The New Atlanticist

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The New Atlanticist

Poland's Foreign and Security Policy Priorities

Kerry Longhurst
and Marcin Zaborowski

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We dedicate this book to
Oskar Zaborowski

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Birmingham and Paris, November 2006 K.L.
M.Z.

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Abbreviations and acronyms

CEFTA	Central European Free Trade Agreement
CFE	Conventional Forces in Europe
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy (EU)
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
COMECON	Council for Mutual Economic Assistance
CSCE	Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
ESDP	European Security and Defence Policy
ESS	European Security Strategy
EUPM	EU Police Mission
GROM	Operational Mobile Response Group
KFOR	Kosovo Force (NATO)
LPR	Liga Polskich Rodzin – League of Polish Families
NGO	non-governmental organization
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
IGC	intergovernmental conference
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
PiS	Prawo i Sprawiedliwosc – Law and Justice Party
PO	Platforma Obywatelska – Civic Platform
POLUKRBAT	Polish–Ukrainian battalion
PSL	Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe – Polish Popular Alliance
QMV	qualified majority voting
SLD	Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej – Democratic Left Alliance
UP	Unia Pracy – Labour Union
ZchN	Zjednoczenie Chrześcijańsko-Narodowe – Christian-National Union

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1

Introduction

Located at the heart of Europe and with a population of around 40 million, Poland was clearly destined to become an important player in European security upon gaining full sovereignty. Indeed, in the immediate wake of the events of 1989 Poland was the first state from the former Soviet bloc to elect a non-communist government and to begin shifting its foreign policy towards the West.[1]

Once democracy had taken hold in the newly sovereign Third Polish Republic in 1990, Polish foreign and security policy began to be characterized by a high level of consensus and continuity, despite ever-changing party political constellations and a near record-breaking number of governments. As a consequence, it gained a distinct and robust Atlanticist quality, which has not only raised Poland's profile above that of every other post-communist state in Central and Eastern Europe but has also allowed it to exercise a strong influence on the EU's foreign and security policy.

In short, Poland has made an impact. It quickly became clear that, after joining NATO in 1999, Poland would be the most proactive and vociferous of the new members. Through a readiness to send troops to Kosovo and Iraq, Warsaw demonstrated the confidence to use force and at the same time revealed the extent to which Polish policies would adhere to US strategic thinking.[2] While this has rendered Poland a 'cherished partner' in US eyes and elevated its position to that of America's 'protégé' in the East, Polish Atlanticism deepened the fissures within Europe in 2003–4 and has led many to refer to Poland as 'America's Trojan horse' or, even more pejoratively, its 'Trojan donkey'. In addition, intra-European and transatlantic differences had spill-over effects for Poland's bilateral relations and especially the Polish–German relationship, which had been a principal cornerstone of Polish foreign policy since 1989 and played a crucial role in bringing about NATO and EU enlargement.

Although Polish Atlanticism has evolved, not least in response both to

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the opportunities arising from EU membership and to the constraints it imposes as well as the sense of disillusionment felt over Iraq, Polish foreign and security policy is still characterized by a firm commitment to Atlanticism and is driven by the belief that the United States remains the ultimate guarantor of European security. Furthermore, Poland continues to stand out from the other newcomers by virtue of the way in which Warsaw sometimes conducts its European diplomacy. The characteristically uncompromising stance that it adopted on a number of issues during the accession process and that re-emerged in debates over the weighting of votes in the Council of Ministers in the slogan 'Nice or death' continues to feature periodically in the Polish approach to the EU – a stance that has led to the view of Poland as the 'noisy newcomer'.[3] It is for all these reasons that an in-depth examination of Poland's foreign and security policy and priorities is needed, not least because, as this book shows, the Atlanticism that characterized Polish policy throughout the 1990s is evolving.

Our starting point is the principle that Polish national history and, in particular, its core issues of identity, sovereignty and geopolitics remain vibrant, almost tangible influences on contemporary policies and perspectives. Consequently, we put strong emphasis on identifying the historical sources and factors that have driven Polish foreign and security policy perspectives since the end of communism and on demonstrating how they filter into policy across a number of key themes and issues in European security. To achieve this objective, the book mobilizes the concept of 'security culture', a distinct approach within the field of security studies that stresses the defining role played by history and collective memory in the formulation of national security policy.[4] We see a nation's security culture as the accumulation of the 'weight of its past'; it constitutes a distinct body of beliefs, attitudes and practices regarding the use of force that emerge over time. It is of an enduring nature, tending to outlast the era of its conception; at the same time, it is not immutable but is determined and influenced by formative periods and can alter at critical junctures. A security culture moulds policy by providing policy-makers with a frame of reference that shapes their conceptions of a situation and presents them with a repertoire of goals and policy tools.

In the case of Poland, we posit that it is geopolitical concerns, the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Polish nation as well as the effects and aftermath of the Second World War that became defining factors or 'core tenets' of Polish security culture; these tenets are examined in Chapters 2 and 3. Briefly, we describe Poland's contemporary security culture as both fixated on geopolitics and the country's historical strategic vulnerability and strongly defined by the past. This combination has led to a preoccupation with overcoming Poland's status as an outsider and a focus on stabilizing its

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eastern environment. Moreover, it gave rise to the prevalence of 'Atlanticism' and a strong attachment to the United States, which has been an underlying precept of the foreign policy of all post-1989 Polish governments.

This book also underscores the importance of competing national ideologies and, in particular, the ideas of Józef Piłsudski and Roman Dmowski, which, we argue, remain relevant for any analysis of contemporary Polish foreign and security policy. The opposing ideas and prescriptions for the Polish nation formulated by these two figures provided the framework within which Polish foreign policy, broadly defined, was conducted in the period up to the Second World War. Both statesmen were born towards the end of the nineteenth century at a crucial time in Polish history, and both played an important role in Polish politics and foreign policy. They espoused very different, if not conflicting, ideas about the nature of the Polish state, Polish international affairs and, in particular, Poland's relations with its immediate neighbours. While Piłsudski saw merit in the idea of Poland's developing into a multi-ethnic, heterogeneous state, Dmowski's vision centred on the concept of a Poland 'of and for the Poles', namely an ethnically based state. These two visions, which are discussed in detail in Chapter 2, offered very different prescriptions for Poland's international relations and, more specifically, its regional role.

Crucially, 'the Piłsudski/Dmowski debate' continues to inform Polish foreign policy and not just the often historically laden rhetoric of political elites. In their foreign and security policy thinking and programmes, Polish elites and parties have tended to align themselves, whether consciously or not, with either a Piłsudski- or a Dmowski-informed vision, an alignment that has had important consequences for foreign policy.

Thus, the objectives of this book are threefold. Bearing in mind the concept of Poland as a 'new Atlanticist', we will explain the significance of the past for Polish foreign policy and then outline and bring into focus Polish positions on a number of current issues in European and Euro-Atlantic security with a view to suggesting how the foreign policy of Poland, as an established member of NATO and the EU, might develop. In the chapters that follow, we will identify the roots and implications of the Polish approach to Euro-Atlantic security issues and European integration in general. We will examine the route that led to Poland's membership of NATO and the EU and present the Polish perspective on the EU as a foreign and security policy actor. We will also analyse Poland's approach towards its eastern neighbours as well as the question of the further enlargement of the EU. A thread running through the book is the idea that both Polish Atlanticism and Polish European diplomacy are evolving and have begun to adapt in ways that are perhaps unexpected. Despite being a proponent of a Europe of nation-states

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and a keen Atlanticist – a position that is similar in some respects to that of its British counterpart – the Polish political class has recently come to realize the benefits to Poland of a strengthening of EU institutions and the continuation of a large union budget to help the poorer and weaker states and regions.

This book will also bring into focus and consider the implications of the autumn 2005 parliamentary and presidential elections for Polish foreign and security policy. As a result of those elections, Poland is now ruled by a right-wing coalition government that includes parties which question some fundamental aspects of post-1989 Polish foreign policy. The scale of the challenge is demonstrated by the fact that the most pro-EU party in government – Law and Justice (PiS), which is also the main party of the coalition – is a member of the mildly Euro-sceptic Union for Europe of the Nations group in the European Parliament. The two other parties in government – the far-right League of Polish Families (LPR) and the populist Self-Defence party (Samoobrona), traditionally opposed to Poland's EU membership – have called for the renegotiation of the accession treaties.[5] There is no doubt that this is an inward-looking, populist and socially conservative government and that it differs from the European mainstream to an extent that alarms the liberal press and puzzles some of Poland's traditional allies in Europe.

However, at the time of finishing this book, it appears that Poland's radicalizing domestic context has not yet affected its foreign policy, which, in reality, has remained largely consistent and based on the same principles as those of the post-1989 period. While the government of Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz spoke at home about a 'Europe of the Nations', Polish policy has often in practice supported the 'community method' and a stronger Common and Foreign Security Policy (especially in the East). Similarly, Jarosław Kaczyński, who succeeded Marcinkiewicz as prime minister in July 2006, rejected EU interference on such issues as gay marriage and abortion, but at the same time declared that Poland would be an engaged and reform-minded member of the EU.

It is clear that the rest of the EU believes this government has a considerable image problem, which is exacerbated by the fact that the Polish centre right is introverted and often scornful of the 'EU liberals'. In other words, in contrast to previous governments, whose attitude towards the EU was aspirational, the current government cares far less what other states think about it. While this is a considerable departure from the past, it does not necessarily represent a policy change that is substantive or will endure. We argue that, as far as foreign affairs are concerned, this government may have a different face but its guiding principles will be the same as those of its predecessors.

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2

The past as prologue: the culture of Polish foreign and security policy

Poland's contemporary foreign policy perspectives have emerged from a unique and immensely rich historical process that has seen the Polish state appear, disappear and then reappear. This history has shaped Polish conceptions of sovereignty, statehood and security and ultimately given rise to a distinctly Atlanticist 'security culture', which has informed Warsaw's foreign and security policy in the post-Cold War era. Throughout the 1990s Poland's security culture steered Warsaw's 'return to Europe' after 1989 and its bid to join the EU and NATO. It also influenced Polish policies on key military-security issues such as Kosovo and Iraq.

At the core of Polish security culture is the dilemma of being sandwiched between Germany and Russia/the Soviet Union. This dilemma has had dramatic implications for the identity of Poland as a sovereign entity ever since its decline as a major European power in the eighteenth century. Thereafter geopolitics dictated a strong interrelationship between external and internal politics and led to the emergence of two broad political orientations: 'political realism' and 'political idealism'.[1] These two traditions framed Polish foreign policy thinking, which crystallized during the eighteenth century into two grand strategies. Political realism espoused a pragmatic view of Poland's status quo and thus sought a *modus vivendi* with its powerful neighbours. For the realists, security was to be achieved not through foreign adventure but by preventing any further setbacks for the nation. In contrast, the idealists confronted Poland's security dilemma by insisting on the sacrosanct nature of independence and sovereignty; oppression by powerful neighbours should be rejected and overcome at any cost. Competition between these two strategies, which eventually encompassed many groups, movements and individuals, has had an overwhelming impact on Polish politics and the 'politics of Poland', arguably until the present day. In its contemporary incarnation, the realist/idealist struggle manifests itself in the divide between advocates of an active and overtly Eastern external

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policy and those who promote domestic consolidation and internal reform.

Thus in broad terms Poland's unique security culture was shaped by the competing views of the realists and idealists on how to resolve the Polish security dilemma. More specifically, Polish security culture was fleshed out by a string of formative episodes that produced distinctive ways of thinking about sovereignty and national identity, the use of force and the building of alliances. Contemporary conceptions about the state, sovereignty and identity derived from leaders such as Roman Dmowski and Józef Piłsudski, who during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries made an indelible impact on Polish nationalism and foreign policy. A second formative episode – one that had a marked effect on Polish security culture – was the Second World War and its aftermath, during which Poland's rather cynical approach to multilateralism and alliance-building crystallized. Polish security culture was also influenced by the experience of Soviet tutelage and communist rule. After the war it was 'hijacked' by the communists to help ensure Moscow's continued support and the continuity of post-Yalta international relations. But this period also witnessed the emergence of an alternative security culture which, nurtured by the opposition and émigré communities, was more in line with pre-1945 foreign policy perspectives and traditions. After 1989 this alternative discourse returned to prominence to shape the Third Republic's external profile.

THE STATE, SOVEREIGNTY AND IDENTITY

Polish security culture began to emerge at a time when the Polish state did not exist as an independent, sovereign entity. The Polish–Lithuanian commonwealth, once the largest polity in Europe, was carved up and divided among neighbouring Prussia, Russia and Austria in three successive partitions between 1772 and 1795.[2] While a Polish national identity had started to materialize in the last years of the commonwealth, it remained both underdeveloped and largely elitist. The eventual emergence of popular nationalism in the late nineteenth century yielded two competing visions of what constituted the Polish nation and what kind of relations Poland should cultivate with its neighbours.

These two visions, which corresponded to the traditional realist/idealist dichotomy, were articulated by Roman Dmowski and Józef Piłsudski. Dmowski founded the national-democratic movement, while Piłsudski was the leader of the national-revolutionary wing of the Polish Socialist Party. Piłsudski's Poland was a political and federal project that emphasized the multinational and multi-ethnic character of the state.[3] In contrast, Dmowski's Poland was conceived as a 'nationalizing state' – in the words of

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Brubaker, 'of Poles and for the Poles' – where minorities would be tolerated but subjected to the policies of assimilation.[4] The opposing conceptions of these two individuals led to political cleavages and contrasting perceptions of Poland's international relations.

The state-centric vision of Józef Piłsudski

Piłsudski's idea of a federal, multi-ethnic Polish state harked back to the pre-partition Polish–Lithuanian commonwealth, which was also called the First Republic. A political project with a strong ethnic mix, the First Republic encompassed most of modern-day Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus and even some parts of what is now Russia. It was ruled by the landed gentry (*szlachta*), who elected a king with no hereditary privileges and increasingly limited powers. The *szlachta* were multi-ethnic, albeit mainly Polish or Polonized, and defined explicitly by class-based privileges. Long before the French and American revolutions, the state had a constitution that was committed to religious and political tolerance; as a result, it became a centre of migration and home to the largest concentrations of Jews in Europe.[5]

Piłsudski, himself brought up in multicultural Wilno/Vilnius, was clearly inspired by the model of the state and ethnic relations that, he believed, had existed in the pre-partition republic.[6] As a socialist, he was, of course, opposed to the kind of class divisions that had existed in the First Republic; thus he consistently promoted a political vision of the supremacy of the state above all ethnic groups and, in this context, often referred to the experience of the Polish–Lithuanian commonwealth.[7] Less a political thinker and more an active politician, he expressed his views through his actions as commander-in-chief of the Polish forces during the early years of the Polish state/Second Republic (1918–22) and as a semi-dictator after the *coup d'état* in 1926. In charge of Poland for much of the inter-war period, Piłsudski developed both a vision of the state and policies on the national question that not only had far-reaching consequences for Polish foreign policy between 1918 and 1939 but have exercised a strong influence on the formulation of Polish security policy ever since. Three distinct aspects of Piłsudski's ideology deserve mention: his attitude towards the national aspirations of the East European nations situated between Poland and Russia, his active and interventionist foreign policy and his view of relations with Germany and Russia.

As a unifying nationalist, Piłsudski recognized and to some extent promoted Lithuanian, Ukrainian, Ruthenian and Belorussian aspirations for emancipation. Through Polish independence, he aimed to recreate the pre-partition commonwealth (the First Republic) as a loose confederation led by Poland but with a large degree of autonomy for other East European states. To

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this end, he supported the Ukrainian independence movement and militarily endorsed the anti-Russian Ukrainian uprising led by Semon Petlura, which became one of the main causes of the Polish–Soviet war of 1920. He was also willing to renounce Polish claims to Wilno/Vilnius if Lithuania consented to his federal project. However, his plan was rejected by the Lithuanians, and Petlura's pro-Western policies failed to attract popular support in Ukraine. Despite winning the 1920 war, Poland proved militarily unable to drive the Soviet forces out of Eastern Europe and the attempt to establish Petlura's government in Kiev was unsuccessful. In addition, Piłsudski's expansionary Eastern policy was not endorsed by the Western powers, which at the time remained in favour of recreating pre-revolutionary Russia with only slightly modified borders.[8]

Faced with the failure of his federal project, Piłsudski chose to incorporate parts of western Ukraine and the Wilno/Vilnius enclave into Poland. Consequently, inter-war Poland evolved into a highly heterogeneous state in which minorities constituted more than one-third of the population.[9] In keeping with his unifying instincts and in pursuit of the federal project, Piłsudski favoured a multi-ethnic state and was the main force behind the 1935 constitution, which defined the nation in non-ethnic terms. He supported national self-determination in Eastern Europe and was prepared to alter Poland's eastern borders to accommodate the nation-building process in Ukraine and Belorussia. During the communist period Piłsudski's vision was kept alive by progressive Polish émigrés, such as the members of the Kultura Institute, which was based at Maisons-Laffitte, near Paris. After 1989 it returned to the forefront of Polish foreign policy thinking.

