rational actions, aimed at maximising the effectiveness of the uploading procedures. The three mechanisms bear different significance for different dimensions of Europeanisation. Conditionality was directly a mechanism facilitating downloading only and worked at the organisational level (structure). Learning was a mechanism that first facilitated downloading, but in a longer perspective also uploading, as the 'lessons learnt' were applied in order to promote national interests at the EU level. It worked at both levels: individual (first) and organisational (when the lessons were institutionalised). Socialisation has directly affected downloading and uploading, as the actors were socialised in a new environment, adapted its rules, but at the same time took an active part in creating a group atmosphere that other actors would become socialised into. It applied at the individual level, however, these individuals acted on some occasions as 'change agents' in relation to their organisations (ministries). The above conclusions may be summarised as follows (figure 7):

Figure 7. Three mechanisms of Europeanisation

Mechanism	Direction	Level (of analysis)	Time factor
Conditionality	Downloading	Organisational	Before membership
Learning	From downloading to uploading	Individual and Organisational	Before and after membership
Socialisation	Downloading and Uploading	Individual	From active observer period

The thesis identified different strategies that a member state (Poland) uses when trying to upload national policy goals to the EU level, such as: agenda setting, entering formal and informal coalitions of like-minded groups of states, applying 'Euro-jargon' discourse and attempting persuasion in the Council, disseminating information through formal channels like CORTESY (e.g. non-papers) and holding bilateral meetings. On the other hand, in the course of the thesis, some motives behind such attempts also became apparent: legitimising national policies 'through Europe' on the wider international scene (as in the case of Polish involvement in the Orange revolution), gaining support for national policy prerogatives (bringing Ukraine closer to the EU), seeking international support in the case of bilateral conflicts (as in the case of harassment of the UPB in Belarus) or using success in the EU as an asset in domestic politics.

Where is the line between national and European interests?

The thesis has often referred to the concepts of **national and European interests**. For example, one possible effect of the Europeanisation process on policy substance would be a possible change in (the perception of) national interest. Even though the empirical evidence does not support such a far-reaching hypothesis, it is apparent that there has been a **change of context** in which the Polish national interest is now formulated. Hence, in this study the European and Polish national foreign policies are not perceived in zero-sum terms. In practice, the process is much more complex and both policies seem to be complementing each other and exerting mutual influence on each other.

In this respect, the findings of this study are in line with the earlier research conducted by Ben Tonra, who concluded that "institutional coordination – common work practices and structures, a shared information base and the establishment of a common substantive agenda – set up a truly collective context in which a large proportion of national foreign policy is being formulated and pursued" (Tonra, 2001: 230-231). This involved the adaptation of procedures, caused by EU membership, such as the development of a coordination reflex or consensus-building practices at the EU level. Such a situation

limits the usefulness of the 'misfit' concept, sometimes applied in Europeanisation studies. If the national interest is formulated in a changing context and Europeanisation is understood as a circular process, it is difficult to determine where to look for evidence of such a misfit, in other words, where the national interest ends and the European interest begins?

Another finding of the thesis related to interests. Occasionally one set of policy goals are presented in Poland's bilateral relations and another at the EU (multilateral) level. Which one of them points to the 'real' national interest, if one can assume that it exists? Again, the findings do not offer any straightforward answer. Such dualism of policy demonstrates itself through tensions not only between Brussels and Warsaw but also between the professional diplomats / civil servants (experts) and politicians. While the former undergo socialisation processes in the Council, the latter are not subjected to such an intense process because they meet with each other less frequently?

Another (methodological) difficulty is related to the fact that there might be multiple decision-making centres in a member state such as Poland which occasionally compete with one another in the course of defining national foreign policy. In other words, it becomes difficult to determine who defines the national foreign policy. Such a situation was observed in the case of Polish foreign policy towards her immediate Eastern neighbours, especially after the parliamentary and Presidential elections in 2005. The role of the Polish MFA was seriously challenged by both the Prime Minister's office and that of the President. On top of that, the course advocated by the Prime Minister's advisors would on occasions be different from that proposed by the MFA. In such cases, it is difficult to determine the definite national interest, when foreign policy lacks consistency and not all the foreign policy actors involved speak with one voice.

