



## ***New EU members and the CFSP: Europeanization of the Polish foreign policy***

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*The issue of the foreign policies of the new EU members seems to be especially important today, as the enlarged EU needs to build a coherent foreign policy to be able to pursue its role as a global actor. Different history, experiences and political cultures of the new member states still seem to be quite unknown for the old EU members. This study focuses on the Polish foreign policy and its change, motivated by the EU adaptation pressures and investigates the impact of Poland on the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) of the European Union with particular reference to Poland's ability to 'upload' its foreign policy interests in Eastern Europe to gain acceptance and support from its EU partners. To highlight the scope and limitations of Poland's ability to upload its foreign policy preferences to the EU level, the focus of this study will be on the EU's relations with Ukraine, after the Orange Revolution and Belarus, after the Presidential elections in 2006. The theoretical framework is based on the Europeanization approach, showing first the level of adaptation of the policy on the national level, and then the process and mechanisms of bringing national interest to the EU.*

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### **Introduction**

Polish foreign policy has had to face revolutionary and profound challenges due to the collapse of the Iron Curtain and changes in the international environment. In particular, after gaining independence Poland has had to find a balance between the West mainly organized in NATO and the EU, and the East including former allies from the Warsaw Pact. This “in-between” situation, especially in a country in the early stages of democracy with few security guarantees, and the experience of being left isolated at critical moments in its history, has had a profound impact on foreign policy choices. Concentrating mainly on the “return to Europe” and dealing with the internal transformation rather than active participation abroad, Poland has only started to recognize the change in its position in Europe and international politics, after NATO accession and the “big-bang” EU enlargement. Independent and transformed, Poland had developed a new Post-Cold war identity, with a new role for the country, as the regional leader, predestinated to promote democracy in the neighbourhood and import knowledge about Eastern Europe to her Western partners. This paper aims to show the impact of the European Union on Polish foreign policy, and Polish attempts to influence the EU’s external relations with Ukraine and Belarus. It also aims to capture the external pressures on Polish foreign policy within the EU and in the Eastern neighbourhood. The study investigates to what extent Poland as a new, Eastern member is able to balance its European foreign policy objectives concerning Ukraine and Belarus, and the European Neighbourhood Policy in the East, defined as an alternative to the further Enlargement. Polish efforts are investigated on two case studies: the Orange Revolution and EU’s response to it, and the support for the Belarusian opposition after the Presidential elections in Belarus.

Poland’s position between Russia and Germany had been for years a source of worry to Poland, as the experiences from before the wars<sup>ii</sup> and in the immediate aftermath of World War II<sup>iii</sup> showed that those powers were bilaterally making decisions about the future of Poland. The issue of territorial defence has been an obsession for Polish policy makers, who were fearful of a threat from Russia. After the collapse of the Soviet Empire and the end of

the Cold war, Poland was afraid to be left out in the vacuum sphere or the grey zone of security, and that fear influenced her application for the NATO membership (Zaborowski 2004). The EU was regarded by Poland rather as a soft power and Poland needed hard security guarantees due to its geopolitical situation and past experiences. Accession to NATO and the EU were seen as two inseparable ways of achieving the security in the region. Maintaining security, together with sovereignty and economic development, was one of the three maxims that drove Polish foreign Policy after the Cold War. The Common Foreign and Security Policy of the EU introduced Poland to a wider spectrum of international politics and gave possibilities to be not only the regional, but also an international player, if only Poland was able to learn how to “push” its preferences into the EU arena. The active participation in the creation of a coherent EU policy on the Ukraine and Belarus might be a chance for Poland to join the “directoire”- that is, the decisive core of those countries who influence and shape EU external relations the most.

The Polish aspiration to be a member of the first European league seems to be blocked not only by the internal situations but also by the specificity of the region in which Poland wishes to be a European leader and which still is a grey zone of security. Involvement in the democracy building in post-soviet republics, together with interest in the energy sector in this region, causes major problems between Poland and Russia. Due to the natural resources and unstable situations in a majority of the republics, there are many actors wishing to be involved in this sphere. As an equal member of the EU, Poland is expected by her EU partners to develop a coherent and predictable foreign and security policy, especially towards its Eastern neighbours. However, Poland and the majority of the EU countries have different visions of EU relations with Ukraine and Belarus. The EU believes that the newborn European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) is a sufficient way to bring the neighbourhood countries closer to the EU and support them in transition and reforms. However, Poland believes that ENP should differentiate the Southern and Eastern countries and offer the European perspective for Ukraine and Moldova in future.