The second outstanding feature of Piłsudski's foreign policy was its interventionist and proactive tendency. This was demonstrated by his role as organizer of the Polish Legions during the First World War, his offensive strategy during the Polish–Soviet war of 1920 and his proposal to the French to engage in a pre-emptive war against Nazi Germany in response to the remilitarization of the Rhineland in 1934. Whether as a conspirator or at the helm of the Polish state, Piłsudski believed that Poland's independence could not be secured by taking a passive or defensive position.

The third characteristic of Piłsudski's policies was related to Poland's geographical location between two expansionary powers, Prussia/Germany and Russia, which proved fatal for the First Republic and was one of the main reasons for the non-existence of the Polish state from 1795 to 1918. After 1795 Polish foreign policy focused on overcoming Poland's 'geopolitical trap' through building alliances with Western powers. But by the mid-nineteenth century it had become apparent that neither France nor any other West European power was prepared to engage in a military conflict for the sake of

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Polish independence. Only a conflict between the occupying powers would offer a realistic prospect of the re-emergence of the Polish state. Consequently, from the late nineteenth/early twentieth century onwards various factions within the independence movement sought the opportunity of a trade-off with one of the occupying powers. There was, however, no agreement within the independence movement about which of the occupying powers should be its ally. Piłsudski was of the opinion that Russia represented the greatest threat to Polish national aspirations; thus he chose to ally his movement with the Central Powers – first the Austrians and then Germany.[10] The legacy of this policy is evident in contemporary Polish foreign policy.

The primacy of the nation in the ideology of Roman Dmowski

Dmowski's vision of the nation and nation-state was explicitly ethnic: the nation was an organic community connected by bonds of language and culture. In his view, the Polish nation was headed for oblivion because of the inherent weakness of the First Republic. While the gentry had held a strong position, the middle class was too small and predominantly non-Polish. Dmowski argued that the social make-up of the First Republic was the reason for its weakness and, ultimately, for its demise. If the Polish nation-state were ever to flourish, the Poles would need to democratize society and emerge as a homogeneous nation bound by ethnicity, language and religion (Catholicism). Thus, in opposition to Piłsudski, Dmowski argued that Poland should be a state of and for the Poles. Non-Polish minorities should be given the chance to join this cultural community, but only if they were prepared to become Polish. But Dmowski believed that some minorities were better at assimilating than others and distinguished between 'weaker' minorities (Ukrainians, Ruthenians, Belorussians) and 'stronger' minorities (Germans and Jews). He argued that while the first group could easily be assimilated, Germans and Jews might resist shedding their distinctiveness and for this reason should be encouraged to emigrate.[11] Like Piłsudski's prescription for the Polish state, Dmowski's vision had far-reaching implications for foreign policy and Poland's international relations.

Because of his explicitly ethnocentric view of the nation-state, Dmowski had no interest in the kind of federal project promoted by Piłsudski; nor was he interested in supporting the national aspirations of Ukrainians and other East European nations. Dmowski's foreign policy vision was rather introverted and isolationist relative to Piłsudski's. The responsibility of the Polish state was to provide secure conditions for the Polish nation and not to engage in an overly active foreign policy in the region. Also in contrast to Piłsudski, Dmowski saw Germany as the main threat to Poland's security

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and thus sought to forge closer ties with Russia.[12] Consequently, during the First World War Dmowski was involved in organizing Polish military units to fight in alliance with Russia.

The two visions of the Polish state and its international relations proffered by the two men became the polar ends of Polish security culture. Piłsudski's Poland was inclusive and propagated an active, interventionist anti-Russian foreign policy, while Dmowski's was exclusive and advocated an inactive but distinctly anti-German foreign policy. Although Piłsudski and Dmowski both rose to prominent positions after 1918, neither saw his concept of state and foreign policy fully realized. However, elements of both ideological outlooks could be found in the Second Republic.

The Second Republic

Given its ethnic make-up and its geographical location between the post-revolutionary Soviet Union and an unstable German state, the Second Republic clearly could not be a coherent political unit. Piłsudski's promotion of Poland as a regional leader was appealing amid the national grandeur and glory days of the First Republic. But Dmowski's 'integral nationalism' had the benefit of simplicity and appeared less elitist than Piłsudski's 'liberating and unifying nationalism'. Most important, as national tensions grew in inter-war Poland, Dmowski's view of a Poland 'of and for the Poles' gained ground.

While Piłsudski continued to tower over Polish politics until his death in 1935, he increasingly withdrew from involvement in domestic issues. It became evident that most of his compatriots, including some members of his government, did not subscribe to his 'unifying nationalism'. As a result, many of his inclusive policies were implemented only in part or simply not implemented at all. After Piłsudski's death his party continued to hold on to power but moved steadily to the right. The pendulum of Polish politics and security culture thus swung towards Dmowski's position. Policies towards minorities became increasingly intolerant and anti-Semitism more widespread. Ukrainians were no longer seen as allies but rather as a potential threat. Although Poland did not participate in the Munich agreement, it contributed to the weakening of the Czechoslovak state by incorporating some of the disputed territories into the Polish state after Hitler had invaded the western part of Czechoslovakia. On the eve of the Second World War Poland was inward-looking, in conflict with its neighbours and regionally isolated.

Although Dmowski and Piłsudski had polar visions, they shared a very important principle, namely the need to take an uncompromising stance on the independence of the Polish state and defend Poland's borders against an external threat, whether Soviet or German. This view was roundly endorsed

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by popular opinion, as demonstrated by the mass mobilizations during the wars with the Soviet Union (1919–21) and during the Nazi–Soviet assault in September 1939. Further evidence was the size of the Polish domestic resistance – one of the largest in Europe – during the Second World War and the fact that Poland remained the only part of mainland Europe where the Nazis proved unable to set up a collaborationist (Vichy-style) regime. Thus independence and sovereignty were firmly established as central tenets of Polish security culture.

THE SECOND WORLD WAR AND ITS AFTERMATH: THE BIRTH OF POLAND'S 'INSTINCTIVE ATLANTICISM'

The impact of the Second World War on Poland can only be described as catastrophic. Around six million Poles – or more than one-fifth of the entire population – lost their lives. At the beginning of the war Poland was abandoned by the guarantors of its security, France and the United Kingdom, and at its close the Western Allies agreed that eastern Poland would be permanently incorporated into the Soviet Union (although Warsaw would be compensated in the west, at the expense of Germany). Moreover, post-war Poland was to remain firmly within the Soviet sphere of influence. Consequently, although Poland had opposed the Nazis and its troops had fought in all major battles of the war, Poles felt no sense of victory when the war ended. The country was depopulated and almost all of its borders redrawn; from those areas incorporated into the Soviet Union huge numbers of refugees headed westwards. Perhaps most important, Poland was destined to become a communist dictatorship – one that was controlled by the Soviet Union and had little sovereignty in domestic affairs and none whatsoever in foreign policy.

All these factors left an indelible impression on Polish security culture. Three developments, in particular, were to shape Polish perceptions of international relations. First, the crushing defeat of the Polish forces in September 1939 and the collapse of the Warsaw uprising in August 1944 led to a pessimistic assessment of Poland's ability to defend itself. Second, the cataclysmic results of the West European appeasement policy and the way in which Poland was, in effect, abandoned by France and the United Kingdom in September 1939 engendered a very sceptical view of Western Europe and, specifically, of its ability to guarantee security and stability on the Continent. Third, the West's agreement to the permanent annexation of eastern Poland and the *de facto* consent of the United Kingdom and the United States at Yalta to the extension of the Soviet sphere of influence to Central and Eastern Europe illustrated the degree to which the 'great powers' could

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and would exclude Poland from crucial decisions affecting its interests. Thus Yalta became synonymous with the concept of betrayal.

Under the impact of these developments, Poland became intensely insecure about its ability to defend itself and very sceptical about whether Western Europe had any interest in coming to its assistance or the ability to do so. The origin of Polish foreign policy's predisposition towards Atlanticism can be identified here; indeed, during the post-war years the independence-minded opposition in Poland and abroad advocated an Atlanticist dimension to Polish foreign policy. While it was inevitable that the United States would be blamed, alongside the United Kingdom, for endorsing the Yalta agreement, it could not be blamed for the appeasement policy; nor had the US been obliged, unlike the UK and France, to assist Poland during the Nazi–Soviet assault in September 1939. Most importantly, the US was viewed as the only power in the world willing and able to oppose the Soviet Union and restrain Germany.

Of course, as long as Poland remained a communist state and a Soviet satellite, the principle of national independence could not be applied. This is not to say that the communist Polish People's Republic deviated entirely from Poland's inter-war security culture. Although the republic did not have an independent foreign policy, the communists' national policy was rooted in Dmowski's philosophy, which had several important implications for Poland's international position after 1945.

Security culture under communism

The new elements of Polish security culture that emerged after the Second World War fed into the concepts developed by the independence-minded forces within émigré circles abroad and among the democratic opposition in Poland itself. For its part, the communist government was prepared to use the traumatic experience of the war to justify its alliance with the Soviet Union and its acceptance of limited sovereignty. The communists argued that while Poland had been abandoned and betrayed by the West during the war, it had been 'liberated' by the Soviet Union. Thus there was an implicit suggestion in communist Poland that although the alliance with the Soviet Union was perhaps not ideal, Poland had had no option. This view was reinforced by the territorial dispute with West Germany and the Western powers' refusal to recognize the new Polish border, which made Poland's security essentially dependent on Soviet guarantees.[13]

The communists sought to portray themselves as nationalists who accepted limited sovereignty as the only way of ensuring continued national existence. The Polish state was threatened by German expansionism, as it

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had been since the emergence of the first Polish polity in the tenth century. This thesis was in harmony with Dmowski's view of Poland's international relations. Subsequently, the communists accepted (and presented as their own) some core elements of Dmowski's 'integral nationalism'.[14] They argued that although the pre-war Second Republic had been bigger, it had also been ethnically diverse and weak. Communist Poland was portrayed as a return to the ethnically pure nation of the West Slavonic Polish tribes who had peacefully coexisted alongside other Slavic nations, and the Russians in particular.[15]

Forty-five years of communist rule in Poland should not be seen as a genuine expression of how the nation viewed itself and its role in international relations. Although the communists used and manipulated some elements of pre-war Polish security culture, the Poles never accepted the notion that they were the true carriers of the national idea. This was because of the fundamental inability of the communists to implement the most essential component of Polish nationalism – the principle of independence and sovereignty. Consequently, while the communists skilfully appealed to some of the nation's sentiments – for example, anti-Germanism – staying in power remained entirely dependent on the support of the Soviet Union.

The communist opposition and foreign and security policy

Beyond officialdom, a more representative perspective on Poland's international relations matured within the democratic opposition and émigré circles. Contrary to communist policy, dissidents believed that, regardless of Poland's evolution as a state, it must remain sovereign and independent. In this context, the fundamental question had not altered since the late eighteenth century: how to deal with Poland's geopolitical dilemma of being squeezed between two powers that did not recognize its right to self-determination.

As discussed above, the prevailing view before and during the interwar period was that Poland should seek closer relations with France as a counterbalance to German and Russian domination. However, after the Second World War this view was no longer sustainable. France had not only failed to fulfil its alliance obligations in September 1939 but had also proved unable to defend itself against the invasion of 1940. For the Poles, one of the strategic lessons of the Second World War was that France could not be trusted and that it did not make a credible ally. Moreover, France's Eastern policy remained focused on Russia and it was clear that Paris would not risk damaging its relations with Moscow for the sake of Poland.

Having given up on France, the opposition turned its attention towards the United States, which was viewed as the only power capable of containing

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the Soviet Union and pacifying Germany. But in the first decades after the Second World War it remained unclear whether Washington's interests were, in fact, compatible with Poland's. Memories of the role played by President Franklin D. Roosevelt during the Yalta conference were still fresh, and many Poles, including the leaders of the opposition, blamed Washington for endorsing an international system that denied them the right to self-determination. Moreover, the United States did not recognize the new Polish–German border and some US politicians supported the revisionist stance of the West German government, which until 1970 demanded a return to the pre-1937 borders. Thus the task faced by the opposition was enormous: how to free Poland from Soviet influence while making it secure from Germany and at the same time establishing an alliance with the United States or other powers that shared Poland's view of international relations.

To a limited degree, the visions of Piłsudski and Dmowski continued to inform the development of conceptual thinking within opposition and émigré circles. While Dmowski's philosophy retained its popularity among some parts of the opposition, especially in the United States, it provided no satisfactory answers to Poland's post-war geopolitical dilemma, not least because some of its core ideas were adopted by the communists. After all, Dmowski had wanted Poland to be ethnically homogeneous, anti-German and friendly towards Russia.

Since Piłsudski's assertion that Russia constituted the greatest threat to Polish independence seemed to correspond more closely to post-war geopolitics, it was his vision that inspired the progressive and, as it turned out, most active elements within the independence movement. This process was shaped by changing international circumstances and, in particular, by the emergence of West European integration, but intellectual developments within the independence movement itself also played a role. The democratization of the Federal Republic of Germany and its integration into multilateral institutions was of considerable significance for Polish geo-strategic thinking: for the first time since the partitions, Poland was no longer under threat from the West. After West Germany had recognized Poland's western border in 1970, the pro-independence opposition became more confident about pursuing a pro-Western and, by implication, pro-German course and adopted some key tenets of Piłsudski's philosophy.

A critical role in this process was played by the Kultura Institute. Jerzy Giedroyc, the head of the institute and a former civil servant in the Second Republic, was inspired by Piłsudski's ideas on the national question and foreign policy.[16] The institute published a number of papers that revolutionized Polish foreign policy thinking and contributed to the formulation of a strategic concept that would influence Warsaw's policy after 1989. The key

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elements of Kultura's foreign policy philosophy were rapprochement with Germany, the recognition of Poland's territorial losses in the East as permanent and the promotion of the independence of Ukraine, Lithuania and Belorussia.[17] These ideas were introduced during a period that extended from the late 1950s to the 1970s. During this period they lingered on the fringes of mainstream thinking among émigrés, the vast majority of whom remained both anti-German and firmly convinced that Poland should regain its pre-war eastern territories.

Kultura's approach to foreign policy proved most influential among the democratic opposition in Poland. Very few people in Poland believed that a return to the pre-war eastern borders was realistic or even desirable. Generations of Poles born after the war had no memory of and thus no nostalgia for the 'lost eastern borderlands', and their attitude towards Germany became increasingly pragmatic. While the communist state actively promoted anti-German sentiments, the influential and highly respected Catholic Church called for reconciliation with Germany as early as 1965.[18] Responding to the appeals of Kultura and the Catholic Church, a group of dissidents called the Alliance for Independence issued a foreign policy manifesto in 1976, which appealed for a pro-Western orientation of the future Polish state and the recognition that a unified Germany was a precondition of achieving this objective.[19]

Thus the key tenets of the new Polish foreign policy – an unambiguous pro-Western orientation and the development of close relations with Germany to the west and Ukraine, Lithuania and Belarus to the east – were in place long before communism collapsed in 1989. This is not to say that these views went uncontested. While almost all dissident groups and large sectors of society supported a pro-Western orientation, the pro-German and pro-Ukrainian policies remained controversial. Beyond the general objective of 'returning to Europe', it was by no means clear what kind of foreign policy the first non-communist government would pursue.

STRATEGIC PERSPECTIVES AT THE BEGINNING OF THE THIRD REPUBLIC

In its foreign and security policy, the Third Republic, established in 1990, has been guided first and foremost by the same sacrosanct elements of Polish nationalism – the preservation and maintenance of independence and sovereignty – as the governments of the inter-war Second Polish Republic. The ideologies of Dmowski and Piłsudski are still exercising an influence but, as a result of the demographic and territorial changes after 1945, are less salient. They continue to represent divergent approaches towards foreign policy in

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post-communist Poland, but of course the culture of foreign and security policy of the Third Republic has also been shaped by other views and debates as well as international pressures.

Two sets of issues strongly influenced the Third Republic's foreign and security policies in the period immediately after 1989. The first related to the perceptions of and the lessons learned from the Second World War, while the second stemmed from integration into Western Europe. The experience of the Second World War had led to a lack of confidence in Poland's ability to defend itself, the syndromes of 'abandonment' (1939) and 'betrayal' (1944–5) as well as a critical view of West European pacifism, which was equated with appeasement. Although these syndromes or predispositions were prevalent in society after 1945, they had only a marginal influence on the policies of the communist government. But following the return of sovereignty in 1989/90 the foreign policy of the Third Republic became heavily influenced by the memories of the Second World War.