Finally, an interesting idea for future research might be to look at the domestic factors influencing the Europeanisation process. Studying this thesis, the influence of domestic politics and changes in government, have been treated here as a 'black box'. However, as the recent presidential and parliamentary elections (2005) have shown, these factors had

considerable impact on the overall policy of Poland inside the EU. However, in the case of foreign policy, these changes of course were mainly at the highest levels, while at the levels of experts the work done was typically 'business as usual' with the application of lessons learnt. As for the procedures, there could be a possibility of un-learning, especially given that a large number of the foreign policy staff, including many of those interviewed for this thesis, have either left or been made redundant (some also left to work for the EU institutions).

The insights from the four substantive cases

This part of the conclusions discusses the main findings of the empirical data, it summarises it and refers to any similar research done in other studies. The findings of all explanatory cases both on the process and on the policy substance are brought together.

The Europeanisation of the Polish MFA: change in policy process

The main empirical findings of the thesis relate to the influence that participation in CFSP had on the process and substance of Polish foreign policy. It was shown that the Polish MFA had to adapt the structures, rhythm and some of the underlying principles of its work. After the changes in 1989, becoming an active observer and then a member of the EU were very important events of ministerial history. The adaptation to CFSP was quite difficult, considering the organisational baggage that the MFA took over from the communist period. Some very deep-rooted habits of officials had to be changed, such as (lack of) information sharing or team-building. Also the hierarchical structure, very characteristic of the communist regime's executive, had to be adapted to allow for the delegation of more powers to the level of experts. The most important findings are discussed below.

Adaptation in the organisational structure, policy process and institutional culture

Research on the Polish MFA identified several types of change that took place as a result of Polish participation in the CFSP. The earliest change, that began even before the active observer period was caused mainly by conditionality and was organisational. It involved creating new departments dealing with the EU (DUEiONA, later the DUE) and the unit responsible for CFSP. Also within the territorial departments of the MFA, the positions of desk officers responsible for CFSP matters were created. This fostered the new role of the DUE that shifted mainly towards that of coordinator of the CFSP dossier within the ministry and even within the government. Europeanisation could also be observed in the establishment of new posts (or adding new functions to already existing positions), such as that of the European Correspondent, his/her deputy, the Political Director or the PSC Ambassador. Active participation in the CFSP meetings required teamwork and information-sharing on the part of the officials from different units and departments. Both of these processes meant substantial changes in the way the work was organised and information circulated. As one of the diplomats noted, the greatest challenge was to convince the officials in the MFA that they should start acknowledging the necessity to work in a multilateral, rather than a bilateral environment.

Next to the MFA, the role and organisation of the Polish Permanent Representation to the EU in Brussels has changed. Two sub-sections were created in the external relations section: one dealing with CFSP and one with ESDP issues. When Poland gained the status of active observer, the number of personnel in the Permanent Representation tripled and new coordination mechanisms were introduced. The rhythm of work changed substantially and was adapted to the work of the EU institutions, particularly the Council of the EU. It included a number of preparatory meetings before EU meetings, such as COREPER II or the PSC. Also a system of preparing instructions in Warsaw, getting them authorised, sent on time to Brussels and then timely reporting back to the Polish MFA by the representatives had to be implemented. The coordination system for EC and CFSP related issues was established to first manage the accession negotiations and later to facilitate Polish input to the EU's politics. It remained rather cumbersome, involving a

lot of different actors and it is still in flux. For example, after a significant debate about the situation of UKIE after accession, its role still remains uncertain.

Europeanisation has also meant modernisation in technical issues and every-day work management, as innovations were also introduced in this area. New communication systems were installed, first the EU-32, then ACN and finally CORTESY. From the very beginning, Poland faced problems introducing a safe electronic network, a challenge that has yet not been fully overcome. This has obstructed the circulation of documents, which is crucial in managing a dynamic area like the CFSP, when time is an important factor in the decision-making process.

Regarding the internal working organisation and culture, EU membership and the establishment of the DUE resulted in a clear generation gap in the Polish MFA. This gap seemed more significant than the different political orientations of the officials. It was mostly young diplomats that dealt with the CFSP and, as many of them claimed in the course of this study, they became the least liked ministerial department, bringing with them revolutionary changes. This gap has not been closed and one of the insiders observed gloomily that it seemed almost impossible to do so in the near future.