This Polish advocacy for the Ukraine is not only caused by the desire of having its 'domain reserve' in the EU external relations, but mainly by a belief that only really strong 'carrots' can motivate the country to implement profound reforms. This is based on a strongly held belief that the potential of EU membership was a motor of the Polish transformation and democracy building, capable of uniting Polish elites and society around reforms, even at the worst moments of the process. Poland believes that the similar situation could take place in the Ukraine. European integration constrained domestic and international choices and enabled democratization and stabilization in Poland. Poland is profoundly embedded in the European system and its policy objectives draw on the euro-centric approach. This is a result of many years of close cooperation with the European elites and the support gained from the EU members on the transformation path. Despite its strong transatlantic ties, Poland is EU focused and "a good European". Former Polish Foreign Minister, Stefan Meller said, "It is via the EU we are going to realize our political and economic aims. We should build the European identity and work on the strategic vision of Europe" (Meller 2005).

### **Conceptual framework**

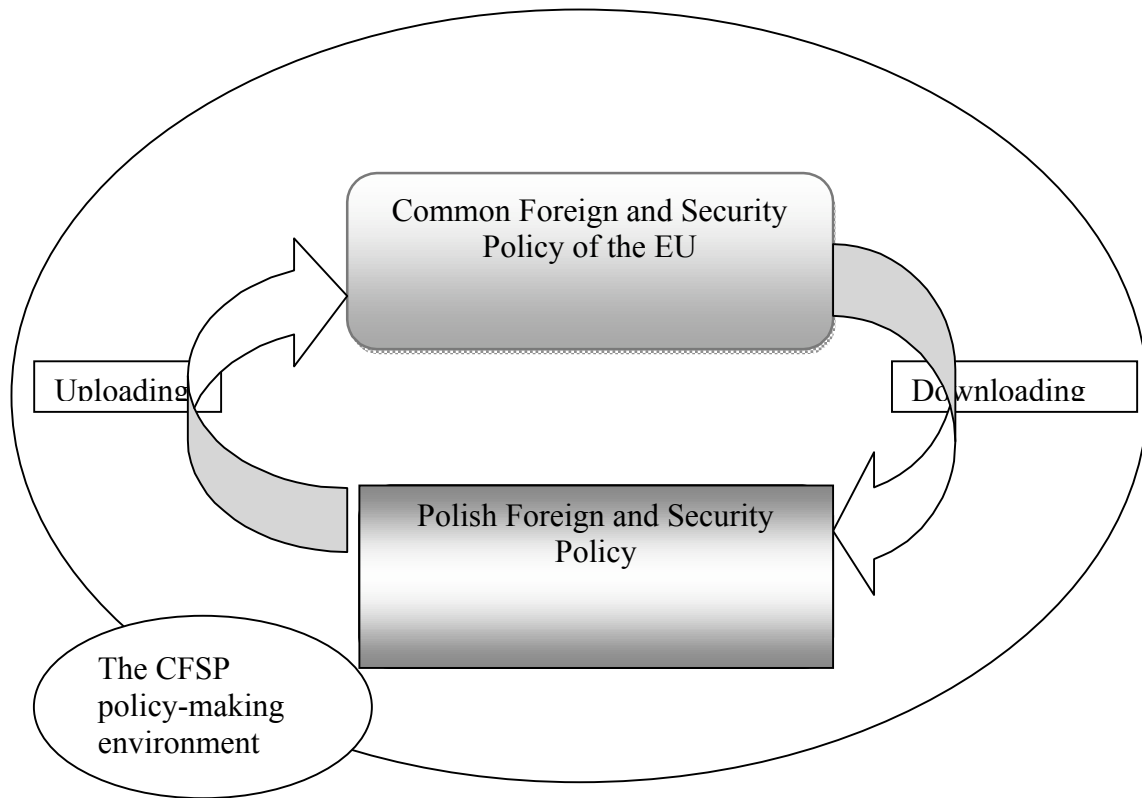
This paper examines the mechanisms of influence and pressures introduced by Poland to be able to shape the EU external relations according to its preferences, and investigates the EU influence on Polish decision-making. Analyzed dynamics are framed in the Europeanization concept, as it is believed that Europeanization highlights the influences on the level of EU-member and also candidate state. The literature on Europeanization is growing and moving towards attempts to define a concept and set out research designs. There are many definitions of Europeanization and as a result, the term is now used to describe a variety of phenomena and changes. Some authors see the Europeanization as the export of cultural norms from Europe to other parts of the world, others as a synonym of European integration processes or as a development of a special system of governance of the EU level. There is also a large group who argue that Europeanization is the adaptation of domestic political structures to European pressures and then

the ability of project the national preferences on the EU level. The approach taken in this study fits into the latter group.