The 'lessons learned' from the war manifested themselves in the foreign policy axioms of post-1989 governments in Poland. First and perhaps most important was the rejection of the Yalta-style international order, which symbolized the concert of the 'great powers' dividing Central and Eastern Europe into their spheres of influence. Post-1989 Polish diplomacy almost obsessively repeated 'No to another Yalta' and pursued a policy of 'Nothing about us without us'. Second, post-1989 governments sought to obtain only 'hard' security guarantees and (with the exception of Tadeusz Mazowiecki's transition government) rejected any alternatives provided by collective security arrangements. Third, Poland sought to present itself as a 'model ally' in order to forge relationships with its new Western partners and the United States in particular. Fourth, the Third Republic would often support the use of force for purposes other than defensive ones. Although Poland lacked the material capacity to participate fully, it did not suffer from a lack of political will.

The second set of issues that determined Poland's post-communist foreign and security policies related to the international environment. Unlike its predecessor, the Third Republic is surrounded by mostly friendly states. Geopolitics have therefore ceased to pose a major threat; rather, Poland's location between the East and the West may even have become an advantage. The demise of geopolitics resulted largely from Poland's integration into Western Europe and (West) Germany's integration into multilateral organizations in particular. As early as the 1970s the democratic movement in Poland had become well disposed towards European integration while performing the role of the 'illegal' opposition. When former dissidents took up posts as ministers after 1989, the government's foreign policy embraced

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the principle of 'returning to Europe', and in the early 1990s Poland applied for both EU and NATO membership. In Poland, joining the EU was equated with joining the West. This pro-European course was seen as strengthening rather than weakening national sovereignty and independence.

Until the late 1990s there was no contradiction between these two sets of issues. The 'lessons learned' from the war suggested that Poland should join a credible alliance – one that could offer hard security guarantees and use force if necessary; NATO seemed best equipped to meet these criteria. Poland also sought to join an alliance of European states that promoted peace and prosperity and in which its voice would be acknowledged and taken into account; it believed EU membership offered these opportunities. Once membership of NATO and the EU had been ensured, a new chapter of Polish foreign policy opened.

TOWARDS A FOURTH REPUBLIC?

Poland's accession to the EU in 2004 coincided with tectonic shifts in Polish domestic politics. In the parliamentary and presidential elections held in the autumn of the following year, the political forces that had dominated during the Third Republic gave way to new conservative-liberal, national-Catholic and populist movements[20] that promised a radical departure from the key tenets of the Third Republic, a new constitution and even a Fourth Republic. Even a year on, it remains unclear whether the composition of the current parliament and the determination of the politicians elected in 2005 will lead to such a radical break from the Third Republic; however, it soon became apparent that the autumn 2005 elections signalled the beginning of a new era in Polish politics.[21]

The aspirational attitude that the previous governments of the Third Republic had adopted towards Western institutions and the West in general meant that Poland's outlook was unusually international and open to Western influences. This tendency was reinforced by a domestic agenda that was dominated by the idea of 'catching up' with the West and thus had an often idealized view of European integration. But this period seems to have come to an end. With Poland now accepted as a member of the Western community, its borders secured and its alliance with the United States sealed, Warsaw's motivation to prove itself an outward-looking European has somewhat weakened. Preaching the merits of European integration went out of fashion at the same time as domestic politics underwent a shift to the right conspicuously inspired by Piłsudski and, to a lesser extent, Dmowski – the fathers of Polish nationalism.

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AUTUMN 2005: A RENAISSANCE OF HISTORY

The autumn 2005 election campaign was marked by the return of traditions, debates and symbols rooted in the inter-war Second Republic. In the race to govern, all sides glorified Piłsudski and the Catholic Church, which, from a historical point of view, was somewhat inconsistent, given that Piłsudski was not particularly religious. Both the parliamentary and presidential elections were won by the fiercely patriotic and socially conservative PiS, which went to the polls explicitly referring to Piłsudski's concept of *sanacja*; this term, which roughly translates as 'moral renewal', was meant to signify the 'cleaning up' of public life.[22] Interestingly, the party that came second, the liberal-conservative Civic Platform (PO), used the same morally charged rhetoric. The two parties' presidential candidates – Lech Kaczyński (PiS) and Donald Tusk (PO) – disagreed over a number of issues (taxation in particular) but agreed that Piłsudski was the nation's greatest statesman and claimed that his ideas had inspired their programmes.[23]

Both parties also willingly acknowledged that Piłsudski's legacy was evident in their foreign policies. PiS ran a distinctly Euro-sceptic campaign (for example, arguing against the European constitution), and while PO presented itself as pro-European, it, too, pledged to be a robust defender of Polish national interests.[24] Yet there have been no differences in their Eastern policies; like Piłsudski, they have both pursued a policy of strengthening the independence of Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova and taking a tougher stance towards Moscow. The two parties were staunchly and actively supportive of Ukraine's 'Orange revolution'. Both praised former President Aleksander Kwaśniewski's role during the uprising in Ukraine, but criticized his decision to participate in the celebrations in Moscow in May 2005 commemorating the sixtieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Europe.[25]

While Piłsudski appears to have finally triumphed over his arch-rival, Dmowski, the legacy of the latter has by no means exhausted itself. Contemporary followers of Dmowski are to be found mainly on the far right, namely within the League of Polish Families (Liga Polskich Rodzin, or LPR), which explicitly states in its programme that it regards itself as a continuation of Dmowski's Endecja party.[26] In fact, the LPR's link with Endecja can be described as 'genetic'. The party was founded and continues to be led by the Giertych family; Maciej Giertych was its presidential candidate, and his son, Roman, has led the party since its creation. Both men are direct descendants of Jędrzej Giertych, a close associate of Dmowski and considered one of the most extreme nationalist, anti-German and pro-Russian voices in Endecja. Significantly, Giertych's extreme nationalism was more acceptable to the communists than left-wing dissident movements, among others. Although Jędrzej Giertych emigrated to the United Kingdom after the war, he often

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supported the communist government – for example, when it adopted a strongly anti-Semitic stance following the student demonstrations in 1968. His son Maciej returned to Poland in the 1960s to a cushioned job and had the rare freedom to voice his extreme views. In return, he supported the crushing of Solidarity (which he described as a left-wing conspiracy) and the introduction of martial law in 1981.[27]

In their policies, the Giertychs – and by implication the LPR – remain faithful to the core ideas of Endecja and Dmowski. The LPR stresses an ethnic definition of nationhood and is hostile towards foreign influences, real or imaginary. In its foreign policy, it is anti-German, critical of reconciliation with Ukraine and Lithuania and sympathetic towards Russia. The party's philosophy also reveals a strong element of Pan-Slavism. But with regard to European integration and transatlantic relations, there are growing signs of inconsistency and divisions within the Dmowski camp. Whereas before 2004 most followers of Dmowski were opposed to Poland's EU membership, some have since reluctantly embraced European integration, although they insist that this process can take place only under certain conditions and stress the need to retain Poland's sovereignty and distinctiveness within the EU. Nonetheless, the official position of the party remains deeply Euro-sceptic; for example, even though Poland has not yet declared its intention to adopt the common currency, the LPR is already running an anti-euro campaign.

Current US foreign policy also poses a major dilemma for the adherents of the Dmowski vision. It could be reasonably expected that, owing to their anti-German and Euro-sceptic attitude, followers of Dmowski would feel compelled to seek closer relations with the US as a counterbalance to what they see as a German-dominated EU. Although some have advocated such ties, others – including the majority of LPR members – have been unable to shed their dislike of the multi-ethnic and pro-Israeli United States and have repeatedly voiced their opposition to the Atlanticist tendency in Polish foreign policy.[28] Among other things, the party objected to Poland's involvement in Iraq and called for the immediate return of Polish troops. In fact, the LPR is consistently opposed to Poland's involvement in any missions abroad, including in Afghanistan and the western Balkans.

The LPR is an extreme, rather small and internally divided party whose popularity has shrunk as the PiS has emerged as the main party on the right. However, some contemporary Dmowski supporters belong to other parties, most notably the far-left wing of the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) and the populist Samoobrona. Andrzej Lepper, the leader of Samoobrona, has spoken in defence of Dmowski, whom he described as a 'realist' with a 'considerable grasp of foreign policy and understanding of the importance of Russia'. In foreign policy, Samoobrona's line is similar to that of the LPR: it is anti-European, anti-

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American, pro-Russian and deeply introverted. Like the LPR, Samoobrona was opposed to Poland's role in Iraq and its diplomatic engagement during the Orange revolution in Ukraine.

Perhaps most important, Dmowski's ideology continues to have considerable appeal to various politicians within the governing PiS who originally belonged to the Christian-National Union (ZChN) – a party that, like the LPR, has cast itself as a continuation of the inter-war Endecja, albeit a modernized version. These individuals include Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz of PiS, the prime minister from October 2005 to July 2006, who proudly displayed portraits of both Dmowski and Piłsudski in his office.[29]

However, while Dmowski's philosophy continues to exercise a degree of influence in public and parliamentary debates, there is no doubt that Piłsudski's legacy has prevailed in the politics and foreign policy of the Third Republic. This has been most evident in Poland's Eastern policy. The Third Republic has consistently sought to strengthen the independence of Ukraine, Lithuania and Belarus and to promote their integration with the West. Arguably, Piłsudski's influence can also be seen in the evolution of Poland's relations with Germany. Piłsudski was not pro-German but neither was he anti-German; his attitude stemmed from a non-ideological assessment of the relationship between the two countries. While Polish thinking on relations with Germany began to evolve well after Piłsudski's departure, the legacy of his unemotional and interest-based attitude clearly contributed to the change that occurred after the Cold War.

As discussed above, the experience of the Second World War introduced new elements into Polish security culture, while reinforcing some existing tendencies. The loss of faith in Poland's military self-sufficiency and its ability to defend itself contrasted sharply with the optimism and confidence of the inter-war period. Moreover, the experience of the war confirmed the growing scepticism about whether the instruments of collective security could provide peace. Both the League of Nations' failure to prevent the outbreak of the Second World War and the United Nations' impotency in the face of the Cold War only intensified Poland's highly pessimistic view of multilateralism. From these experiences a lesson had clearly been learned: Poland could not defend itself, nor could it trust its West European allies to come to its assistance. Hence the birth of Polish Atlanticism, which was founded on the belief that the United States was the only power capable of rescuing Poland from its geopolitical trap.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has demonstrated that Poland's distinctive history has and continues to have an enormous impact on Polish foreign and security policy. Tough geopolitics and a perpetual security dilemma gave rise to a security

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culture that remains heavily preoccupied with the ideas of sovereignty, the state and the nation. The separate ideologies encapsulated in the 'Dmowski versus Piłsudski' debates revealed contrasting approaches to Poland's international relations. These approaches had tangible and enduring effects.

At the same time, many of the core beliefs championed by Piłsudski and Dmowski have been kept alive in the Third Republic; indeed, the two men are potent national icons and their ideas are regularly used as points of reference in foreign policy speeches and statements. The ideology of Piłsudski, in particular, can be detected in the politics of 'national renewal' and a Fourth Republic – ideas that emerged in the 2005 parliamentary and presidential elections.

To determine the effects of Poland's past on its present-day foreign and security policy, the subsequent chapters scrutinize some of the most important issues and events that have helped shape that policy since 1989. Chapter 3 examines Poland's integration into Euro-Atlantic structures after the Cold War – a development that confirmed Warsaw's Atlanticism. Chapter 4 traces the evolution of Polish perspectives on the EU's growing role as a foreign and security policy actor. Chapter 5 focuses on Poland's Eastern policy and, in particular, its attempts to draw its eastern neighbours closer to the EU; this provides an opportunity to assess the strength of the linkage between Poland's historical role in the region and its current position as an EU state on the union's easternmost border. Warsaw's role in the enlarged EU and especially the issue of Poland's 'size' is the focus of Chapter 6. Here the key concern is what kind of EU member Poland has turned out to be: what its priorities are and whether it has forged any coalitions with other member states, especially on foreign policy issues. Poland's self-image as an important player in Euro-Atlantic security, a regional leader with 'big state' interests, is doubtless informed by historical precedent. But now that Poland is fully integrated into the EU, this self-perception is changing.

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The emergence of an Atlanticist: the strategic orientation of Polish security policy after 1989

During the seventeen years of its existence, the Third Republic has witnessed a revolutionary change in its foreign and security policy. When in the autumn of 1989 the first non-communist government came to power, Poland was still a member of the Warsaw Pact; there were more than 40,000 Soviet troops stationed on its territory and its relations with West Germany remained poisoned by the unresolved dispute over the Odra/Nysa border. By the end of 2004 Poland was a member of both NATO and the EU, and Germany was perhaps its closest ally in Europe. Most important, after joining NATO in 1999 Poland came to be perceived as one of the most pro-Western and pro-American states in Europe. This radical change in Poland's strategic orientation was shaped by the historically determined cultural and strategic factors described in Chapter 2; at the same time, it was underpinned by a sturdy domestic consensus. By 2004 there had been no fewer than eleven governments during the short history of the Third Republic. However, foreign and security policy remained remarkably stable since each of these governments pursued the objectives of Western integration, rapprochement with Germany and the formulation of a new Eastern policy.

The undisputed main goal of all eleven governments was to overcome the country's geopolitical dilemma – the First and Second Republics had both fallen victim to the territorial ambitions of their more powerful neighbours – and to turn Poland's geopolitical location into a pivotal advantage. After the Cold War conditions were conducive to achieving this objective. The progress and relative vigour of integration into Western Europe provided a clear focus and opportunity for Poland to anchor itself in Euro-Atlantic institutions. However, Poland's route towards NATO and the EU proved rather protracted and bumpy; success was not ensured until the final phase of the accession process. Poland had to quickly learn the 'rules of the game' within Western institutions; one of these rules was that some states were far more influential and more supportive of Polish priorities than others. Poland

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also had to learn that the 'West' it was joining differed quite significantly from the one that had existed during the Cold War.

Thus Poland's new foreign policy was influenced mainly by two sets of factors: the historically determined perceptions detailed in Chapter 2 and the experience garnered during the processes of NATO and EU accession. With the end of communism the primary objectives were to retain independence and to 'return to Europe'. In 1989 it was by no means clear whether these objectives would be achieved through a regional initiative, involving close cooperation with Czechoslovakia and Hungary, or by acting alone and seeking partnership with individual member states of NATO and the EC/EU. It was also unclear whether the foreign policy of the Third Republic would be pro-American, pro-German or even pro-French; in the case of the last option, this might have meant a return to the inter-war system of alliances led by Paris. What was clear at this point, however, was Poland's desire for greater security and integration with the West.

The evolution of the Third Republic's foreign and security policy can be divided into three periods, each of which witnessed a different level of integration into Western institutions, new developments in relations with Western and Eastern partners and domestic transformation. They are referred to here in their respective order as 'power vacuum' (1989–91), 'transition' (1992–7) and 'consolidation' (1999–2004).

1989–91: power vacuum

Following Solidarity's victory in the semi-competitive June 1989 elections, Poland became the first state in the Eastern bloc with a non-communist government. Faced with an uncertain and precarious international environment, the cabinet of Tadeusz Mazowiecki moved cautiously towards achieving full independence. Poland was still a Warsaw Pact member and remained bound to the alliance with the Soviet Union through a number of formal agreements; at the same time its position *vis-à-vis* unifying Germany was unclear. Equally important, the domestic situation was far from stable. Under the so-called round table agreements between Solidarity and the communists, the latter were to remain in charge of the security services and armed forces, regardless of the outcome of the elections. Consequently, despite their crushing defeat at the polls, the communists exercised considerable influence within the new government through their control over the country's defence and internal security. Moreover, Mazowiecki had to share power with the new president; under the roundtable agreements this post went to the former leader of the communists, General Wojciech Jaruzelski.

Despite these domestic and international constraints, Mazowiecki's

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foreign policy agenda was from the outset cautiously aimed at redirecting Poland's international orientation and strengthening its sovereignty *vis-à-vis* the Soviet Union as well as overcoming the division of Europe and its security structures. Mazowiecki's administration was also rather Eurocentric; initially it focused on developing closer relations with Germany and France and creating a new pan-European security system. However, this new approach was severely undermined by the re-emergence of the Polish–German border dispute, which resulted in a setback for the efforts to redirect Warsaw's international orientation.

Between rapprochement and territorial dispute

Both Mazowiecki and his foreign minister, Krzysztof Skubiszewski, had extensive contacts with West German elites, in particular the Christian Democrats and the Liberals, which dated back to their pre-1989 activities. Both spoke German and came from that part of the opposition which regarded rapprochement with Germany as a precondition for the establishment of closer links with the West. This pro-German focus at the outset of the Third Republic was in harmony with the foreign policy philosophy that had been developed within dissident circles since the mid-1960s; to some extent, it also represented a return to Piłsudski's view of the Polish national interest.