Another significant change in terms of policy making and institutional culture was the fact that officials in the Polish MFA became a part of an EU coordination reflex with their counterparts from other member states. They now began to consider what the others might think before even preparing their own national position/instructions for representatives in Brussels. Such consultations would take place in various forms, on a bilateral basis, in Warsaw and in other European capitals or in groups of 'like-minded' member states that would often prepare joint strategies for the formal meetings.

The role of national representatives in Brussels as 'change agents' in the Europeanisation process

The findings of the study indicate that national representatives in Brussels, even at the level of experts, have an impact on the procedures and substance of national (Polish) foreign policy and take an active part in the process of Europeanisation. They act as 'change agents' in relation to the capital, initiating changes at the domestic level. One mechanism fostering their influence is providing instructions and advice to the capital, which may lead to the institutionalisation of the lessons learnt. It may take different forms: in some cases it is reporting back from a meeting, providing feedback or a contribution to non-papers and other policy documents or assisting higher ranking officials in their meetings and advising them on the strategy of pursuing national goals.

The role of the national representatives in Brussels as 'change agents' is reflected in the evidence reported. They have undergone an intense process of socialisation during the Council meetings and entered the learning process. The change in their behaviour during meetings became apparent to the other participants and was reported in the interviews. At the same time, their colleagues in Warsaw were not subjected to the same socialisation and learning processes or to such an extent and soon a gap in experience and knowledge opened between those based in Brussels and those based in Warsaw. One of the results was that the representatives were observed to adopt a less radical line and discourse than Warsaw might wish, as a result of gaining confidence and learning the procedural norms in the Council. They would also often signal to Warsaw how far it could press for a favourable solution and when such actions would endanger the state's credibility among its partners.

In this respect, the experts in Brussels had an important impact on the strategies that Poland chose, providing legitimacy to new ideas, based on their newly-gained expertise inside the Council. This was generally recognised by their colleagues in Warsaw, who often admitted in the interviews that they learnt from their Brussels-based counterparts. But the consensus oriented nature of negotiations in the EU was an important lesson for

all levels of decision-making in Poland. As expressed by the Prime Minister, in the EU everyone has their own interest, but one cannot allow the situation when one member state would feel it unacceptable to stay in the EU. Hence, as he claimed “if for someone the word ‘compromise’ is a bad one, he is not a true European” (Belka, 2005).

Perceptions of CFSP by diplomats and MFA officials

In the course of this thesis, it became apparent that there was a shift in the perception of the CFSP among Polish officials and diplomats from the MFA. As explained by one of them, in the beginning it was seen as something that Brussels was confronting with the Polish national policy. Such a view was especially common among the older diplomats, whereas the younger generation seemed to be more open for change. Such fears may be related to the fact that Poland had been in a position to create its own independent foreign policy for a few years before having to face up to the requirements of the CFSP. Slogans, like ‘from Moscow to Brussels’, illustrated some popular fears that Polish state sovereignty in the domain of foreign policy, once lost to Moscow, could again be made subordinate, this time to the EU. Hence, the ‘opposition reflex’ described by one practitioner was closely linked to the issues of independence in policy-making.

Nonetheless, this situation has been changing with time and now, more than three years after accession, the CFSP is perceived as an opportunity rather than a constraint on national foreign policy. This became very clear from the results of the interviews both in Brussels and in Warsaw. There are a few reasons behind this shift in perceptions. First, the channels and mechanisms of uploading were discovered and used. Even though the Poles were disillusioned with the fact that only part of their ideas were taken on-board, they have experienced an active shaping of the policy of the 25 (now 27) member states, something they were unsuccessfully trying to influence prior to the accession (for example in the case of the Eastern dimension). The Poles were also able to ‘internationalise’ some of their national problems or priorities in national security. For example, the issue of the harassment of the Union of Poles in Belarus was condemned by the whole EU-25, which bore much more weight than if Poland had done it unilaterally.

Polish diplomats and politicians also managed to get the EU involved in the events of the Orange Revolution, despite an initial reluctance on the part of some old member states. Taking a leading role, together with Lithuania and the CFSP High Representative Javier Solana, they were able to pursue a policy that was central to the national interest with the support of the whole of the EU.