Europeanization is used here to analyze the influence of the EU on the candidate (and member) country and examine if it causes any reverse process. The definition of Europeanization employed encompasses institutional changes as well as changes in belief, discourse and procedures (Bulmer and Burch 2005). Europeanization is defined here as ‘the impact, convergence or response of actors and institutions in relation to the European Union’ (Featherstone, K and Kazamias, G 2001) and “consists of processes of a) construction, b) diffusion and c) institutionalization 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 EU policy process and then incorporated in the logic of domestic discourse (national and sub national), identities, political structures, and public policies” (Grabbe, 2001; Featherstone and Radelli 2003). The Europeanization of the foreign policy has been less analyzed than other policies. The EU has been described as “weak” in this policy area, as there are no conditional requirements of law or procedures implementations.

The Europeanization of foreign policy is a process that occurs at the national level, impacting policies, preferences, behaviours, ideas or institutions. This change comes from the adaptation pressures generated by the European integration process and its intensity depends on the “fit” or “misfit” between domestic institutions and pressures. The process is also influenced by the role of mediating factors (Cowles, Caporaso and Risse 2001). It is a reciprocal process, which implies the projection and reception (Bulmer and Burch 2005). States are active in projecting their preferences, policy ideas and models to the EU, as only active projection allows preserving the national interest on the EU arena and increasing the international influence (Wong 2005). This approach to Europeanization combines two dimensions of this concept: downloading and uploading. To answer the question of how much Polish foreign policy has been influenced by the EU “top-down” (downloading) and “bottom-up” (up-loading) processes of Europeanization will be examined. This

will first, show the level of adaptation of the policy on the national level, and then the process and mechanisms of bringing national interest to the EU and influencing European policy-making. More specifically, this study identifies a number of key mechanisms through which “uploading” and “downloading” can take place.



Picture 1 Europeanization model Miskimmon A.

The effective strategy of minimalizing the costs and maximalizing benefits is to ‘up-load” the national policy to the European level. The more European policy fits the domestic context, the lower are the costs of adaptation. In contrast, policy “misfit” increases the adaptation pressures on national institutions and forces them to react. Michael E. Smith introduced four indicators of downloading within the domestic arena (Smith 2000: 617). These are: elite socialization, bureaucratic restructuring, and constitutional changes and changes in public perception concerning the political cooperation. Smith’s

model of policy change will serve as a framework for this study. Policy adaptation is understood as the “change of the existing position or creating a new position on an unsettled policy problem, thanks to a participation in the CFSP”. To be able to measure the Polish ability to “upload” its interest on the East, this article will use Miskimmon and Paterson’s model (Miskimmon and Paterson 2003), which shows the tools and methods used by the state to influence the EU. These are: institution building/exaggerated multilateralism, agenda setting, example setting and ideational export. The uploading dimension also includes Polish involvement in creating the Eastern dimension of the EU and relations with Ukraine and Belarus.

<b>Adaptation/downloading</b>	<b>Projection/up-loading</b>
1. Elite socialization	1. Institutions building/exaggerated multilateralism
2. Bureaucratic restructuring	2. Agenda setting
3. Constitutional changes	3. Example setting
4. Changes in public perception concerning the political cooperation	4. Ideational export

The described model tries to link the level of Europeanization with the impact on the EU’s external relations policy. Poland, which tries to use the EU as a tool to pursue its interests in the East and also as a way of strengthening its position in the region, is forced to balance its national interest with the EU’s interests. To be able to achieve its goals in the EU, Poland is pressured to behave in the ‘European manner’, which is often contradictory to the Polish vision of power policy. However, it is argued that Poland would be able to bargain its policy preferences more effectively if it was Europeanized.

***Applying Europeanization in practice: Adapting the CFSP to Poland***

Applying Europeanization to Polish foreign policy is a big challenge, as Poland can fully participate in the CFSP creation since 2004, and even though the Europeanization process had started before that, with the Association Agreements, it is still a short period of time. Foreign policy is also inseparably connected with the national sovereignty, and remains one of the most

guarded areas of government policy. It is therefore interesting to analyze the Polish response to integration deepening, especially given that Poland only re-gained its sovereignty seventeen years ago. We also need to be aware of the difficulty of excluding the impact of other international dynamics: NATO, OSCE, the Council of Europe or different regional organizations on the Polish foreign policy change. This study tries to assess only the EU impact on the foreign-policy making in Poland.