Bonn's initial reaction to the election of Mazowiecki was positive, if not enthusiastic. Less than two months after the new government had been appointed, West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl paid a state visit to Poland, which, though interrupted by the fall of the Berlin wall and Kohl's return to Germany for a day, bore all the hallmarks of a historical breakthrough in bilateral relations. During the visit a Polish–West German declaration was signed that paved the way for extensive cooperation modelled on the post-war Franco-West German rapprochement. Warsaw recognized the existence of the German minority, and Kohl and Mazowiecki attended a bilingual Catholic Mass, where they embraced in a gesture of reconciliation – an act reminiscent of the closeness between French and West German leaders.[1]

Yet, despite all the grand speeches and the symbolism of the event, Kohl failed to help Mazowiecki's foreign policy shift and refused to confirm the existing Polish–East German border as permanent. Although the Federal Republic had recognized the Odra/Nysa frontier in the 1970 treaty with the People's Republic of Poland, this document would not be binding for unified Germany. As unification drew nearer, it became clear that the ambiguous territorial status of the two countries would obstruct the reconciliation

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process. Kohl did not appreciate the sensitivity of the issue and refused to confirm the border prior to unification. Moreover, he suggested that the issue should be resolved as part of a package of deals that included concessions for the German minority in Poland and Warsaw's renunciation of compensation claims dating back to the Nazi era.[2]

The border dispute severely undermined Mazowiecki's new foreign policy. By putting a question mark over reconciliation with Germany, it militated against Poland's pro-Western shift. Kohl's nationalist overtures strengthened calls in Poland for a renewed alliance with the Soviet Union based on a similarity of interests in the face of an enlarging Germany. As discussed below, Warsaw did indeed respond by playing the 'Russian card', but subsequent developments demonstrated that Warsaw's short-lived flirtation with Moscow was merely tactical and that the key tenets of its new West-oriented foreign policy remained in place. At the height of tensions with Bonn, Mazowiecki confirmed Poland's pro-Western orientation in a speech to the Council of Europe, while Skubiszewski put forward the idea of a Polish–German community of interests in a unifying Europe.[3]

While Mazowiecki's initial foreign policy may be seen as idealistic (for example, he was not able to comprehend why Kohl would not help a fellow democrat), the border crisis introduced a strong element of scepticism into Warsaw's dealings with Bonn and, to a lesser extent, with other Western powers. As a result, Warsaw's policy often became less revolutionary and more strongly determined by historical memory. For example, Mazowiecki and Skubiszewski would frequently refer to the misfortunes experienced by Central and East Europeans, which, in their view, were the direct cause of Yalta-style diplomacy.[4] Warsaw began to insist that the policy of 'Nothing about us without us' should be the core principle of the creation of a new, unified Europe. Indeed, it successfully lobbied in favour of Poland's inclusion in those parts of the '2+4' (East and West Germany plus the four occupying powers) negotiations on German unification that concerned Poland's borders or were regarded as affecting its security. Warsaw and other Central and East European states also consistently used the anti-Yalta argument during negotiations on the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) agreement.[5]

By the end of 1991 Poland's international and domestic situation was becoming clearer. Under pressure from Western powers and the United States in particular, the West and East German parliaments issued a joint declaration confirming the Polish–German border. The dispute was finally resolved by a comprehensive treaty signed by Poland and unified Germany in 1991, which paved the way for genuine rapprochement.[6]

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Security policy

Warsaw did not raise the prospect of NATO membership during the first years of the Third Republic. There were three main reasons for this cautious approach. First, the territorial dispute with Germany revived the rationale for the maintenance of a security alliance with the Soviet Union, which remained the only guarantor of Poland's territorial integrity. The second reason was related to the transitional nature of Mazowiecki's government. As mentioned above, the communists remained in control of defence and internal security and the vast majority of high-ranking military officers, educated in the Soviet Union, continued to see NATO as a hostile alliance. But even the non-communist foreign minister, Krzysztof Skubiszewski, was not well disposed towards the idea of Warsaw's developing closer links with NATO. Third, the continued presence of Soviet troops in Poland rendered any discussion about closer relations with NATO virtually impossible at this stage.

Initially, Mazowiecki's caution did not seem extraordinary, given the precarious circumstances in which his government operated. But from the beginning of 1990 Poland began to lag behind its regional peers Czechoslovakia and Hungary, both of which had already commenced talks on the withdrawal of Soviet forces and were in favour of dissolving the Warsaw Pact. To recapitulate, Poland's hesitation not only about seeking closer ties with the West but also about freeing itself from dependence on the Soviet Union was linked at this time to the revival of the territorial dispute with West Germany. The 'German factor' was also an important reason for Warsaw's decision to join forces with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev to argue in favour of a new pan-European system to replace NATO and the Warsaw Pact. In his speech to the Council of Europe in January 1990, Mazowiecki proposed creating a new security organization, to be called the 'Council of European Cooperation'. This body, inspired by Gorbachev's concept of a 'common European home', was meant to embrace the whole of Europe. It was intended to become a permanent part of the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) process and, as such, enhance the institutionalization of the organization.[7] In a speech to an extraordinary session of the Assembly of the Western European Union in March 1990, Foreign Minister Skubiszewski echoed the call for the creation a new European security system, saying it should 'reflect the concept of a single Europe'. Indirectly referring to the German question, Skubiszewski defended Poland's membership of the Warsaw Pact, which, he argued, would in any case be 'dissolved the moment an all-European system of security becomes a reality'.[8]

Eventually, the deadlock in Polish–West German relations was broken through US mediation. In the context of Bush's talks with Mazowiecki and Kohl it was agreed that both the West and East German parliaments would

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confirm the Odra/Nysa border prior to unification in a joint declaration issued in March 1990.[9] Almost immediately after the declaration Poland's position on the Warsaw Pact changed and within less than a month Skubiszewski had joined his Czechoslovak and Hungarian colleagues in declaring the three countries' intention to dissolve the Eastern alliance.

With the final confirmation of the border in the Polish–German Treaty on Good Neighbourly Relations and Friendly Cooperation, signed in 1991, Warsaw took steps to commence negotiations on the withdrawal of Soviet troops and gradually abandoned references to a pan-European security system. However, neither Mazowiecki's government (which held office from September 1989 to December 1990) nor its successor, the government of Jan Krzysztof Bielecki (January–December 1991), made a formal announcement about the desire to join NATO. The Atlanticist option was embraced officially for the first time by the government of Jan Olszewski in 1992.

Forging links with the EC/EU

In contrast to the issue of NATO membership, the goal of developing closer links with the EC/EU featured on the agenda of the Third Republic almost immediately after the 1989 elections. At this stage the EC/EU was largely perceived as a club of countries espousing liberal democracy and a market economy, and it was precisely these principles that the new Polish government was aspiring to implement at home. Consequently, integration into European institutions was regarded not only as enhancing Poland's international position but also as being in harmony with its domestic project. During the first years of the Third Republic the question of integration into the EC/EU emphasized both 'identity' (return to Europe) and economic factors; the security and political aspects of European integration were either ignored or discussed only in very vague terms.

Despite the cooling of relations with (West) Germany over the border conflict, Bonn/Berlin emerged at an early stage as the main supporter of Poland's integration into the EC/EU, and it retained this position throughout the 1990s. A reference to Poland's integration had appeared in the Polish–West German declaration signed during Kohl's visit to Poland in November 1989. The subject was also addressed in the 1991 Treaty on Good Neighbourly Relations and Friendly Cooperation; in that document, Germany obliged itself to support Poland's European aspirations both technically and politically. Furthermore, in the framework of internal EU debates Germany spoke early on about the desirability of enlargement and never failed to mention Poland in this context. The United Kingdom, too, emerged at this time as a proponent of enlargement, although London failed to devote as

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much attention to the issue as the Germans, nor did it emphasize the role of Poland. Moreover, UK pro-enlargement views failed to carry much weight in the EC/EU as both Margaret Thatcher and her successor, John Major, saw enlargement as a way to derail the pro-integrationist drive in the EU and, in particular, to delay the introduction of the single currency.[10]

In contrast to Germany and the United Kingdom, France proved a major sceptic on the issue of opening up the EC/EU to the East. Insecure about its position *vis-à-vis* unified Germany, it saw enlargement as a step that would strengthen Germany's position and thus undermine France's relative influence in Europe. Consequently, Paris proposed a number of alternatives to enlargement and opposed any moves in the EC/EU that could be interpreted as offering former communist countries the prospect of membership.

This division of roles among the three largest member states became apparent during the negotiations on the Europe Agreements which the EU concluded with Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia. Germany and Britain supported these countries' pleas for the inclusion of a provision offering the prospect of accession, but France remained staunchly opposed. The outcome was a politically weak document that contained no commitment to enlargement from the EU and merely recognized that the associated states would like eventually to join the EU.[11]

Nascent Atlanticism

The Atlanticist predisposition that developed in Polish security culture following the Second World War did not manifest itself in the foreign and security policy of the Third Republic until 1992 for the reasons discussed above (the Warsaw Pact was still in existence, Soviet troops remained in place and the Soviet Union, though weakened, remained a powerful player in the region). Moreover, at this point the very future of NATO was in doubt. To a significant degree, the Atlantic alliance was being eclipsed by the proposed pan-European security structures aimed at supplanting traditional Cold War alliances.

However, although Atlanticism did not directly guide the foreign policy agenda of the first two governments of the Third Republic, it was becoming clear that its significance would grow. During this period the Poles realized that the United States could still wield leverage over Germany and that Washington would remain a central player in European security. During the Odra/Nysa conflict the US demonstrated the ability to mediate, to pacify and to broker a deal that ended the dispute and paved the way for an overtly pro-Western shift in Polish policy. The US was also instrumental in securing unified Germany's continued membership of NATO, which proved central

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to the survival of the alliance, and thereby undermined plans for a new pan-European security system. Mazowiecki's government welcomed both the persistent engagement of the US in Europe and the role played by Washington during the crisis over the German–Polish border. Thus the perception of the US as an essential element of stability in Europe was strengthened during the first years of the Third Republic. In the years that followed, this view would become a core element of Polish security thinking.

1992–7: TRANSITION

By the end of 1991 the dissolution of the Eastern bloc was complete. The Warsaw Pact and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON) were both disbanded and Soviet forces were withdrawing from Central and Eastern Europe. The Soviet Union imploded following the failed coup of Vice-President Gennadii Yanayev and Gorbachev resigned in December 1991. The Cold War was truly and inevitably coming to an end, but it was unclear whether it would be replaced by instability of the inter-war kind or a liberal-democratic order fostered by the expansion of Western institutions. Growing tensions in Yugoslavia, which erupted into a full-scale Serbo-Croatian war in September 1991, had a major impact on US and West European policies towards formerly communist Europe. The idea that the eastward expansion of the EU and NATO could be the most effective way to bring about stability in new democracies and prevent the further escalation of regional conflicts was slowly gaining ground.

During the same period Poland's domestic transition entered a more advanced stage. The communist ministers were sacked in 1990 and Jaruzelski was forced to resign from the presidency. In the autumn of 1990 Lech Wałęsa, the legendary leader of Solidarity, became the first freely elected president of Poland. January 1992 witnessed the country's first fully free elections, which brought to power the centre-right government of Jan Olszewski. Although this survived for only four months (February–June 1992), it initiated a firm pro-Western course; in particular, it completed negotiations on the withdrawal of Soviet troops and officially announced Poland's intention to join NATO.[12]

Subsequent governments pursued foreign policies that not only built on the pro-German and pro-European shift introduced by Mazowiecki and Skubiszewski between 1989 and 1991 but also incorporated the Atlanticist dimension introduced by Olszewski's team in 1992. During this period Poland's foreign policy became decidedly pro-Western and its departure from an alliance with Russia unambiguous. But towards the mid-1990s it became clear that Poland's position did not allow its foreign policy to be

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exclusively West oriented and that Warsaw urgently needed to carve out a regional role for itself outside the framework of European and Euro-Atlantic integration.

Western integration

Poland's Western orientation rested on three pillars during the period 1992–7: the promotion of the eastward expansion of the EU and NATO, the establishment of closer relations with Germany and the development of bonds with the US. While the issue of NATO enlargement was largely absent from debates between 1989 and 1991, it became Warsaw's top priority from 1992 onwards. NATO's decision at the Madrid summit in 1997 to invite Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary to join the alliance was widely seen as a success for Polish diplomacy and evidence of Polish influence in Washington. Polish lobbying in favour of EU enlargement was also successful insofar as Poland was invited at the European Council summit in Luxembourg in December 1997 to begin entry negotiations. Although the outcome of the accession negotiations was far from certain and there remained the possibility that Poland would be left out of the first wave of enlargement, the fact that it had been included in the elite group of states that were beginning negotiations was a boost both to Warsaw's pro-Western orientation and to its self-esteem.

To a large extent, the success of Poland's promotion of the eastward expansion of NATO and the EU was attributable to Warsaw's relations with the United States in particular and Germany. When Poland and the other Visegrad countries (Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia) started to lobby in favour of NATO enlargement in 1992–3, there was no real enthusiasm for such a development either in Western Europe or in the US. At the time Bill Clinton's Eastern policy was influenced by Strobe Talbott, a Russian specialist and a close friend of the president, who initially opposed enlargement of the alliance, arguing it might endanger Russia's fledgling ties with the West.[13] Similar views were expressed by London, Paris and Berlin. However, in the case of the last-named, NATO enlargement became a subject of internal debate and disagreement within the government. While Defence Minister Volker Rühe put forward the idea of NATO expansion to Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary as early as 1993, this proposal was strongly opposed by Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel; Chancellor Kohl, for his part, remained neutral but was initially inclined to support Kinkel's view.[14] By late 1993 the majority of members of the ruling Christian Democratic Union and Kohl himself had come round to the idea that NATO's eastern expansion should be supported; thus it was Rühe's view that prevailed.[15]

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But the key to NATO's expansion undoubtedly lay not in Europe but in Washington. Owing to a combination of factors, the US administration began to perceive NATO enlargement as essential for the survival of the alliance and as an instrument to stabilize and extend US influence to Central and Eastern Europe. The most important factor in this change of attitude was perhaps Clinton's embrace of an active and interventionist foreign policy. Other factors were a strong pro-enlargement lobby within both Congress and the administration, including Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, and pressure from the large Polish diaspora in the United States.[16] The EU's embrace of NATO's eastward expansion and the fact that it preceded the enlargement of the EU strengthened the Atlanticist tendency in Warsaw's foreign policy and within Polish society as a whole. This, in turn, contributed to the widespread perception in Poland that the US was both a more effective and more reliable ally than Poland's European neighbours.

As regards EU enlargement, it was Germany that remained Poland's most consistent and most influential ally. Berlin was the strongest advocate of expansion and of Poland's candidacy in particular. Initially, Chancellor Kohl pushed for a small and rapid enlargement that would include Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary. Following the rejection of Kohl's proposal at the European Council summit in Luxembourg in December 1997, at which the EU decided to begin negotiations not only with Berlin's three favourites but also with Slovenia and Estonia, Germany continued to stress the primacy of Poland's membership. Not surprisingly, Berlin's support for enlargement decidedly strengthened the pro-German orientation of Polish foreign policy. From the early 1990s onwards Germany was singled out in Polish foreign policy doctrine as a 'special friend'.[17]

While the United States and Germany emerged as Poland's closest allies, the 1990s saw a deterioration in Franco-Polish relations. Once the power that had wielded the most influence in Central and Eastern Europe, France now appeared neither interested in nor capable of finding a role for itself in the region. Preoccupied with the changing nature of its relationship with the new Germany, France viewed the Western integration of Central and Eastern Europe with suspicion and as strengthening the influence of Germany and the United States. Its evident lack of enthusiasm for NATO and EU enlargement was received with disappointment in Warsaw. Following Jacques Chirac's accession to power, French policy on the issue briefly changed; in 1995 the president declared himself in favour of Poland's entry into the EU as early as 2000. Significantly, his declaration came just a few weeks after a similar statement by Kohl; as a result, Poland's bid to join the EU was given an important boost. However, no practical steps followed to demonstrate a genuine French commitment to enlargement. Despite the

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enduring lack of warmth in official Warsaw–Paris relations, public opinion in Poland remained strongly pro-French throughout the 1990s.

During this period UK policy remained broadly supportive of EU enlargement but London did not single out Poland as a key partner in Central and Eastern Europe. The internally divided and increasingly Eurosceptic government of John Major lacked any significant influence over the EU agenda – a fact recognized by Poland and other candidate countries. It was not until the late 1990s that London began to adopt a more consistent and focused approach to enlargement and relations with the states applying for membership.