The EU has also started to be perceived as an institution that the Polish MFA was part of and not something 'alien' to it. This was illustrated in the language used for example in instructions or in the informal and public discourse, where the officials no longer refer to the EU as 'them'. There is also less calling for action from a position of an outsider, but more pragmatism underpinned by an understanding that Poland has become one of the states responsible for the EU's policies and their implementation. Finally, Brussels has also become a valuable source of information and analysis, coming not only from the EU institutions, but also from other member states, for example via CORTESY network. This development has shown another advantage of CFSP and proved to many officials in the Polish MFA that EU foreign policy was based on an expertise that Poland could never have access to if it remained alone or at least outside the EU. On the other hand, it changed the context in which national foreign policy was formulated by providing some fundamental information.

Between the member states: the 'crossloading' dimension of Europeanisation

The 'crossloading' dimension, conceptualized earlier as an exchange of norms and practices between the member states, but outside of the EU institutional framework, receives the least attention in most academic studies. Also in the course of research on Polish foreign policy, there is very little evidence gathered to draw any substantial conclusions as to this aspect of Europeanisation. Most 'crossloading' took place before Poland became an active observer to the EU. This is nothing surprising, considering the fact that in that period the EU institutional fora were largely unavailable to Polish officials.

There are a few documented attempts at ‘crossloading’. Before Poland joined the EU, several member states, such as the UK, the Netherlands, Denmark or France, offered to share their experiences of coordinating EU policy and in adjusting their own foreign ministries to working within the framework of the CFSP. Such courses were often sponsored by the EU, for example by the PHARE programme. The older member states also offered the Polish (Associated) European Correspondent some possibilities of practice-oriented training. For example, she was invited in 2000 to visit the FCO in the UK for a week, in the period preceding the General Affairs Council (GAC). There is, however, no evidence that those lessons were later institutionalized.

After Poland became a member of the EU, a couple of officials from the DUE were hosted in 2005 by the UK and Austria to assist and learn from the experiences of holding the Presidency. An official from DUE was invited to the FCO’s CFSP Unit in order to observe how the British dealt with the challenge of the Presidency. The same official was later made responsible for the preparations for the future Polish Presidency, so there is hope that the lessons she learnt in London will become institutionalized in the Polish MFA. Such evidence, however, is not there yet.

Is the Polish case any different? Polish MFA and other ministries of the member states

For Poland, as for many other member states, EU membership has posed considerable institutional challenges, not only in terms of coordinating EU policies and managing the ‘blurring boundaries’ between domestic and foreign affairs, but also concerning the design of effective systems that would allow for “projecting to and receiving from the EU” (Allen, 2005: 131).

Many of the problems experienced by Poland are shared with other new member states, while others may be characteristic only for the largest of the newcomers. In relation to this issue, the old member states’ representatives would most often refer to miscommunication between the capital and the representatives in Brussels, a relatively long decision path, retaining consistency between different Council Working Groups or

using aggressive rhetoric in the pursuit of national goals. Poland was usually named as the new member state with most resources at hand, but also the strongest ambition of playing an active role in the CFSP. In the case of a few smaller states, such as Slovenia or Malta, lack of human resources was a considerable problem and these countries were often unable to send representatives to all CFSP Working Groups. The lack of foreign policy traditions and institutions was listed as yet another obstacle, for example in the case of the Baltic States.

The challenges to the role of the Polish MFA as a 'gatekeeper' of the state's external relations is another feature held in common with other member states, resulting from global developments rather than the EU integration process alone. For example, academic studies on the adaptation of the Austrian (Neuhold, 2002) and Danish (Jorgensen, 2002) MFAs, as well as the British FCO (Allen, 2002; Oliver and Allen, 2006) have shown that they faced the same challenge. As Oliver and Allen put it, the main challenge brought about has been with foreign and EU policy increasingly becoming issues of coordination across government, with the FCO striving to remain a central department in this process (Allen and Oliver, 2006: 53 and 59). For some time now, the Polish MFA has been managing the challenge by accepting its new role of a 'boundary-spanner' and it engages in more interaction with other ministries, where EU contact officials were established. But even this function was called into question during the negotiation period by the creation of the UKIE, with the initial aim of coordinating negotiations with the EU. However, after accession, the future of the UKIE still remains unclear.