### ***Institutional and bureaucracy restructuring***

Analyzing changes in Polish foreign policy on the level of political institutions, we can observe changes in the administrative structure of all ministries and departments that have included EU issues on their agenda. The country also has established new institutions coordinating European integration and has actively participated in the European debate. Those changes were necessary to facilitate the co-ordination of the Polish European policy and contacts on the working level. The Polish foreign policy administrative structure went through a major change because old and highly bureaucratic ministries were not prepared for the rapid information channels from the EU. Before reform, this caused major delays in cooperation in the field on the European Foreign Policy. Also the number of the institutions responsible for the European policy coordination caused confusion, both in the Polish internal arena and within the EU.<sup>iv</sup> One of the best examples of the Europeanization of foreign policy institutions is the creation of the European Committee in the Council of Ministers. The Council, established in 2004, is led by the President of the Council and acts as a forum of common position creation and decision-making in the EU sphere. The Council meets twice a week and debates on contemporary issues and problems with European integration, and also prepares proposals and draft instructions for the COREPER. On the level of foreign policy, it includes the Secretaries of the States and Undersecretaries for the issues being discussed.<sup>v</sup> During the last ten years, Poland has set up many inter-ministerial working groups discussing the issues of the Polish foreign policy and the CFSP.<sup>vi</sup> Deeper political cooperation led to the creation of new national officials to organize it, and also encouraged the expansion of the national diplomatic service (Smith M. E. 2000).



The Polish Foreign Ministry has established a group of experts working on the CFSP within the European Union Department of the Ministry. The department cooperates with Polish officials working in the Polish Representation in Brussels and the Office of the Committee of the European Integration (UKIE), which is responsible for coordinating the preparation of Poland's official positions for COREPER I and COREPER II (Jakubek, 2007). To facilitate contacts on the foreign policy level, the Polish "little MFA" in Brussels has an external relations department that deals with the CFSP. A separate department deals with European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) issues. The expansion of diplomatic services and reorientation of the foreign ministries towards the EU is especially evident in the Polish Representation to the EU where the number of officials has tripled since 2004, and now includes one hundred and twenty staff (Pomorska 2007), of which seventy are experts.<sup>vii</sup> Also, the Polish Foreign Ministry has enlarged its expert resources on the different areas of the CFSP. The intense work on CFSP issues forced the creation of the post of Brussels Ambassador, whose sole responsibility is coordinating cooperation at the Political Security Committee (PSC). Before joining the EU Poland was already focused on its Eastern European neighbours, the Ukraine and Belarus, but the pressure to be a bridge between the West and the East resulted in the creation of internal institutions dealing with democracy promotion in those countries. The Department of Democratic Transition in Central and Eastern Europe was established in the Prime Minister's Chancellery. Sub-committees dealing with democracy building in the neighbourhood were also set up in Sejm and Senate.

### ***Elite socialization***

National policy decisions are not made in a vacuum, as Smith argues (Smith 2000). In reality they are the result of both interactions at national level and interactions with other states. Main actors bargain positions amongst themselves, which then need to be approved on the national level (Putnam 1993). Decision-making and problem solving on the EU level depends on the level of socialization amongst these major decision-makers. Institutionalized networks and cooperation during prolonged periods of time encourage this socialization process (Smith M. E. 2000). Analyzing the level of elite

socialization, we need to make a distinction between the governments, which stay in office only for four years, and lower level professional officials, who stay in office for a longer period of time. Political nominees are going to identify themselves less with the EU, as they are appointed for only a fixed period of time, and usually come from regional parties or universities. Professional officials dealing with the EU on an every day basis are going to be more familiar with the EU and the institutional paths of cooperation or behaviours. The political dialogue, which was introduced in 1991 by the Association Agreement, was created at the highest level: the head of state and the head of the government, with the President of the Commission and on the ministerial level in the Association Council, which was supposed to meet once a year. Cooperation was also agreed on the level of the directors of political departments with Troika and on the level of ambassadors of member and associated countries. The Association Agreement signed in 1991 created a parliamentary committee, which included delegated national MPs and MEPs (Starzyk 2003).

In practice, the political dialogue was only limited to consultations on the most important issues. However it created a chance for the exchange of views on matters of contemporary external relations. The meetings were also not very regular, and Polish policy-makers regarded them as being very brief. However it led to a lack of controversy in external relations, as the member countries and the candidates usually shared the same point of view.

In 1994 the EU set up a political framework for cooperation with candidate countries. This included annual meetings of the Heads of State and Government and, twice annual meetings of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and political directors of the associated countries with the EU countries. Also the *correspondences europeenes (COREU)* was set up to facilitate contacts in the sphere of external relations. The candidate countries made significant progress towards achieving the EU's declarations, initiatives and demarches (Łos-Nowak 2005). It is argued that during the accession negotiations, which were the most intense phase of the integration, we can observe the formation of "norms entrepreneurs", which are the network of experts who legitimated new norms and ideas by providing the scientific knowledge (Boerzel and

Risse 2000). Those “norm entrepreneurs” were the experts; officials from different ministries and local government, who have participated in exchange and twinning programs offered by the EU institutions and EU members. They were able to “translate” the EU policies on the local and national level. As a result the Polish elite became more familiar with the work and positions of their European colleagues, and learned to value political cooperation as a way to enhance their own foreign policy capabilities.