The emergence of an Eastern policy

While the 'return to Europe' was the focus of Polish foreign policy throughout the 1990s, a more coherent Eastern policy emerged in the mid-1990s. During the first half of the decade Warsaw's approach towards the East was focused on Russia, while relations with Ukraine, Belarus and Lithuania remained of secondary importance and Polish policy towards these countries somewhat inconsistent. Poland was the first state to recognize independent Ukraine, and went on to confirm its post-war borders with all its eastern neighbours. But thereafter Warsaw's Eastern policy lacked both attention and a clear sense of direction.[18] This situation changed around 1994, when Warsaw discovered that greater engagement in the East was welcomed by its Western partners and seen as making a genuine contribution to European and transatlantic security.[19] Poland proceeded to establish close ties with Ukraine and Lithuania and sought to maintain relations with Belarus that were as open as possible.

This change to Warsaw's Eastern policy was clearly guided by the tradition of Piłsudski and his followers, in particular the members of Giedroyc's Kultura, and the concepts developed by the democratic opposition in the 1960s and 1970s. The outcome of the presidential elections in 1995 further contributed to the more comprehensive adoption of Kultura's philosophy. The new president, Aleksander Kwaśniewski, was familiar with the ideas developed by Giedroyc's circle and determined to make a 'new' Eastern policy one of the most important features – if not the most important feature – of his presidency. He therefore invested heavily in developing closer relations with Ukraine and Lithuania. The following were the main trademarks of his policy: the principle of no special treatment for Russia – relations with Ukraine and Lithuania were to be considered just as important as relations with Russia; the attempt to draw Ukraine and Lithuania closer to Central Europe by supporting their participation in the Central European Initia-

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tive, the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA) and Visegrad working groups; support for closer cooperation with/eventual membership of NATO and the EU; the maintenance of a visa-free regime with Ukraine and eventually with Belarus; and, finally, the development of economic cooperation aimed at lessening Poland's dependence on Russian energy.

By the end of 1997 Warsaw's foreign policy was realigned with Piłsudski's philosophy. Its two main hallmarks were good relations with Germany and active support for an independent Ukraine, Belarus and Lithuania. But in the period that followed, Warsaw would have to formulate its foreign policy in conditions where the ideas of Piłsudski or Kultura could offer only limited guidance. Crucially, Warsaw would have to define its approach to European integration and transatlantic relations and make choices it had never wanted to make. The outcome of these choices would be a further strengthening of Warsaw's Atlanticist tendencies, combined with the emergence of an ambivalent attitude towards European integration.

1998–2004: CONSOLIDATION

The years 1998–2004 marked the steady consolidation of the foreign policy goals identified at the outset of the Third Republic. During this period Poland joined NATO and the EU and its Eastern policy assumed a more consistent and more permanent shape. While the major battles over NATO and EU enlargement had taken place during the previous period and membership of both organizations had become practically irreversible policy by 1998, it remained unclear whether Poland would join the EU at the same time as its more advanced regional peers or whether it would become an active member of NATO. It was also unclear, particularly to outside observers, what kind of NATO and EU member Poland would be and whether its Atlanticist instincts would become an enduring feature of Polish foreign policy. Finally, a major challenge to Warsaw's policy priorities was the likely contradiction between Poland's integration into Western institutions and its Eastern policy.

Poland's response to all these challenges would not be significantly affected by domestic politics, where a broad consensus on foreign policy priorities had been established in the early 1990s (although this consensus would weaken over a number of issues related to European integration). Rather, the main influences on the evolution of Warsaw's policy after 1998 were linked to developments beyond Poland's borders, including the war in Kosovo, the terrorist attacks in the United States, the EU constitutional debates and the emergence of the reform movement in Ukraine. Poland's response to these external events would consolidate its international profile as one of the staunchest Atlanticists in Europe. From 1998 to 2004 the areas

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that dominated Warsaw's foreign policy agenda were its integration into both NATO and the EU, and its Eastern policy.

Security and Atlanticism

Together with the Czech Republic and Hungary, Poland joined NATO in March 1999 at a time when the alliance was undergoing a major transformation and was on the brink of launching its first-ever offensive operation. This ongoing evolution of the alliance was not wholly welcomed by the newcomers, who had joined NATO predominantly because of its defensive purposes. Above all, these countries hoped that NATO membership would liberate them from the geopolitical trap of being 'lands in between' and bring an end to their situation as an inherently vulnerable buffer zone dividing East from West. While it was acknowledged that the alliance had to evolve and become more proactive in order to remain relevant, Poland, like all the new member states, emphasized that collective defence should continue to serve as NATO's main purpose and that collective security should play only a secondary role.

Stressing the defensive role of NATO was not only in keeping with these countries' security cultures; it was also popular at home. Andrzej Olechowski, a former Polish foreign minister who ran for president in 2000, argued that thanks to Poland's NATO membership, a development for which he claimed credit, the country was now secure and its defence policy could be relaxed. Olechowski's comment clearly implied that the chief responsibility for Poland's defence now lay with NATO rather than with Poland; somewhat astonishingly, the former foreign minister noted in this context that the country 'could not defend itself anyway'.[20]

Just two weeks after NATO expansion the alliance began military operations in Kosovo against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Thus at the very outset of its membership Poland had to demonstrate that it could adapt to the expansive redefinition of NATO's role, which flew in the face of its earlier expectations. But despite any lingering concerns, Poland passed this test with flying colours at the level of political commitment. In contrast to the other two newcomers, the Czech Republic and Hungary, Warsaw endorsed NATO's action without hesitation; and although it did not participate in the offensive part of the operation, it subsequently sent a number of peacekeeping troops.

Another defining feature of Poland's approach to the war in Kosovo was that it sided with the 'non-multilateralists' within the alliance. It was clear that Warsaw attached little importance to the dispute over NATO's failure to obtain the mandate of the United Nations Security Council for

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its operation in Kosovo. The soul-searching arguments about the illegality of the war, which featured so prominently throughout much of Western Europe, were a small-scale affair in Poland. Warsaw simply assumed that the NATO member states' consent to action was sufficient to sanction an intervention. It also argued that human rights were more important than legalistic disputes, particularly since a UN mandate depended on the consent of non-democratic China and Russia.[21] Such arguments became typical of Polish security thinking and would be replayed during the Iraq crisis and during the debates on the EU's security strategy.

Warsaw's behaviour during the war in Kosovo demonstrated to the outside world that Poland was likely to emerge as a new Atlanticist in Europe. It was one of the very few European countries in which a broad political consensus in support of the war was sustained throughout the conflict. The Polish approach towards multilateralism and international law was also more in line with the US administration's approach than that of most other European countries. Not surprisingly, it was around this time that concern arose over what kind of EU member state Poland would become and, in particular, whether Warsaw would pursue policies resembling those of a 'US Trojan horse' within the enlarged EU.[22]

While Kosovo might be seen as the first indication that Polish security culture was congruent with that of the United States, subsequent developments confirmed that Poland was fast becoming one of the staunchest Atlanticists in Europe. During his visit to Poland in July 2001 US President George W. Bush officially endorsed the further expansion of NATO – a policy championed by Warsaw even before Poland had joined the alliance itself. In addition, the US supported Warsaw's policy towards Ukraine, and the Polish government was even able to influence US aid policy towards Kiev.[23] Quick to reciprocate, Warsaw did a radical pro-US turn in its defence procurement policy, opting to purchase 48 Lockheed Martin F-16 fighter jets. As will be discussed in Chapter 4, the deal, one of the largest in the industry's history, will have a long-term impact on the future of the Polish defence industry and, arguably, Polish defence policy too.

But the boldest expression of Poland's Atlanticism came in the wake of the events of 11 September 2001. This issue is addressed in more detail in Chapter 4; it suffices to note here that Poland's unequivocal support of US policy over Iraq, including its sizeable military contribution, signified a departure from the policy of balancing Polish loyalties between the US and Europe. By becoming one of the staunchest supporters of George W. Bush's agenda in Iraq, Poland made a choice that would have considerable implications for its position in the EU and its bilateral relations with European neighbours.

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The route towards EU membership

EU enlargement negotiations with the so-called Luxembourg group, consisting of Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Estonia, Slovenia and Cyprus, began in November 1998. Following the outbreak of the Kosovo war the group was enlarged to include all remaining applicant states, namely Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Bulgaria and Romania. Although Poland began negotiations as a member of the privileged group and was described by the European Commission as one of the most advanced candidate states, it soon turned into a 'laggard'. Poland not only fell behind members of the Luxembourg group but was overtaken by states such as Slovakia and Latvia.

Poland's slow progress in the negotiations was caused partly by objective factors such as its size. With a population of just under 40 million, Poland was larger than all other members of the Luxemburg group together; thus its preparations to join the EU were inevitably more arduous. At the same time, because of its size, Poland adopted a more assertive approach to the accession negotiations than its fellow applicants. But whatever the reasons, Poland evoked resentment from the more advanced candidates, which believed that it was holding back the enlargement process. Hungary, in particular, argued strongly that such was the case and proposed an accelerated but smaller enlargement that would include itself, Slovenia and possibly Estonia.

Hungary's proposal was received positively by some EU member states – particularly the Nordic countries and other small countries – as well as by the European Commission, which had long argued in favour of a more transparent and merit-based approach to enlargement. However, Germany flatly rejected EU expansion without Poland; from Berlin's point of view, the whole process was predominantly about its eastern neighbour. Meanwhile, the threat of being excluded from the first round of enlargement made Warsaw more determined to catch up in the negotiations.

When the negotiations were nearing completion, Poland came under increasing pressure to contribute to the looming constitutional debate and to present its vision of the EU's future. Until then Warsaw's views on European integration had been either unclear or not made public; in fact, the latter approach was the government's official line and had been spelled out in its 'National Strategy of Integration'. This document, published in 1997, argued that publicizing Poland's views on matters internal to the EU could antagonize some of the existing member states; it thus implied that such an approach might obstruct or even delay the enlargement process.[24] However, by late 2000 circumstances had changed. The negotiations were nearly over and it was largely assumed that Poland would indeed be among the first group to join the EU. The EU itself was engaged in debating the forthcoming Treaty of Nice, which was intended to bring about a thorough overhaul of

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existing institutions and policies. Poland could no longer afford to remain silent on these issues.

In its Nice position paper, Poland argued that it would fit awkwardly into the existing pattern of large and small states since it was neither a firm intergovernmentalist nor a consistent proponent of the 'community method'. As will be discussed in Chapter 6, Poland, as one of the poorest member states, had an interest in stressing the idea of solidarity, which implied a stronger role for the European Commission; but as a relatively large state, it was inclined to support a stronger role for the Council of Ministers. Not surprisingly, therefore, the Polish position reflected a rather incoherent approach to European integration. While Warsaw explicitly declared itself in favour of the community method, it took a conservative position on the extension of qualified majority voting (QMV) in the Council of Ministers and co-decision with the European Parliament. In his address following the signing of the Treaty of Nice, Polish Foreign Minister Władysław Bartoszewski admitted that Polish objections about the extension of QMV reflected concerns over national sovereignty and the provision's likely impact on taxation and asylum policy in particular.[25]

Poland's support for the reform of the European Commission and, in particular, the introduction of the rotation of commissioners stemmed from the belief that as one of the largest member states, it would be able to influence the new rules of the game. Most importantly, Warsaw was more than satisfied with the new voting system in the Council of Ministers, which, in accordance with the Treaty of Nice, would give Poland almost the same number of representatives as Germany (27 and 29, respectively). This generous provision of the treaty proved a major bone of contention during the constitutional debate and contributed considerably to the ultimate failure of the EU constitution.

During the Convention on the Constitutional Treaty Poland was represented by members of the Polish parliament who, after an initial period, were granted the same voting rights as representatives of member states. As in the case of the Treaty of Nice, Warsaw's position often hovered between traditional intergovernmentalism and the extension of the community method. But this time it was largely in favour of strengthening the role of the European Parliament, particularly *vis-à-vis* the European Commission; for example, the Polish representatives proposed that the parliament have a bigger say in selecting and approving the president of the commission.[26] To a large degree, the evolution of Warsaw's position was tactical and linked to the ensuing debate about the change in the weighting of votes, which had been proposed at Nice. Germany and France agreed that the Nice system was discriminatory against the larger member states and that a new system

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should be introduced that reflected the demographic size of the member states. Hence the so-called double majority system was proposed and found its way into the text of the constitutional treaty.

Compared with the Nice system, the Franco-German proposal was clearly disadvantageous to Poland, as well as to Spain – another medium-sized state. Warsaw objected to the formula proposed by the convention on the grounds that it would seriously 'enfeeble' Poland's position in the decision-making of the Council of Ministers; it also objected to the way in which the proposal had been pushed through.[27] In accordance with the Nice system, the larger countries would have been unable to outvote the smaller ones without the support of either Poland or Spain – thus placing the latter two in strong, potentially pivotal positions. In Poland the proposed changes created a groundswell of controversy and prompted the rise of Euro-scepticism among mainstream political parties and the centre-right opposition, which demanded that the government adopt a policy of 'Nice or death'.[28] Strong pressure from the opposition and an alliance with José María Aznar's Spain strengthened the government's resolve to defend the Nice system. However, the terrorist attacks in Madrid and the collapse of Aznar's government in March 2004 resulted in dramatic changes in Spanish foreign policy and, in effect, ended the Polish–Spanish coalition. Isolated, Warsaw agreed to a compromise formula.

While this compromise provided for an agreement over the constitutional treaty, which was duly adopted by the European Council, it did not end the Polish domestic controversy. The opposition rejected the compromise and, still clinging to the 'Nice or death' slogan, denounced it as a betrayal of national interests; for their part, the centre-right PiS and the right-wing LPR announced that they would urge their voters to reject the treaty in the planned referendum. However, despite the domestic storm over Nice, Poland's entry into the EU in May 2004 had the effect of heightening the general pro-European mood throughout the country. Thus it is fairly safe to surmise that had the constitution not seemingly died a death in France and the Netherlands, the Polish referendum, if held when originally planned, would have yielded a positive result.

CONCLUSION

Historically, Poland's foreign policy was determined first and foremost by immediate security needs; its geographical location, sandwiched between Germany and Russia, meant that geopolitics shaped, if not determined, Polish choices. Until at least the late 1990s there was still a tendency in Poland to look at international developments through historical lenses. Foreign policy elites

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continued to assess and debate international politics with one key question in mind: 'Is this policy conducive to the maintenance of Polish independence?'

Initially, the foreign policy of the Third Republic remained fluid, reflecting the instability of the international environment within which it was evolving. After 1992 it became clearer that Warsaw's foreign policy orientation would be firmly pro-Western. Warsaw focused on applying for NATO and EU membership – key objectives whose realization was assisted by Polish–German reconciliation. From the mid-1990s onwards it also pursued an active Eastern policy aimed at strengthening Ukraine's independence and establishing close relations with Lithuania. Thus the influence of Piłsudski's thinking was once again evident in Polish foreign policy, albeit in a modernized version that had been developed by Giedroyc's Kultura and the Solidarity-linked foreign policy elites.

By 2004 the key foreign policy goals identified in the first years of the Third Republic had been achieved: Poland had joined NATO and the EU; it enjoyed stable, though not entirely problem-free, relations with Germany; and it was pursuing an active Eastern policy – one that had the support of the United States. While Warsaw's relations with Moscow were somewhat cool, they were not antagonistic; nor was Russia regarded as an immediate source of insecurity for Poland, at least not in the territorial sense. Thus the traditional drivers of Polish foreign and security policy were becoming obsolete. Poland's independence was no longer under threat; the external borders of the country had been secured and Warsaw's relations with most of its neighbours, eastern and western, were better than at any point in history.

From the perspective of examining how the past affects the present, it can be concluded that this new situation, desirable as it was, presented Polish foreign and security thinking with a conceptual challenge. Neither Piłsudski nor Dmowski nor any of their followers had a clear formula for a Polish foreign policy that was not founded solely on geopolitical concerns. The Polish response to this new situation was based on a mixture of old and new thinking, as elites drew inspiration from the past but at the same time formulated new ideas in line with external events. This evolving perspective was evident in the case of Poland's approach to the development of the EU's foreign and security policy and apparatus. This approach had all the hallmarks of an often uncertain policy caught between history and a preoccupation with status and sovereignty, on the one hand, and the growing realization of the emerging implications of EU membership and a realistic assessment of Poland's true size, weight and interests, on the other. The development of the EU's foreign and security policy and instruments as well as Poland's response to that development are the focus of the next chapter.

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The EU as a security actor: the Polish perspective

Since Poland embarked on the road to EU membership, both the international environment and the EU itself have been transformed. One of the most profound and far-reaching consequences of this transformation has been the emergence of the EU as a security actor. From the initial articulation of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) at Maastricht in 1992, through the St Malo declaration of 1998, which gave rise to the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), to the launch of the European Security Strategy (ESS) in 2003, the EU's aspirations to become an important security actor have steadily grown. For Poland, such developments have not always been easy to digest. Described as 'idyllic' and unproblematic in the run-up to EU accession,[1] the process of closing the CFSP chapter with all Central and East European states, including Poland, was relatively quick and easy, not least because it involved mostly 'rhetoric' and only limited 'action' and thereafter attracted little controversy compared with the much thornier accession issues of agriculture and EU structural funds.[2] However, towards the end of the 1990s the foreign policy role of the EU began to change and become more diverse in response to various external and internal impulses and challenges, rendering the CFSP a far more complex and contentious issue in the context of enlargement.