Europeanisation of Polish foreign policy: substance

As well as policy procedures, the study has also looked at the Europeanisation of policy substance, focusing on policy towards Poland's immediate Eastern neighbours. This choice meant researching change in one of the most sensitive areas of Polish foreign policy. The evidence has shown that while some national adaptation took place and its degree is still difficult to determine, there were significant efforts made in order to upload national policy objectives to the European level. Strategies have been adapted and

changed with time, after the unsuccessful advocacy of the idea of creating the Eastern dimension before accession. Some explanation can be certainly provided by the fact that the Poles did not have any insight into the workings of the EU, as they did not yet have the privilege of sitting in the Council. This changed once Poland gained the status of an active observer. This initiative of creating the new dimension remained 'on the shelf' throughout most of the period which this study looked at and was brought back to the discussions by the Poles two years after their accession, in mid-2006. An initial assessment of how the Eastern Dimension was advocated on these two occasions points to the fact that some Europeanisation took place, such as thorough consultations with partners, informal seeking of necessary support or simple and pragmatic formulation of the main ideas, but not all the lessons have yet been learnt.

The first period prior to accession, was characterised mainly by national adaptation and alignment with the EU *acquis politique*. In the case of the policy towards Poland's Eastern neighbours some formal adjustment took place. However, these were not revolutionary changes and the overall policy direction remained the same. Examples include restraining official contacts with the Belarusian officials at the ministerial level, which were taking place beforehand, or introducing a strict visa regime for Ukraine. The last one, while not being a part of the second pillar, is tightly connected to the foreign policy and had an influence on bilateral Polish-Ukrainian relations.

The study focused on two of Poland's neighbours: Ukraine and Belarus. Because of the strategic importance of the two, one could expect that Poland would attempt to 'ring-fence' these special relationships and keep them as a *domaine réservé* for bilateral relations. It was rather, however, the opposite that was noted. While in the case of Belarus, the Poles continued expressing quite harsh criticism of the EU's approach (coming especially from the Department of Europe in the MFA), they became actively involved in trying to change the current EU approach. In the case of Ukraine, the decision to go to the Orange Revolution with the EU, instead of limiting the participation to bilateral relations, is the best example of the Europeanisation of Polish foreign policy. At the same time, the issue of prospective EU membership for Ukraine remained a good

example of a national long-term goal that Poland has been pursuing within the EU. As the goal itself remained unchanged, there was a shift in strategies to a more pragmatic ‘small-steps’ approach. This example also shows that as far as it is relatively easy to show the uploading dimension of Europeanisation, it is much more difficult to trace national adaptation and change in the core of national foreign policy. Here, the main national goal remained unchanged, even though, one could argue that the shift in strategy and discourse may also eventually influence the re-formulation of Poland’s objectives.

Another conclusion that may be drawn from the empirical research is the fact the Polish decision-makers decided to be active in the EU and use it as an arena for the ‘internationalisation’ of some national strategic goals. When linked with the findings relating to the MFA, it shows that the shift in perceptions of the CFSP from a constraint to an opportunity for national foreign policy has occurred in favour of the latter. This is despite the often expressed criticism of the CFSP as being ineffective and ‘blurred’ as a result of a compromise between the 25 member states. The cases analysed belong to the most sensitive components of Polish foreign policy. This may explain such intense uploading efforts and active participation, which did not take place in many other policy areas.

An important role in this process of Europeanisation was played by those diplomats who were posted to Brussels or at least attended meetings in the Council. They took the responsibility for ‘translating Brussels’ to Warsaw and often signalled what would be the best strategy or the best moment to accept a compromise. In the analysed cases, the COEST representative remained in very close contact with the MFA, usually with the European Correspondent, making important suggestions on the conduct of negotiations. The role of the Brussels-based officials was even appreciated by several of the EU officials and national representatives who were interviewed. An example of such a role might be the case of the UPB or the MES for Ukraine.