The period of “observation” has resulted in different approaches to the CFSP creation. Poland, instead of showing her disappointment with decisions being taken by the other heads of states or the government, started to look for allies who would support its views. The increasing level of pre-consultation, as well as coming to the meetings with the well prepared proposals, was evident during the European Convention meetings. Poland started to recognize the need of coalition building to support its ideas, as it could be observed on the example of cooperation with Spain or the United Kingdom during the works on the draft EU Constitution Treaty. This proves the changes in problem solving strategies employed by Polish diplomats, as they realized that exchange of information and cooperation was the only successful way of policy making in Brussels (Pomorska 2007). Michael E. Smith argues that elite socialization is especially evident when national elites change their approach to controversial issues (Smith 2000). A change of approach can be observed on the position of the Polish government over the ESDP. Very skeptical and critical at the beginning, Poland is now participating actively in all the components of the ESDP. This however is not necessarily due to the fact that Polish policy makers started to believe in the EU as future superpower, possibly even in military terms, but the result of a rational calculation that active participation in the ESDP would mean stronger influence on EU decisions.

The policy change can be observed on the example of the active participation of Polish soldiers in ESDP missions in the regions such as Congo, which have never been spheres of Polish interest; the development of Polish humanitarian aid to Africa or Asia; and participation in the building of European security, by contributing soldiers to multinational battle-groups

(Kupiecki, 2005). Poland also contributed more than seven hundred experts for civilian missions, which makes Poland to be the sixth largest contributor in the EU. A very good example of the Europeanization at the level of the CFSP is Polish relations with Asia-Pacific countries, and participation in Asia-Europe Meetings and ASEM Regional Forum. Poland gave financial support to Indonesia after the Tsunami, and has sent a Polish Medical Mission to Iran after the earthquake. This involvement in the EU foreign policy actions is due to the fact that Poland tries to play more active and influential role within the EU, and does so by creating a wider international interest. It is hoped that this will let Poland join the EU's decisive core. The EU had widened the Polish national interest in Africa and to Latin America which have never been in the Polish sphere of interest. Polish decision makers have realized that it is only through an active policy in the EU that Poland can realize its Eastern policy, which is the priority in Polish external relations. However it is also evident the Eastern dimension is the only Polish objective in the CFSP and that Polish government finds it difficult to define other aims.

Socialization is a process rather than an outcome (Schimmelfenning 2000) and it does not have to be successful. It is successful if it results in the actor's internalization of beliefs and practices (Schimmelfenning, 2000). The decision makers' ambitions and their approach to Poland's role in Europe have changed. During the first period of cooperation between EU and Polish elites, the CFSP was criticized in Poland for the "Russia first policy", and the lack of the ideas on the Eastern neighbors relations. However, after the accession, Polish elites realized that the Eastern policy could be important in building influence in the CFSP forum.

The channels of elite socialization seem to be however blocked by the high politicization of the public administration in Poland. The 'spoils system' practiced, not only on the level of high officials, but also in the regions, leads to a high rotation of cadres, even within the civil service, which slows down socialization. Each government and therefore its officials have to go through the process again as the most Europeanized professional tend to move to work in the EU institutions, getting more stable and better paid jobs.

### ***Constitutional change and the change of the public discourse***

During the association period Poland harmonized her laws and procedures to be able to implement demarches, declarations, positions and sanctions.<sup>viii</sup> Polish laws and legal procedures concerning the CFSP were implemented during the pre-accession period. Poland has also implemented the *acquis communautaire*.<sup>ix</sup> As Poland's constitution was only introduced in 1997, those who were writing it already had in mind the fact that Poland was going to join the EU in next couple of years. As a result, they included laws that would allow the transfer of national competences to the international organization. Article 90 of the Polish constitution agrees to such a situation, provided it is due to the international agreement decided by the Sejm and Senate or by national referendum<sup>x</sup>. The biggest challenge for Poland is developing ESDP and the Constitutional Treaty of the EU, as Poland is able to take part in shaping them. Visible efforts of the Polish government to strengthen the Polish position by changing the treaty voting system show how important it is for Poland to have an influence on the EU's external relations. More voting power would also allow pressing the EU on the energy solidarity question.