Since gaining independence in 1989 and obtaining NATO membership in 1999, Poland has consistently demonstrated that it will not be a mere bystander in matters related to Euro-Atlantic security; rather, it will seek to influence and shape institutions and policies as an 'agenda setter'. Above all, Poland wants to be taken seriously as a medium-sized power with global and regional interests and to stand out from the rest of the new EU member states. To this end, it has been a keen contributor to collective peacekeeping missions beyond Europe's borders as well as supporting US policy in Afghanistan and Iraq. It has also sought to play the role of 'regional leader' by acting as the chief advocate of reforms in Eastern Europe and

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particularly of Ukraine's anchorage in the West, including its membership of the World Trade Organization, the EU and NATO.[3] Finally, unlike most other EU newcomers, which have reformed their defence sectors to develop niche specializations, Poland has sought to maintain a large armed force with wide-ranging military capabilities.[4]

Poland's ambitious outlook and approach have been especially marked in the context of the ESDP, to which Poland, like other Central and East European states, responded 'late and defensively'.[5] In the early stages of the development of the ESDP and before EU enlargement in 2004, Polish policy was preoccupied with overcoming the country's status as an 'outsider'; but because of its Atlanticist tendency, it was also overtly sceptical about the ESDP project. Thus while Warsaw strove to enter the decision-making arena and lead the other non-EU NATO member states in this pursuit, Polish policy remained generally less than enthusiastic about the ESDP. Every opportunity was used to stress that the EU's involvement in security should be limited and should not seek to duplicate or negate the alliance's pre-eminent role.

Like other Central and East European states, Poland saw the functions of NATO and the EU as well as its integration into those institutions in rather conservative and rigid terms or, put another way, in discrete 'boxes'; moreover, the United States was regarded as the ultimate guarantor of Europe's security. In one 'box' NATO performed the task of delivering the all-important hard security guarantees, while in another 'box' the EU dealt with broader political, social and economic issues.[6] Hence Poland was not impressed when the functions of the EU began to change and appeared to encroach on the remit of the alliance. But with EU enlargement on the horizon, Poland and the other candidate states did not want to be seen as overly critical of the ESDP or have a head-on confrontation with the EU. For this reason they tried to steer the evolution of the ESDP in a direction that reflected their Atlanticist preferences.[7]

However, this generally sceptical and rigid view of the EU's role was about to change owing to a combination of factors. As this chapter demonstrates, Warsaw's policy was defined until 2003 by the goal of limiting the scope of the ESDP; and, to a certain extent, it continues to be defined by that aim today. But the experience of Iraq and its aftermath, coupled with Poland's entry into the EU, has given way to a palpably more positive approach to the ESDP. In retrospect, Poland's Iraq policy can be seen as a high point or 'crossroads' in Polish Atlanticism.[8] Thereafter a reappraisal took place and Warsaw, like most other European capitals, displayed a new willingness to boost Europe's collective voice and improve its collective capabilities in security matters. This is not to say that Poland's Atlanticism was abandoned as a result of EU

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membership and Iraq. Rather, by 2004 it had become tempered as Warsaw began to accept the idea of an autonomous ESDP offering a constructive role for Poland.

EXCLUSION FUELLING SCEPTICISM: POLAND AND THE ESDP, 1998–2003

Having been included in the first wave of NATO's eastern enlargement in March 1999 and having earlier secured the status of associate member of the Western European Union, Poland, it seemed, would no longer be excluded from core decisions about European security. However, just three months after its entry into NATO this situation appeared about to be reversed. Against the backdrop of the war in Kosovo and the development of the blueprints drawn up at Pörtschach and St Malo, the Cologne European Council drew up plans to create an autonomous ESDP as the military arm of the CFSP.[9]

Under the first draft of the ESDP, the non-EU European NATO states would have been 'consulted' but essentially excluded from the decision-making process.[10] Poland did not take kindly to such ideas emerging during Germany's EU presidency and did not hesitate to say so. Not surprisingly, its response was agitated; Warsaw remained unconvinced by the provisions in the draft and echoed the concerns voiced by the Clinton administration in the form of the so-called 'three D's'.[11] It believed that any attempt to strengthen Europe's security capabilities should be aimed at reinforcing the transatlantic link and the United States' presence in Europe – in short, bolstering NATO's pivotal role. Some Polish commentators went so far as to argue that the ESDP would lead to a US withdrawal from Europe and signal the return of inter-war instability to the continent.[12] At the time Warsaw had two main concerns that prompted it to question the ESDP. First, like Washington, it argued that the Europeans should develop their defence capabilities within NATO's existing European Security and Defence Identity; otherwise they would be simply duplicating existing structures, which would weaken the alliance. Second, it argued that the ESDP was too exclusive and discriminatory since those states that were not EU members but already belonged to NATO would be left out of the decision-making process.[13] Despite protestations from Warsaw and other non-EU capitals, especially Ankara, the EU pressed ahead. In December 1999 the Helsinki European Council outlined the 'headline goals' for the creation of a rapid reaction force of 50–60,000 troops to carry out the EU-led Petersberg tasks.[14]

The Helsinki summit made considerable progress towards the realization of the EU's security ambitions, but it exacerbated the concerns of the non-EU European NATO members. Although the presidency's conclusions

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stressed that the so-called 'Six' would be able to contribute militarily to EU crisis management missions – and indeed several of these states, including Poland, decided to dedicate their troops to the headline goals – they had no decision-making powers and thus were kept at a distance in the evolution of the ESDP.[15] The summit also essentially failed to differentiate between the Six and other 'interested states', including Russia and Ukraine. The idea that Russia should have a say in European security affairs equal to that of the Six was clearly unacceptable to the Poles as well as to the other former Soviet satellite states. Thus not only were Polish fears of exclusion seemingly confirmed in the Helsinki plan; the presidency's conclusions also gave rise to speculation that the ESDP could become a platform for Russian influence in European security.[16]

Such concerns were apparent in the negative Polish responses to developments related to the ESDP. Polish Defence Minister Janusz Onyszkiewicz criticized the EU plan as unclear and lacking in military and operational viability,[17] while in his annual address to the parliament Foreign Minister Bronisław Geremek expressed disappointment that the EU had, in effect, excluded the 'Six' from core ESDP decision-making mechanisms. Geremek also called for the further strengthening of transatlantic ties, arguing that the Europeans should concentrate on 'security requirements' rather than on the creation of new institutions.[18] Similar criticism came from the Polish military, which regarded the EU's plan to create a rapid reaction force as unrealistic or, worse still, potentially weakening of NATO's military cohesion.[19]

In the months that followed the Helsinki summit, tensions between the EU and the 'Six' grew considerably, and Warsaw and Ankara, in particular, were vociferous in their criticism of the ESDP. Some EU members appeared intransigent; France pushed for the EU to develop a planning capacity independent of NATO, to which Turkey responded by threatening to veto any use of NATO assets by future EU forces.[20] The deadlock was not tackled in earnest until the Feira summit in June 2000, at which Poland submitted a proposal for the greater involvement of the Six in the ESDP.[21] Supported by the United Kingdom, most of Poland's proposals were approved; as a result, the modalities of the '15+6' discussions were established with the express purpose of allowing EU member states and the non-EU European NATO members to discuss ESDP issues.[22] Under this arrangement, the Six were given the opportunity to participate in the Political and Security Committee – the liaison mechanism between the ESDP and the broader CFSP – and to set up communication channels with the EU Military Committee and the EU Military Staff.[23] Provision was also made for the Six to play a role in the consultation process of future EU-led operations and to be involved in such undertakings.[24]

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The post-Feira rebuilding of confidence between the EU and the Six was bolstered further by agreements concluded at Nice in December 2000. By clarifying the relationship between the EU and NATO – specifically, the latter's continued superiority, the way in which the two institutions would function in the event of a crisis and, not least important, the participation of European NATO states in ESDP missions in which NATO as a whole was not involved – these agreements largely allayed Polish concerns. However, it was not until 2002 that the Nice provisions on the 'Berlin Plus' arrangements were adopted – a development aided by the Copenhagen decision on EU enlargement and the change of government in Turkey. In this way, a set of permanent agreements between NATO and the EU came into being.[25]

Despite the emerging *modus vivendi*, Poland continued to express reservations about the ESDP and to be guided by both a 'NATO first' policy and the desire to avoid discrimination, as demonstrated by a number of speeches in the first half of 2001 and within the framework of the European Convention one year later. In May 2001 Foreign Minister Władysław Bartoszewski delivered a speech at Warsaw University as part of a series of set addresses that presented Poland as a nation committed to European integration and thus aimed to allay the concerns of some EU states about what kind of member Poland would be. Bartoszewski called for Warsaw to play an active role in European security and argued that its failure to assume such a role in the past had cost Poland dear. He also denied that Warsaw's approach towards the ESDP was sceptical. At the same time he churned out several well-worn phrases of Polish diplomacy, insisting that the ESDP should have only a limited remit. First, he argued that the term 'defence' should be dropped from its title. Second, the ESDP should complement and never duplicate NATO. Third, it should be as inclusive as possible and fully integrate all non-EU European NATO members. And finally, EU member states should concentrate on increasing their military capabilities rather than focusing on new institutions.[26]

Europe fractures: Poland, ESDP and the War on Terror

At the time Warsaw did not seem overly concerned when the EU's ambition to become a security actor and for NATO to become a platform for collective action was squashed by US unilateralism in the War on Terror; indeed, Poland emerged as one of the United States' key allies in the wake of 9/11 and seemed to thrive on the 'renationalization' of security policy.[27] Polish diplomacy fell in line with US policy on virtually every count, thereby cementing Poland's role as the US's protégé in the East.

Poland's support for US policy, coupled with the desire to limit the devel-

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opment of the ESDP, was further strengthened by the efforts of the United Kingdom, Germany and France, acting without the EU presidency, to set an agenda for a coordinated EU response to 9/11.[28] Although this initiative ultimately failed when the three states' policies over Iraq diverged, the very prospect of an exclusive West European *Directoire* or 'steering committee' deciding the EU's foreign policy agenda was unacceptable to the Poles and helped bolster Polish Atlanticism.[29] 'ESDP by *Directoire*' smacked of an arrangement whereby decisions could be made without Poland's participation. Warsaw feared that should the United States lose interest in Europe, a self-appointed exclusive club of privileged and powerful European states would seek to replace it and thereby marginalize Poland's voice and influence.[30] Thus the threat of a *Directoire*-led ESDP and its potential to dislocate US and European security structures helped determine Warsaw's readiness to join the US-led 'coalition of the willing'.

Poland's pro-US tendency intensified once the bombing in Afghanistan began. Warsaw was quick both to align itself with the United States and to stress that Poland would not remain a 'passive' participant in the anti-terrorism coalition. The events of 11 September 2001 also gave new impetus to Poland's ambition to serve as a conduit for those East European countries aspiring to join Western institutions. Speaking in November, President Aleksander Kwaśniewski argued that Poland's role in the world order after 9/11 was to 'act as a leader to coax Eastern nations into the Western camp and to persuade the West to accept them'. In its self-cast role as regional leader, Warsaw convened an anti-terrorism conference with leaders from Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe on 6 November 2001 – a meeting that not only helped significantly to tighten regional security cooperation but also demonstrated Poland's aspiring leadership qualities and commitment to the US-led campaign. Thus few were likely to have been surprised when at the end of November Kwaśniewski responded positively and virtually without hesitation to President Bush's request for troops. The Polish contribution to 'Operation Enduring Freedom', which began in early January 2002, was not insubstantial; around 300 troops were committed, including some 87 elite special forces from the Operational Mobile Response Group (GROM) as well as the logistic support ship *Xawery Czarniecki*.[31]

Poland – the United States' protégé

Having laid claim to credentials as one of the principal allies of the United States in Afghanistan and its new 'best friend' in Central Europe, Warsaw continued to pursue a policy consonant with that of Washington when the administration shifted its focus towards Iraq with the stated objective of

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regime change. Indeed, since the campaign in Afghanistan, Polish foreign policy had become even more closely tied to that of the United States: at the end of 2002 the US Congress approved a $3.8 billion loan for Poland to purchase 48 F-16 aircraft from Lockheed Martin.[32] The significance of the loan was far-reaching and manifold, not just because of its size. It entailed direct investment in Poland worth a projected $1.5 billion and, because of its various lock-in clauses, has linked the Polish defence sector to that of the United States for some time to come.[33]

Bitterness within Europe over the Polish procurement decision rumbled on into 2003 and peaked during the run-up to the war in Iraq. While Poland's participation in the Iraqi operation was the country's most sensational security undertaking by far in 15 years, it was also fully consistent with the Atlanticism and pro-Americanism of Polish foreign policy from 1989 onwards. Polish Iraq policy stemmed from the core belief that the United States remained the ultimate guarantor of Poland's security.[34] Consequently, amid the emerging transatlantic and intra-European rift in the months before the war, Poland sided fully with the US and expressed its support in the 'Letter of Eight' of January 2003 and shortly thereafter for the 'Letter of Ten'.[35]

These letters affirmed transatlantic solidarity between the signatories and the US, helped sanction the US route to war in Iraq and, in effect, dislodged the Franco-German motor as the only driving force behind EU foreign policy. They also contributed to the fissures in Europe that had appeared following US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's reference to 'Old' and 'New' Europe and deepened after French President Jacques Chirac had lambasted Poland and other East European states in February 2003 for supporting US policy. By siding with the United States, these countries had, in Chirac's eyes, stepped out of line and missed an opportunity to 'keep quiet'. EU Commission President Romano Prodi also signalled his disappointment at the candidate countries' behaviour, which, according to him, revealed their failure to understand that the EU was not just about economic union but also about shared political values and consensus.[36]

Ultimately, these spats demonstrated that the dispute within the EU between the Atlanticists and the Europeanists and, on another level, between the 'intergovernmentalists' and those member states seeking greater communitarization not only continued unabated, but had intensified in the context of EU enlargement. Iraq also brought into focus the question of whether the older and larger member states should speak for the EU and the applicant countries accept a subservient role in the development of the EU's foreign affairs.[37] In some quarters, the answer to this question was clearly 'yes'.

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'Status and role': the Polish rationale for going to war

Against the background of European disharmony and the United States' determination to oust Saddam Hussein, if necessary by force and without a UN mandate, Warsaw made the decision to send troops to Iraq.[38] Compared with the situation in the United Kingdom, Poland witnessed a debate and decision-making process over Iraq that was a rather muted and uncomplicated affair. Indeed the driving force behind Polish policy was the desire to enhance its status and role and, above all, to demonstrate Poland's loyalty as 'America's model ally'.[39]

The Polish debate on Iraq was characterized by a lack of detail and the failure to address the question of Polish interests in the region. Such issues were not discussed at the top level of government, nor did they pervade a broader public discussion. Rather, many things were taken for granted, and reflexive Atlanticism and support for the United States steered the decision-making process as indisputable guiding principles. Significantly, there was no justification of Poland's involvement in Iraq in terms of responding to a direct threat; indeed, no one suggested that Baghdad posed a 'clear and imminent' danger.[40] Justification for Polish involvement was based on other factors, including the conviction that the invasion was necessary to bring about an end to a malevolent regime and to promote the spread of democracy. Both the president and the foreign minister argued that Poland had a special responsibility to help export democracy to other parts of the world owing to its communist past.[41]

The Polish discourse was also explicit about the need to preserve transatlantic bonds; it was claimed that Poland's involvement in Iraq was crucial to prevent a deep fissure from emerging across the Atlantic and to ensure that the US remained in Europe.[42] The Polish decision to deploy troops was directly linked to the desire of Kwaśniewski and the government to raise Poland's profile to that of a global actor with international prestige.[43] Kwaśniewski later suggested that Poland, one of the most vociferous and consistent supporters of US foreign policy and of solidarity between the US and Europe, was likely to be among the group of states shaping the new Europe and its foreign policy.[44]

Initially, the expectation of material gains for the Polish state and the country's industrial sector, in particular, during the post-war reconstruction of Iraq was rarely cited as justification for going to war; however, as discussed below, such matters grew in importance. Again, in contrast to the situation in Spain and, to a certain degree, in the United Kingdom, Polish politics tended to steer clear of the debate about the war; as a result, a stable consensus prevailed, as demonstrated by the parliament's approval of the Polish deployment.[45] The main opposition parties supported the government's decision to

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send troops to Iraq; only the fringe parties Samoobrona and the LPR voiced objections.[46]

As already mentioned, this top-level consensus was underpinned by the permissive public opinion environment in Poland. In the absence of a national discussion about Iraq, there was little interest in or engagement with the issue among Polish citizens. While elsewhere in Europe public opinion was divided over the war, Poland experienced no anti-war mass demonstrations; nor was there anything remotely comparable to what took place in other European countries supportive of Washington's policy, such as the United Kingdom or Spain.[47] Thus, Warsaw's decision in June 2003 that Polish troops would remain in Iraq to participate in the post-war stabilization project did not initially spark controversy. Moreover, the plan to give Poland formal responsibility for one of the occupation zones was seen as wholly in keeping with the decision to go to war and, more importantly, as enhancing Poland's role and status as a major security player and a leading partner of the United States.[48]

The emergence of a public debate

Despite Poland's robust determination to play a prominent role in the US-led invasion of Iraq and subsequently in the post-war reconstruction efforts, Polish policy became palpably less resolute and considerably more reflective throughout 2003. As domestic criticism began to emerge, the permissive consensus faded. Continued international speculation and criticism also fuelled the gradual reappraisal of Polish policy. Indeed, the reassessment process moved up a gear when one of the most ardent supporters of Poland's Atlanticist orientation, former US National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski, criticized what he called 'a too excessive and divisive demonstration of loyalty' as unnecessary and damaging to Poland's relations with Germany and France.[49] Brzezinski's view reinforced the now widespread impression that Poland was fast becoming the United States' 'Trojan donkey'[50] – an impression that had taken root, moreover, in the context of the looming enlargement of the EU.