This perception of an EU opportunity is linked to the role that the Polish officials envisage for the EU in their own areas within the policy-making process. As the example

of the Orange Revolution has shown, the EU forum may serve as a legitimising factor for national objectives. At the initial stage of Polish EU membership, this perception seemed to be taken to the extreme with an expectation that the EU would take Polish proposals onboard, even if they were not in line with the general consensus. This may be concluded from the example of the 'Eastern Dimension' or the perceptions of some national representatives. However, such an attitude was bound to change later, when the basic principles of policy-making in the Council were discovered by the Polish representatives. The Eastern policy has also forced the Poles to generally raise their profile in the EU and show that they came to Brussels to do more than just to 'arrange the offices' (Kwasniewski, 2005), as expressed by one of the quoted politicians.

The example of Ukraine has also shown that Poland was not going to 'ring-fence' its relationships with its strategic partners. On the contrary, Polish politicians decided to involve the EU and act through the EU, whether in the case of the revolution or providing support for Ukrainian WTO membership. This willingness to 'go with the EU' went quite far in the case of the UPB. Here, as implicitly suggested by a few diplomats from other member states, Poland went even further than some other member states would usually go. It could be argued that as a result the bilateral contacts and minority issue, which would normally not feature that significantly on the EU agenda, were included in the EU discourse and the Council Conclusions.

In the case of the Eastern policy the adaptation process also resulted in a change of discourse from a more nationalist, even aggressive, to a more compromising one. This process seems to be ongoing. Regarding the Belarusian question, there seems to be an ongoing 'struggle' between Poland, who was pushing for a more active and radical policy, and the EU which tried to restrain Polish foreign policy. Thus, because this issue raises high emotions in Poland, Europeanisation does not always proceed without obstacles. It is an interesting question, related to the circular nature of Europeanisation, whether one will eventually manage to prevail.

Nonetheless, an active position within the EU has not prevented the Poles from conducting their own bilateral relations with the above mentioned neighbours. This is in itself nothing surprising, as the CFSP does not 'override' national foreign policies, but occasionally the two were not fully convergent. In other words, the agreed policy with regard to high-level formal visits to Ukraine was not fully coherent with what the Polish diplomacy and the experts presented inside the Council. Such situations were, however, quite rare. An interesting idea for further research, stemming from this conclusion, is to ask whether it is possible that a member state (Poland) acts in a 'Europeanised' way in multilateral forum but does not show any signs of Europeanisation when it comes to bilateral relations?

In terms of the actual impact that the Poles managed to exert on the policy of the EU, it has been a mixed record. As noted a few times throughout the thesis, they undoubtedly raised the interests in the region on the Council's agenda. There were a few examples when they managed to convince their partners to alter their policies, such as in the case of participating in the Orange Revolution, not excluding limited contacts with Belarusian officials or granting Ukraine the MES. Nonetheless, often the negotiations ended with disappointing results; for example, the EU did not create an independent Eastern Dimension, it did not make any special offer to Ukraine after the revolution and the visa-ban list on Belarusian officials was not extended. Arguably, some important lessons were learnt from these failures and strategies and expectations were at least partially adjusted.

Conclusions: not such an awkward partner after all?

On the basis of this research it can be concluded that EU membership in general and participation in the CFSP in particular had a considerable impact on Poland's foreign policy procedures and on foreign policy-making in Poland. In the case of foreign policy substance, the most visible change took place prior to enlargement. The main shift happened in April 2003 when Poland gained the status of an active observer and was invited to join the meetings in the Council. This provided opportunities for socialisation and learning to take place. However, it may be also concluded that the main strategic

policy goals regarding Eastern Europe remained largely unchanged, in spite of a shift in the discourse, especially in the internal EU forums and the Europeanisation process is still in progress.

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ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: Research Declaration

RESEARCH DECLARATION²⁹¹

In order to facilitate accuracy in social science research it is vitally important that the researcher have access to informed and authoritative sources. At the same time the researcher is under a strict obligation to protect the trust which such sources place in her/him. The recording of interviews is an important tool to ensure accuracy in the research process.

In view of the above, I undertake to abide strictly by the following principles:

- No material gathered in an "off-the-record" interview will be attributed to the interviewee, without the interviewee's written consent.
- Quoted remarks will be attributed only in an agreed formula (e.g. "according to a former Minister for Foreign Affairs, according to a senior E.C. official").
- The interviewee may, at any time, opt to go "on background." Such information is provided solely for purposes of elucidation and may not be quoted in any form.
- An interviewee may, at any time, opt to go "on-the-record." Such remarks are available for attributed quotation.
- A list of interviewees must be appended to the final thesis. Any sources wishing anonymity may request that their names be provided on a separate list which shall be submitted only to the examining authorities.