In analyzing the level of Polish adaptation to the CFSP, it is interesting to look at the extent to which the EU's external policies have become relevant to Polish citizens. Polish public opinion is very much in favour of the CFSP, largely as a result of general satisfaction with the EU membership. According to the Eurobarometer, seventy eight per cent of Poles stated that they are in favour of the Common Foreign and Security Policy .This is the highest proportion of any EU countries.<sup>xi</sup> What is more interesting is that Polish public opinion is more enthusiastic towards the ESDP than amongst the political elites. With eighty four per cent support for ESDP, Poles are amongst the biggest supporters of this policy, which is only supported by seventy five per cent of EU citizens overall. This national enthusiasm over the CFSP and ESDP is very interesting, especially given that no national debate has ever taken place concerning issues such as ESDP missions, and sending Polish soldiers to Congo.

### ***Bringing Poland to the EU***

One year before EU accession, Poland proposed a *non paper* on the “Eastern dimension” of the EU, showing her future aspiration of active engagement in the Eastern Europe (Zulawski vel Grajewski, 2004). Although this initiative stayed in the area of theory and ideas, it well presents the CFSP areas in which Poland directs her efforts. Building a coherent EU policy towards Ukraine and Belarus is seen not only as a way to the Eastern Dimension but also offering the possibility of promoting Poland as a strong EU foreign policy actor. Even though the “Eastern dimension” initiative has not become a reality, Poland managed to persuade the EU to rethink its relations with Ukraine and Belarus, and to search for different ways of cooperation. Poland has transferred part of it foreign policy agenda, making the question of democracy building in the Eastern Neighbourhood countries visible. Poland managed to have the EU adopt the policy towards Ukraine and Belarus, and has engaged the EU during the Orange revolution in Ukraine, as well as presidential elections in Belarus. The chosen case studies show Polish efforts to influence the issues of strategic importance to the Polish foreign policy: EU relations with Ukraine and Belarus. The Orange Revolution and presidential elections in Belarus took place after the Polish accession to the EU, therefore allow us to track both the EU adaptation pressures on Poland and Polish ways of influencing the EU according to the Polish preferences.

### ***Institutions building/exaggerated multilateralism***

Major evidence of Poland’s ability to upload its preferences to the EU level would be contributions to institution building and success in multilateral cooperation within the EU (Miskimmon & Paterson, 2003). Poland has managed to promote the idea of democracy building in Ukraine and Belarus in the EU. The support for Ukraine was especially high during the Orange Revolution, where Poland, together with Lithuania, managed to involve the EU in the events. However, the major aim of gaining the European perspective for Ukraine did not succeed; it was not pushed straight after the events, and has died together with EU enthusiasm and the growing parliamentary crisis in Ukraine. However visible closer cooperation between the EU and Ukraine, including Ukrainian participation in the foreign and security policy of the EU

(border assistance mission between Ukraine and Moldova), ten points of the closer cooperation between Ukraine and the EU, and negotiated visa facilitation regime are in a large part the result of Polish lobbying within the EU.

Poland has also succeeded in promoting tougher EU policies towards the Lukashenka regime in Belarus, by proposing the introduction of visa ban for top Belarusian officials. Sanctions were introduced in April 2006 and the list of banned leaders was extended in May 2006 on the Czech request<sup>xii</sup>. Poland is still trying to work out ways and methods to influence EU institutions and members. The ability to use multilateral cooperation to influence the EU's external relations is much more evident. During the Orange Revolution, Poland managed to involve the EU, and its Secretary General and CFSP High Representative Javier Solana in supporting President Yushchenko of the Ukraine. Poland worked in cooperation with Lithuania and the Visegrad group countries to gain support for Ukrainians in the EU. Poland also managed to lobby for the creation of the EU agency, FRONTEX, which is responsible for the control of the EU's external border on Polish territory. FRONTEX deals with the questions of major importance for Poland, as connected with its relations with EU neighbours. Multilateral cooperation seems to be the weakest point for Polish representatives, as Poland only succeeded in gaining support when the interest of both countries was evident. Polish-Lithuanian common actions sometimes are not sufficient to gain the sufficient support amongst the 27 members (for example, as occurred with visas for Belarusian citizens), and such forums as the Visegrad Group fail to act as effective pressure groups.

### ***Agenda setting***

Poland seems to be a successful Eastern agenda setter. Poland is regarded as an expert on the Ukraine and Belarus within the EU, and the strongest Ukraine lobbyist in the organization.