It was perhaps not until November 2003, when Poland suffered its first casualty, that public opinion finally woke up to Iraq and a broader consideration of the operation's merits and Poland's role in it began to infiltrate party politics. This development helped unleash a steady stream of calls for the government to withdraw its troops.[51] With the governing coalition weak and under pressure, the question of Poland's continued role in Iraq gained salience in the Sejm (the lower house of parliament) and the broader public arena, exposing the government to further pressure. Ultimately, Prime

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Minister Marek Belka was compelled to pledge a reduction in the size of the Polish contingent to around 1,500 troops from the beginning of 2005, but at the same time he insisted that Poland would remain an occupying power until the UN mandate (granted under Resolution 1546) expired in December 2005.[52] Just over a year after Poland had taken responsibility for an occupation zone in Iraq, the government's confidence and optimism had diminished. Iraq remained highly unstable; a growing number of Polish troops had been killed and very few benefits had materialized. In September 2004 the vast majority of Poles – more than 70 per cent – wanted all Polish troops to be pulled out of Iraq.[53]

By this time the issue of withdrawing Polish troops from Iraq had moved beyond the fringe of Polish party politics and become ever more pressing. While in the autumn of 2004 a cross-party consensus on remaining in Iraq continued to hold sway, some opposition parties – not only the LPR and Samoobrona but also the Polish Popular Alliance (PSL) and perhaps even the co-governing Labour Union (UP) – demonstrated a readiness to mobilize the issue during the 2005 elections.[54] Furthermore, the centre-right PO and PiS, which were both in opposition at the time and had voted in favour of sending troops to Iraq, began to criticize the government's failure to secure any material benefits from Poland's involvement in Iraq.[55]

Arguably, the most significant factor shaping the Polish discourse at this time was public opinion. Having woken up to Iraq only in late 2003, the public went on to cause a kind of domestic backlash. By 2004 it not only wanted the troops out of Iraq but also supported the idea that Europe's foreign policy profile should be raised to that of a 'superpower'.[56] Against the background of the continuously worsening situation in Iraq, negative public opinion was nurtured by two issues in particular. First, the low level of involvement of Polish firms and businesses in Iraqi reconstruction projects was a disappointment to a country keen to see some tangible benefits from participating in the US-led war. Indeed, only a handful of Polish companies were involved in the reconstruction efforts; and when the major Polish arms company Bumar was unsuccessful in the notoriously non-transparent bidding for contracts to arm the new Iraqi force, disenchantment became widespread and calls for a withdrawal increased. The second issue was that of visas. Despite Poland's close adherence to US policy since 2001, Poles were among those targeted by the US government's decision to maintain and strengthen its visa regime, which made it even harder for Polish citizens to travel to the United States.[57]

As the situation in Iraq deteriorated even further, these practical issues moved to the forefront of the Polish debate. Responding to domestic criticism, the Polish president and government sought to exert direct pressure

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on Washington. But when Kwaśniewski raised the visa issue with George W. Bush, it was made clear to him that his query was bordering on the inappropriate and that there would be no change of policy. Disappointed, Kwaśniewski announced that he was 'hurt' by the visa decision and, as 'a friend of America', did not understand it. He also appealed for a 'more gracious' and 'less divisive' United States.[58]

But perhaps even more devastating for the Polish government was the impression that developments since the beginning of the Iraq war had undermined the validity of some of the historical and moral arguments that had guided Poland's policy choices in 2003. For example, there was little evidence that Polish and British loyalty to the United States had prevented a split in the transatlantic alliance and helped sustain the US's commitment to European security.[59] In the meantime, the US announced plans for massive reductions in its military presence in Europe. Moreover, the argument about the need to bring democracy and human rights to Iraq, which had initially seemed strong, now appeared jaded in the light of the ongoing violence and scandals involving the abuse of Iraqi prisoners. Warsaw responded by declaring that the withdrawal of Polish troops would take place at the end of 2005 to coincide with the expiration of the UN mandate, irrespective of the situation in Iraq. But after the parliamentary and presidential elections in Poland in the autumn of 2005 Belka's pledge proved short-lived: one of the new government's first proclamations was that Polish troops would remain in Iraq, albeit in reduced numbers, until the 'mission was accomplished'. The new government's allegiance to the United States also manifested itself in the decision to continue with preparations for Poland's inclusion in the US missile defence system, a plan that had reached a critical stage by the autumn of 2006.

Despite the conservative government's decision to renew Poland's commitment to remain in Iraq, the experience of going to war and serving as an occupying power prompted a new direction in Polish foreign and security policy. The period from mid-2003 to 2004 saw not only the emergence of a growing weariness and scepticism towards US unilateralism but also a sharp downturn in popular support for and confidence in Polish policy. Significantly, this had a mildly cathartic effect and contributed to a reappraisal of Poland's role in European security and, in particular, of Polish perspectives on the CFSP and ESDP.[60]

Recalibrating Polish policy after Iraq: the growing relevance of the ESDP

The ESDP proceeded on two levels after 11 September 2001. On the one hand, the diminished role of multilateral forums and the lack of a coherent European voice after 9/11 seemed to expose the innate fragility of the EU's

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foreign policy, calling into question the whole ESDP project. Early initiatives, led by France and Germany, to regroup and take the ESDP forward failed initially to gather support from across the EU and in many ways only entrenched the prevailing 'Old/New' Europe divide. From a Polish point of view, the idea of forming a collective defence alliance within the EU through 'closer cooperation', as proposed by France, Germany, Belgium and Luxemburg in April 2003, was unacceptable. Equally unappealing was the idea of 'structured cooperation', which was seen as a Franco-German attempt to sideline the pro-US new EU member states by establishing military criteria they would never be able to meet.

Paradoxically perhaps, given the general disarray in Europe at the time, the ESDP made significant progress from around May 2003 onwards and began to cohere through EU-led military deployments, the formulation of the European Security Strategy and (by the end of 2003) preliminary agreements on institutional arrangements that were based on proposals emanating from the Convention on the Future of Europe. Towards many of these developments and innovations Polish policy adopted an increasingly positive and constructive approach.

A number of mutually reinforcing factors contributed to this change. First, as described above, Poland's confidence that its role and status would be enhanced through its engagement in Iraq was undermined by events in that country and the perceived lack of reward, either material or political, for its participation in the campaign. Second, Poland's proximity to the EU acquired more significance as membership of the union drew nearer; thus scepticism about the ESDP, which had derived from Poland's 'outsider' status, was abating. Third, the fact that the ESDP was becoming more elaborate and had proved itself in practice helped transform the Polish perception of the policy. While the ESDP had been largely 'declaratory' at its inception – expressing aspirations and ill-defined priorities, which, arguably, made it difficult for non-EU members to confirm their commitment – the precise nature of the EU's role as a foreign and security policy actor became clearer throughout 2003, as did the ESDP's 'mission' and purpose.

The year 2003 witnessed, in effect, the launch of the ESDP. The EU engaged in three missions – in Bosnia-Herzegovina, in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) – and Polish troops were involved in all three. The EU Police Mission (EUPM), launched in January 2003, took over from the UN International Police Task Force in Bosnia-Herzegovina and aimed at establishing local law enforcement capabilities to aid the stabilization of the region. The Polish contribution to the EUPM totalled 12 police officers, a number similar to that of the Greek and Danish contributions.

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At the end of March 2003 the EU launched its first-ever military mission, namely 'Operation Concordia' in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, which replaced the NATO mission 'Operation Allied Harmony'. Led by France as the 'framework nation' and supported by NATO assets and capabilities, the operation was the first test case of the 'Berlin Plus' agreement and proved a success. Again, Polish troops were present; they numbered 17 – a total that was on a par with the Spanish and Swedish contributions.

The third mission of 2003 was 'Operation Artemis' in the DRC. Led by the French, this short mission was significant because it took the EU outside Europe, demonstrating not only that it could 'go global' but also that the UN now viewed it as a major security actor. Though arguably uncontroversial, limited in scope and heavily reliant both on the leadership of the large 'old' EU states and on NATO assets, the ESDP missions in 2003 signalled a breakthrough. They have since been followed up by other EU deployments involving troops from both EU and non-EU states.

An important consequence of this development was that Warsaw, together with other Central and East European capitals, ceased to view the functions of NATO and the EU in terms of discrete 'boxes', as had been the case several years earlier. Crucially, the increasing relevance of the EU's security policy in the face of growing concerns over Iraq highlighted the significant overlap and blurring of functions that could now be detected between the roles of NATO and the EU.

THINKING 'OUTSIDE THE BOX': POLAND AND THE ESDP AFTER 2003

In parallel with the proliferation of EU-led missions, the institutional development of the ESDP proceeded from 2002 within the framework of the Convention on the Future of Europe. While disagreements over Iraq threatened to dismember EU foreign policy, the Convention was getting to grips with some fundamental and forward-looking questions related to the CFSP/ESDP.

In the Convention's early deliberations, Poland, like other candidate members, kept a relatively low profile and adhered to mainstream opinion. With EU enlargement on the horizon, CFSP-related questions were pushed down the agenda by the more immediate and pressing concerns of accession. Besides various policy and sectoral issues, which had not yet been resolved during the negotiation process, Polish diplomacy was preoccupied (as discussed in Chapter 3) with the Convention's proposals for a new voting system, under which the voting weight granted to Poland at Nice would have been reduced. Faced with these larger concerns, Polish governmental and parliamentary representatives to the CFSP and Defence working groups

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raised uncontroversial issues that were familiar themes in Polish foreign policy: the ESDP should not be developed as a rival to NATO, which should remain the core security institution in Europe; and it should become an 'inclusive' entity with equality for all participating states, regardless of their size and whether they belonged to the EU.

However, amid the progress made by the Convention on the Future of Europe and against the backdrop of Iraq, Poland became more involved in the Convention's proposals on foreign and security policy issues and adopted a more embracing approach. In March 2003 Polish Foreign Minister Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz called for the EU to expand the CFSP area.[61] Though doubtless a response to accusations that Poland was being disloyal to the EU, Cimoszewicz's call demonstrated that Polish thinking on the ESDP had travelled a considerable distance. More importantly, it showed that a more articulate and detailed policy stance could emerge.

A positive approach to new constitutional proposals

In subsequent statements, the Polish government welcomed the pro-integrationist proposals that emerged from the Convention on the Future of Europe. It was particularly forthcoming on issues related to the CFSP and supported all major initiatives put forward by Jean-Luc Dehaene's working group, including the idea of a 'double-hatted' foreign minister who would have broad authority and one foot in the Council of Ministers and the other in the European Commission. In addition, Warsaw backed the idea of giving the union a 'legal personality' and establishing an EU diplomatic service. And in opposition to many other candidate states, it also endorsed the proposal to develop an EU security strategy.

Warsaw's response to the proposals made by Michel Barnier's working group on the ESDP was more qualified, albeit generally positive. It supported the creation of an EU Armaments and Research Agency and the inclusion of a mutual defence ('solidarity') clause. While it expressed reservations about the idea of 'enhanced cooperation', stressing the need for the inclusive nature of such cooperation, it was nonetheless more amenable to the idea than other Central and East European candidate countries.[62] Moreover, despite consistently emphasizing the need to respect and preserve the role of NATO, Warsaw made several statements indicating its openness to the idea of increasing the EU's autonomous planning capacity and supported the British proposal to install a European planning cell at NATO headquarters in Mons, Belgium.[63] In general, Polish delegates recognized that the EU needed its own defence capabilities, which, though complementary to those of NATO, could be deployed independently of the United States.[64]

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Taking the ESDP forward – the ESS

Poland's growing willingness to embrace the CFSP and ESDP was mirrored by its approach to the European Security Strategy. Warsaw's reception of the ESS demonstrated a shift from scepticism towards the realization that the EU could be a credible security actor. In particular, the combination of political role and economic carrot without neglecting the importance of the military stick appealed to Warsaw. The Poles praised the ESS for its bold language, its holistic approach to security and its appreciation of the value of transatlantic relations. They were also satisfied with what appeared to be the prospect of the EU's becoming a global actor – one that would not shy away from international engagement, including the use of force. In fact, the prevailing Polish view was that the provisions envisaging the use of force should be strengthened to the extent that this option could be taken without a mandate of the UN Security Council. Warsaw also pushed, unsuccessfully, for the inclusion of a separate paragraph on transatlantic relations.

Such proposals notwithstanding, there was a clear recognition in Poland that the ESS promoted a stronger and internationally more active EU, which was increasingly seen as compatible with Polish interests. This view was overwhelmingly supported by public opinion: in 2004 no fewer than 77 per cent of Poles believed that Europe should have more military power in order to be able to protect its interests independently of the United States.[65] Of course, to a considerable extent, the future evolution of Warsaw's attitude towards the CFSP and ESDP will continue to depend on the sustained development of 'flexible integration' in these areas.[66]

Rethinking the Polish position on a **Directoire***?*

From the outset, Polish policy was opposed to the principle of 'flexible integration' on the grounds that it would create a 'union within the union' and would be likely to serve as an instrument to exclude new member states from vital decision-making within the EU – hence Poland's initial reluctance to endorse the proposals that emerged from the Convention on the Future of Europe, which, like the 'passerelle clause'[67] or 'enhanced cooperation', aimed at greater flexibility. In this context, the threat of a 'two-speed Europe' was often used by other member states, Germany in particular, to pressurize Warsaw into accepting a double-majority voting system, which was provided for by the Convention. As discussed above, Warsaw responded sceptically to the prospect of a Franco-British-German *Directoire* as the leading group in European security matters. Its scepticism was apparent *vis-à-vis* the trio's earlier initiative in Iran, which, according to the Poles, should have included the EU Council's Secretary General and High Representative, Javier Solana.[68]

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However, the Polish attitude towards the idea of flexible integration or closer cooperation within a group of the largest member states began to change as soon as it became clear that Poland itself could be included in such a group. Ironically, perhaps, what brought about this change was the prominent role Poland performed in Iraq, which led it to realize that it could play in Europe's 'premier league'. At the same time other member states, though often irritated by Poland's behaviour, came to see Warsaw as a natural member of a European vanguard. These two factors prompted a turnabout in Poland's attitude towards the idea of 'structured cooperation'; indeed, expectations were voiced that Poland could be among the elite group of member states that launched the initiative. Poland also welcomed the Council of Ministers' suggestion to create 'battle groups' and moved swiftly with the Germans to form a joint battle group by 2007.

In addition to the formal arrangements emerging from within the EU, there was also the growing possibility of Poland's involvement in informal arrangements within the group of the largest member states. In June 2004 Nicolas Sarkozy, France's finance minister and a likely contender for the French presidency in 2007, caused controversy by arguing that France had to distance itself from an 'exclusive' dialogue with Germany and work with the other large member countries, namely the United Kingdom, Spain, Italy and Poland.[69] A similar view was expressed in July by Edmund Stoiber, the leader of Germany's Christian Social Union (CSU).[70] While Poland did not officially endorse these ideas, not least because during the row over the voting system it had portrayed itself as a champion of the smaller states, it participated readily in informal consultations within the group of the six largest states.