The above rules may also apply to a transcribed interview-- with written notes taken in longhand. The undersigned would be happy to discuss emendations or additions to the above.

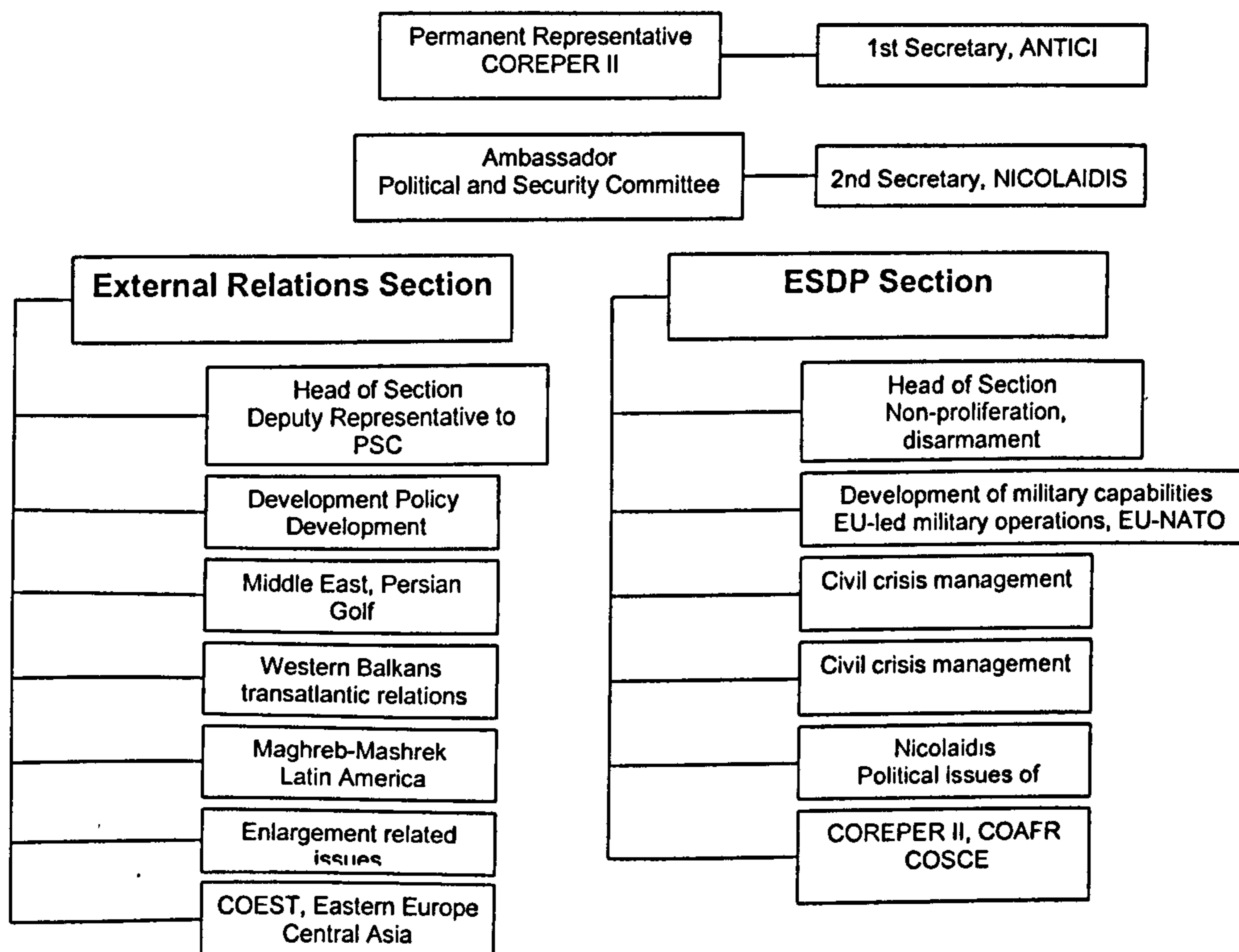
Signed:

Karolina Pomorska

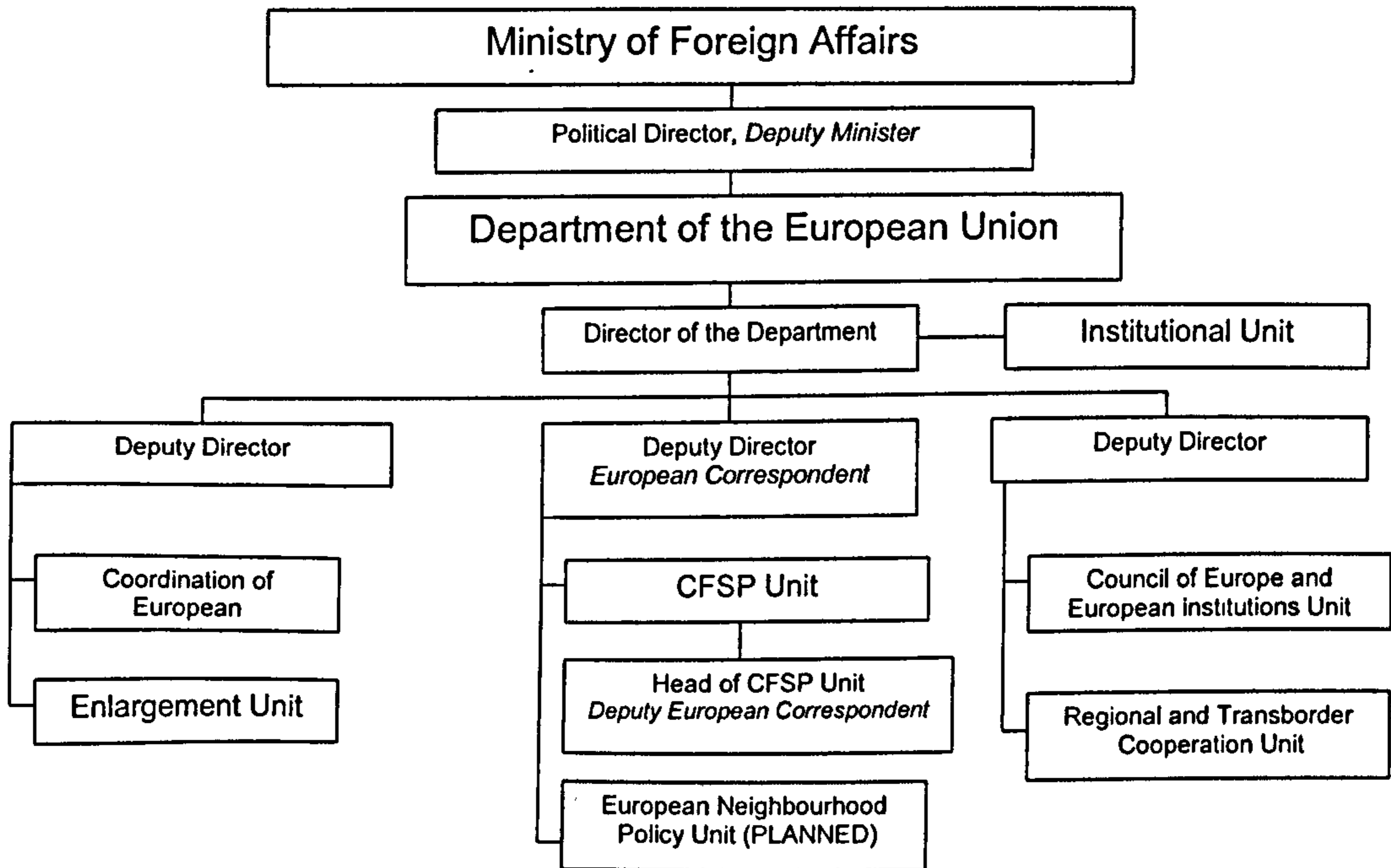
Date:

²⁹¹ The author would like to thank Ben Tonra for granting the permission to use this form in the interviewing process.

ANNEX 2: Polish Permanent Representation to the European Union, 2005/6



ANNEX 3: Organisational structure of the Department of the European Union, DUE (2005/6)



ANNEX 4: Preparing instructions for COREPER