Polish European MEPs managed to argue the need for the resolution of the rigged elections in the Ukraine in 2004. The European Parliament introduced the resolution on the 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2004 and the European Council declaration

on the Ukraine was adopted in January 2004. The EU's cooperation with the Belarusian opposition has also been influenced by Polish efforts, as well as the work of other Central European countries and the Baltic states. After the elections, the EU declared them to have not been free and decided to support opposition movements by financing the independent media and launching the project that would support the NGO sector in Belarus. The European Commission adopted restrictive measures on the Belarusian leaders in April 2006 for the violation of the international electoral standards and international human rights law, together with a crack down on civil society and the opposition.<sup>xiii</sup> In May 2006, sanctions were expanded and the EU decided to freeze the accounts of listed representatives. The EU has also declared that the list was open and could be expanded at any moment (Gromadzki, 2006). The EU introduced the sanctions regime as it was proposed by Poland straight after the presidential elections in Belarus. The Polish Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Stanislaw Komorowski argued in Brussels for immediate sanctions.<sup>xiv</sup>

Apart from engaging the EU High Representative, Javier Solana, in the mediation during the Orange Revolution, Poland is "dominating" the Belarus and Ukraine issues within the EU institutions. The resolution on the Belarusian election, as well as rewarding the Belarusian opposition leader Aleksandr Milinkievich with the Sacharov Prize, was a major success for Polish MEPs. Polish MEPs stress the importance of Ukrainian and Belarusian issues, and they are in charge of the delegations responsible for the Ukraine and Belarus. Marek Siwiec is a Chairman of the Delegation to the EU-Ukraine Parliamentary Cooperation Committee, which deals with Ukraine in the EP, and which groups Polish MPs from all parliamentary fractions. Bohdan Klich is the Chairman of the Delegation for Relations with Belarus, which includes seven Polish representatives amongst its nineteen members. The Foreign Affairs Committee is seen as a very important instrument of pressure to push the Ukraine and Belarus onto the EU agenda. The importance of negotiation over the position of Chairman of this Committee was much highlighted in Poland, as gaining this office for Polish MP Jacek Saryusz-Wolski was regarded as a possibility to push further Ukrainian and Belarusian issues.



There is certainly a national consensus on the issues of the Ukraine and Belarus and a high pressure to “lobby” for the Eastern Dimension across all parties in Poland.

On the domestic level, units or departments dealing with Belarus and the Ukraine or the Eastern Dimension have been established in every institution dealing with foreign affairs: the Chancellery of the Prime Minister; the President’s office; and Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The government also highly involves NGOs and the media in issues concerning Eastern Neighbours. The government has also introduced support programs for Belarusian students and NGOs, and financially supports democracy building in this country. Bringing Belarusian and Ukrainian issues to the EU agenda is an example of transferring national preferences to the European arena, as there is high pressure from the Polish society to be a Belarusian and Ukrainian advocate in the EU.

***Ideational export and example setting***

The idea of the “Eastern dimension” and cooperation with the Eastern neighbours is connected with two issues: Democracy promotion and regional security. Polish relations with its Eastern neighbours have developed from being very difficult and hostile, as rooted in the common, often difficult history, to being friendlier. This shift has occurred only during the last seventeen years and was connected with geopolitical developments, transformation, reforms and reconciliation over the past. Having the common experience and culture, Poland always considered itself as being obliged to support her “younger brothers in democracy.” After the EU Enlargement, Poland pushed the EU towards “democracy promotion” in this region. As it lacked the resources to do so itself and as this issue is one of the priorities in the Polish foreign policy, Poland tries to “fit” its objectives into the EU’s. The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) proposed by the European Commission in 2004, is considered by Poland as insufficient, as all EU neighbouring countries are put into “the same basket”, regardless of whether they are developing Eastern European democracies or as Mediterranean partners. The EU is interested in engaging in democracy promotion in the Eastern European region, however, and is fully

aware that this area is still regarded by Russia as being within her “sphere of influence”. As a result, the EU is very careful. This is one of the challenges for the Polish government - to initiate actions and policies that balance well between the EU’s policy toward Russia and democracy promotion in the region. Visible domestic pressure in supporting the Ukraine in its reforms and Belarusian opposition with their actions should result in the pushing towards more coherent actions at the EU level.

Poland is actively engaged in cooperation between Belarus and the EU, by supporting the NGO sector in this country, introducing projects and programs on various issues, and taking responsibility for the financial part of the projects. Poland also initiated exchange programs and scholarships for suspended students from Belarusian universities and scholarships for students expelled for participating in the opposition movement.<sup>xv</sup> More than three hundred Belarusian students are studying during the 2006/2007 academic year in Poland. Also, the EU has supported students expelled for political reasons by funding the European Humanities University (EHU) in exile in Vilnius with a €2.2m grant in 2006. Additionally, the EU granted €4.5 m to the new scholarship program for a Belarusian student wishing to study abroad.<sup>xvi</sup> Poland had taken part in creating the independent radio in Belarus, which was followed by an EU initiative for a new EC-financed TV and radio broadcasting programs for Belarus. This was launched in February 2006.<sup>xvii</sup> Poland adopted the visa sanction on Belarusian leaders on the 28<sup>th</sup> March 2006 and then opted for the EU decision on this issue, supporting the idea of freezing the bank accounts of listed officials.<sup>xviii</sup> Poland did not manage to succeed with all its proposals, as the list of banned officials was still too short according to Poland, but overall the Polish example was followed and supported.

In case of the Ukraine, Poland not only set an example during the Orange Revolution, but also proved to be an active actor during the visa facilitation regime negotiations. Poland wanted the EU to base the regime on the Polish experience of free of charge visas for Ukrainians. As a result, certain measures were suggested such as imposing visas at the very last moment

(Kral and Pachta, 2005) to enable Ukrainian citizens to cross the Polish border with the lowest possible costs. The price of EU visas for Ukrainian citizens is lower than first proposed by the EU. This has still not satisfied Poland completely, but many of the Polish experiences were considered and reflected in the final agreement between the EU and the Ukraine.

### **Conclusion**

This paper aimed to show the utility and applicability of the Europeanization concept in assessing the Polish ability to 'upload' its foreign policy preferences to the EU, and the EU's role in changing policy. It also aimed to characterize domestic and international dynamics that play a role in Polish foreign policy shaping. Some preliminary conclusions can be made concerning the Polish influence on the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the EU. Participating in the political dialogue with the EU since the early nineties, Poland adapted well to the CFSP, especially concerning administrative and bureaucratic structures, and the high support for the political cooperation amongst Polish public opinion. The weakest point in the Europeanization process is the political elite. This is due to it's the high fluctuation of cadres and the high level of politicization amongst the elite. This ensures that they are less familiar with the EU's methods of work and cooperation. The cases of miscommunication or lack of coordinated strategies between the main Polish policy makers and diplomats, as was the case during the negotiation of the *Constitutional Reform Treaty* in June 2007, shows a major weaknesses in the Polish policy making process, which has repercussions at the EU level. The Polish ability to influence the EU's foreign policy depends not only on a good adaptation to the EU bureaucratic procedures and legal regulations, but also a change in the 'way of thinking' amongst political elites and a broader strategy for Poland in the EU. Being a middle size state with big state aspirations, Poland has to follow the EU rules of behavior to achieve its aims in the Eastern neighbourhood. Lacking the potential and resources of the major European powers, Poland has to find its own place within the EU, and its own methods of wielding influence, corresponding to its potential and capabilities.

Poland, in the beginning skeptical about the CFSP, has found it to be a great instrument for achieving its goals and gaining influence in the EU. By becoming an “expert” on the Eastern European issues, Poland has been able to achieve the institutionalization of its preferences. The efforts and abilities to upload Polish foreign policy preferences to the EU prove that the level of Europeanization of foreign policy in the country is higher than it might at first seem. The growing importance of the Ukrainian and Belarusian issues shows that Poland is successful in keeping Eastern issues on the EU agenda. The Europeanization process continues as Poland looks up to the EU as being a forum where its foreign policy problems (for example, the Russian embargo on Polish meat) might be solved. The EU is also more often regarded as a global actor, able to face challenges both in the region and in the wider world. Poland managed to introduce the issues of the Ukraine to the European agenda, as the example of Orange Revolution and enhanced cooperation with the Ukraine show. Polish diplomats also managed to influence the EU’s relations with Belarus, the visa ban being a clear example of this influence.

However, the failure to achieve support for the Eastern Dimension initiative of the European Neighbourhood Policy, to gain a declaration of the European perspective for the Ukraine or to establish visa free regimes for the Ukraine and Belarus, shows that at the moment Poland is still learning how to influence and can only gain support for smaller initiatives. This is in a large part due to the low ability to compromise and build coalitions displayed by Polish decision-makers, and communication failures within the Polish foreign policy administration structures. The Polish domestic challenge is to find a place for Poland in the enlarged EU, and define a clear strategy in order to realize Polish foreign policy objectives via the EU. The EU exerts pressure on Poland to be an active Eastern agenda shaper and the ‘bridge between East and West’, whilst at the same time placing a limitation on the instruments that the EU can use to bring Eastern European countries closer to the union. Wanting to gain a place amongst the EU premier league, Poland has to overcome its own limitations within the domestic arena first, and then build a coherent vision of her place in the EU and in international affairs.

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