It is important to stress that Poland's predisposition towards flexibility and cooperation with large member states is likely to be marked by ambivalence in the foreseeable future. This prediction is based on two considerations: Poland's size and its economic weakness. While Poland is the largest new member state, it is only a medium-sized power in the context of an EU of 25 members. It is also clear that owing to its economic weakness, Poland will continue to vote for a larger EU budget – a stance that conflicts with that of the richer member states, including the 'big four'. Moreover, this combination of size and economic weakness means that Poland, unlike the 'big four', is neither a natural intergovernmentalist nor a supporter of a stronger Council of Ministers. As mentioned above, as far as the EU budget is concerned, it is the European Commission that is Poland's natural ally.

While Poland may find it difficult to team up with the largest member states in many areas, this does not necessarily apply to 'second pillar' issues – the CFSP and ESDP – where the prospects of closer cooperation with the

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'big four' are more likely. Much will depend on Poland's military capabilities and its ability to reform its armed forces. At present, it still lacks the strategic airlift capabilities necessary to serve as a 'framework nation' in EU missions.[71] Although the number of Polish troops based in Iraq or other parts of the world (altogether around 4,000) is significant by European standards, it is important to note that in most cases, Poland had to rely on other countries' transport capabilities. However, since the Polish public supports an increase in defence spending, the government is relatively free to modernize its armed forces and to enhance its transport capabilities.[72]

THE EU AS A SECURITY ACTOR – AN EVOLVING POLISH PERSPECTIVE

This examination of the EU's development into a security actor and Poland's response to it confirms the argument that by the time of EU enlargement, Poland had ceased to be a 'critical observer' of the ESDP and become a 'prudent participant'.[73] In this way, it went from being 'America's protégé' to something more closely resembling a constructive European.

Poland's Atlanticism was a reaction to its exclusion from the decision-making process in European security matters. This issue played a crucial role in determining its initial attitude towards the CFSP/ESDP. While Warsaw's early reticence stemmed mainly from its concerns about the implications of the ESDP for the cohesion of transatlantic relations, its stance was only strengthened by the EU's initial decision to exclude Poland and other Central and East European countries from some vital aspects of the policy. However, when arrangements for accommodating the accession states were made in Feira and Poland became increasingly involved in the internal working of the EU, particularly in the context of the Convention on the Future of the EU, Warsaw's attitude towards a stronger CFSP and ESDP grew more constructive and accepting – an attitude that has largely endured.

Since joining the EU, therefore, Poland's status has fundamentally changed, and one of the main reasons for its Atlanticism – its exclusion from West European decision-making bodies – no longer exists. Besides the domestic impact of EU enlargement, another factor that is likely to influence the further evolution of Polish foreign and security policy is the continued development of the EU's Eastern policy.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has argued that while Poland supported the institutional strengthening of the CFSP, including the extension of QMV, its position on the ESDP was more conservative, focusing on enhancing capabilities and

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favouring the preservation of the strictly intergovernmental nature of the initiative. However, Poland is likely to support a flexible approach towards the use of force since it advocates a more active and potentially interventionist EU. Polish policy is now well disposed towards closer cooperation among the six largest EU member states in security and foreign policy, although it remains unclear whether Warsaw would have sufficient capabilities to join this group as a key player in the near future. Should the EU evolve into a more coherent and more robust security actor – one in which Poland's voice were adequately represented – it is likely that in the medium term Warsaw would begin to view European initiatives as more relevant to guaranteeing its security interests than NATO undertakings.

Chapter 5 pursues what is a logical link to this chapter's discussion about the security ambitions of Poland and the EU. In contrast to the shifting and, to a certain degree, still ambiguous Polish position on the ESDP, Warsaw's approach towards its eastern neighbours has been largely straightforward and relatively coherent from the outset. Furthermore, Poland soon realized that membership of the EU would serve to enhance and amplify Polish Eastern policy.

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5

Eastern policy – Poland's specialism

One of the most distinctive and innovative features of Poland's foreign policy post-1989 has been the determination to improve and stabilize its relations with its eastern neighbours. The regional role that Warsaw has attempted to carve out for itself in the East is, arguably, what most distinguishes Polish foreign policy from that of other former communist countries; as such, it is a vital asset in Poland's bid for the status of major European power. Though deeply rooted in the country's past and self-perception, Poland's foreign policy is tailored to its aspirations as a regional player and as a state with an important 'specialism' in both EU and transatlantic contexts.

Until its collapse at the end of the eighteenth century, Poland was joined with Lithuania in a multi-ethnic commonwealth (also called the First Republic) whose borders stretched far to the east. Besides Poland and Lithuania, the commonwealth included what is now Belarus, most of today's Ukraine, the northern part of Moldova and some western parts of contemporary Russia. As discussed in Chapter 3, Warsaw's policies and attitudes towards the constituent nations of the former commonwealth contributed to the cleavage in both the Polish national movement (Dmowski–Piłsudski) and its security culture. How the Poles saw themselves *vis-à-vis* their neighbours to the east came to reflect a general view of the outside world and became a key aspect of Polish foreign policy. Indeed, the post-1989 Third Republic is no different in this respect; the desire to act as a bridge between its eastern neighbours and the Western states and institutions has been one of the main aspects of Poland's new Eastern policy.

EUROPEANIZING THE EAST

There is no doubt that the Eastern policy of the Third Republic owes far more to Piłsudski than to Dmowski. Grounded in the ideas that were developed during the Cold War by Piłsudski's followers, namely Giedroyc and

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his associates from the Paris-based Kultura Institute, this policy rests on three pillars: the renouncement of territorial claims against Poland's eastern neighbours; support for the independence of and state- and nation-building in the countries located between itself and Russia; and, not least important, the promotion of these countries' integration into the West.

Consistent with these objectives, Warsaw recognized the independence of its eastern neighbours and confirmed its common borders with them immediately after the Cold War. However, with the exception of Lithuania, the former Soviet republics have made only slow progress towards emancipating themselves from Russia and integrating into the West. It is widely believed in Poland that domestic reforms and the Western integration of Ukraine and Belarus are intimately linked. It is also argued that the West – and the EU in particular – can and should influence these countries' transitions towards democracy and a market economy.

While Poland has secured the stronger engagement of the United States in the region – for example, through the Poland–America–Ukraine Cooperation Initiative – the prevailing view in Warsaw is that the EU is far better suited to playing an active role in the eastern half of the continent. This perception is based on the Polish experience of joining the EU and its witnessing of the impact of conditionality on domestic reforms; it is also determined by international relations throughout Eastern Europe as a whole. Moreover, Warsaw expected the EU to take advantage of its geographical proximity to the East to become more engaged in the region than the United States. Indeed, its belief in the 'transformative powers' of the EU has been one of the main reasons for its post-2004 embrace of the CFSP and its lobbying for the development of a common EU approach to the former Soviet republics.

In particular, Poland has actively advocated Ukraine's integration into the EU and its admission to various Central European institutions, including the Central European Initiative, CEFTA and the regular meetings of the Central European presidents.[1] More recently it has sought to promote a more active EU approach towards Belarus and Moldova. To this end, Warsaw called for the establishment of an EU 'Eastern dimension' as early as 1998[2] – just when it was embarking on its own membership negotiations – and repeated this call in its non-paper on Eastern policy of December 2002. The non-paper also included a proposal for the creation of a 'European space of political and economic cooperation within a wider Europe'.[3] Under this proposal, the principle of conditionality would be introduced into relations with Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus and, depending on their progress towards domestic reforms (such as decentralization, the market economy, democracy and human rights), the East European countries covered by the European Neighbourhood Policy

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(ENP) would conclude association agreements with the union. Such a possibility would remain open for Belarus (which opted out of the ENP) should this country shed its current dictatorial form of government.

The non-paper also argued that, in the longer term, the EU should recognize the 'European choice' made by Ukraine and offer this country the prospect of membership if its engagement with the EU and its domestic transformation permitted such a development. It suggested that in the meantime Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus should be included in a broad range of policies that involved common interests – in particular, cross-border cooperation, justice and home affairs. It also proposed that if these states proved responsive partners, the EU could consider introducing a more flexible visa regime for them. In order to promote their technical capabilities and nurture their ability to cooperate with the EU, Warsaw suggested extending TACIS and other programmes of technical assistance to its eastern neighbours.

However, Poland's efforts to promote the Europeanization of its eastern environment have met with a less than enthusiastic response in Brussels. So far most member states have failed to support the integration of Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova into the EU; only Lithuania and, to a lesser extent, the United Kingdom and Sweden have backed the initiative. Moreover, the Belarusian government remains hostile towards the West and the EU, and Poland's engagement in Ukraine has been handicapped by the imposition of travel restrictions between the two countries following Warsaw's compliance with the Schengen regulations.

Poland's role in the Ukrainian revolution – in which President Kwaśniewski proved an effective negotiator – demonstrated that Warsaw was establishing a regional niche for itself. Following its triumph in Ukraine it has sought to play a more active role in Belarus, albeit without success to date. Clearly, the most important factor in Poland's Eastern policy is its relationship with Russia. Warsaw's increasing involvement in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) has had a strong impact on Polish–Russian relations.

RUSSIA: IN THE SHADOW OF 'BIG BROTHER'

The end of the Cold War changed Polish–Russian relations in two fundamental ways. First, it liberated Poland from Russian domination; and, second, it revived the two states' rivalry for influence in the 'lands in between' and particularly in Ukraine and Belarus.

Obviously, Poland and Russia are not equal competitors. Despite its growing influence, Poland is still one of the poorest members of the EU and its military potential is a fraction of Russia's. Russia remains a nuclear superpower; it is energy-rich and continues to enjoy a network of interests

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in the former Soviet republics, most of which are dependent in some way or other on its economic and, at times, political support. Poland's potential influence in the region derives from its status as a neighbour that has successfully completed its transition. As such, it is seen as a bearer of ideas that the Ukrainian and Belarusian reform movements might seek to emulate.

Poland's increasing involvement in its eastern neighbourhood has been one of the main reasons for the worsening of bilateral relations with Russia. Following Poland's engagement in Ukraine's 'Orange revolution' the relationship hit its lowest point since 1989. Moreover, Poland and Russia remain divided by the past and continue to trade accusations over the Polish–Russian war of 1920, the Second World War and Russia's role during the Cold War. The issue of energy supplies to the region is another cause of tension between the two countries.

From satellite to regional rival?

Since the end of the Cold War Russian policy towards Poland and the other Central and East European states has been driven by two overriding objectives: to see the region serve as a bridge to the EU and to turn it into a buffer against a potential Western penetration into the CIS. To achieve these aims, Moscow needed to ensure that the Western integration of Central and Eastern Europe was limited to economic interests and did not affect security arrangements in the region. To this end, it presented its former satellites with bilateral agreements that, if signed, would have precluded them from joining new alliances and thereby would have bound them to Russian security guarantees.[4]

Poland and its Central and East European neighbours rejected Moscow's proposal, opting instead to apply for NATO membership. When the enlargement of the alliance went ahead, Moscow's strategy was to concentrate on preserving its position within the CIS. While other Central and East European states largely satisfied their security needs by joining NATO and the EU, Poland emerged as a state with an active Eastern policy that, crucially, has conflicted with Russian objectives in the region.

During the first years of its post-communist transformation Poland's relations with Russia were uncomfortable at times but cordial overall. As discussed in Chapter 3, the first post-communist government of Mazowiecki retained close security relations with Moscow, which at the time was seen as an ally in the border dispute with unifying Germany. Most important, in the early 1990s Poland was careful not to tread on Russia's toes, pursuing a foreign policy that continued to be self-centred and sought no engagement in the East.

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Moscow, for its part, remained particularly sensitive to Polish–Ukrainian rapprochement. In 1993 Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk proposed that the two states set up a 'Baltic to Black Sea' security zone. The idea proved a non-starter, not least because Warsaw, concerned about Russia's reaction and focused on joining NATO, showed no interest. However, Poland's lack of interest in the idea did not forestall a negative response from Russia, which accused Warsaw of plotting to undercut Moscow's interests in the area by drawing Ukraine into the West. Similar reactions followed the establishment of a Polish–Ukrainian peacekeeping battalion, POLUKRBAT (see below).[5]

But the strongest reaction from Moscow and the sharpest downturn in Russian–Polish relations occurred in the wake of President Kwaśniewski's involvement in the discussions following Ukraine's presidential crisis and the Orange revolution in November–December 2004. Shortly thereafter Russia withdrew from an agreement to build a gas pipeline (Yamal 2) running through Polish territory to Germany and other West European countries.

Celebrations in Moscow to mark the sixtieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Europe provided another occasion for the airing of Polish–Russian discord. The celebrations proved unpopular in Poland and elsewhere in Central and Eastern Europe, where Russia's role in liberating Europe from National Socialist rule was seen to have been largely overshadowed by Soviet domination of the region following the war. Lithuania and Estonia boycotted the celebrations and the centre-right opposition in Poland called for the president not to attend. Determined to dispel the impression that Poland was an anti-Russian state – an impression that, he believed, would only grow stronger if he boycotted the event – Kwaśniewski adhered to his earlier decision to go to Moscow.

However, Kwaśniewski's determination was severely tested when, amid the domestic controversy, the Russian Foreign Affairs Ministry issued a statement criticizing the Polish view that the Yalta agreement had brought division rather than liberation to Europe. In a separate incident, the Russian deputy foreign minister rejected calls from Poland and the Baltic states for Moscow to denounce the Nazi–Soviet pact of August 1939, which had led to the Soviet occupation of the Baltic states and eastern Poland.[6] Against the background of such developments, Kwaśniewski's decision to participate in the Moscow celebrations became domestically unpopular and anti-Russian sentiments in Poland more widespread.[7]

Pipeline diplomacy

Amid these growing tensions and emerging regional rivalries, Poland remains wedded to Russia owing to its dependence on Russian energy resources and

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gas in particular. Despite the efforts of successive Polish governments and calls from the European Commission to diversify the supply network, the Russian energy giant Gazprom retains a *de facto* monopoly on the Polish market. Not only is Gazprom the provider of 79 per cent of Poland's gas supplies; through its involvement in various joint ventures, it controls the means of distribution and transportation.[8]

Russian gas remains the cheapest Poland can buy, not least because it is transported through a pipeline that was built during the communist era. Hence any attempt to find a different provider runs into a wall of commercial and infrastructural considerations. For example, when the centre-right government of Jerzy Buzek signed an agreement with Norway in 2001 on the construction of a pipeline beneath the Baltic Sea, the deal was criticized as economically unviable. Norwegian gas would have been 30 per cent more expensive than Russian supplies and Poland would have been obliged to buy amounts well beyond its needs. The project, therefore, proved highly controversial. After obtaining several concessions from Gazprom, the centre-left government of Leszek Miller cancelled the deal with Norway.[9] Another factor that militated against Poland's energy policy shifting away from Russia was the lock-in clause in the contract with Gazprom under which Poland was obliged to buy a certain amount of gas until 2020 in return for cheaper supplies. Poland's withdrawal from the agreement would have almost certainly prompted Gazprom to seek financial compensation.

There is little doubt that Russian energy supplies to Poland have become a heavily politicized issue. In 1993 Poland signed an agreement with Gazprom on the construction of a second gas pipeline running from Siberia to Germany and other West European countries – a project that seemed economically profitable as Poland would have been entitled to charge transit fees. However, the proposed Yamal 2 pipeline would have bypassed Ukraine, thereby depriving Kiev of transit revenues and increasing its economic dependence on Russia. Such a development would have driven a wedge between Poland and its immediate neighbour.

As an alternative to Yamal 2 and 'Amber', another proposed pipeline, Gazprom reached an agreement with Germany's chemical company BASF in April 2005 to build a pipeline beneath the Baltic Sea. While this option was the most expensive that Gazprom could pursue (it is estimated that it will cost at least four times as much as Yamal 2), the pipeline will deliver Russian gas directly to Germany – that is, with no transit countries along the route.[10] In a bid to counter the Russian–German deal, Poland and the Baltic states have appealed to the European Commission and lobbied in favour of a common European approach to the question of energy security and relations with Russia.[11]

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UKRAINE: 'THERE CAN BE NO FREE POLAND WITHOUT A FREE UKRAINE'

An independent and pro-Western Ukraine is the main objective of Poland's Eastern policy. Poland was the first state officially to recognize the independence of Ukraine in 1990. The two countries are linked by an ever-growing number of bilateral initiatives, including the joint peacekeeping battalion. Moreover, Warsaw has played a leading role in drawing Kiev closer to Western institutions.

By 2005 Poland's Ukrainian policy seemed to have been successful, given Kiev's apparent pro-Western course. However, this was not always the case, nor is it certain that this trend will continue. Indeed, the installation of the pro-Russian Viktor Yanukovich as prime minister in August 2006 signifies something of a setback for Ukraine's Western path, seen most vividly in Yanukovich's rejection of his country's entry into NATO. Arguably though, there is still no consensus in Ukraine about its foreign policy orientation and it appears the country may drift between retaining close ties with Russia and reorienting itself towards the West.

The first years of the post-communist period were full of Polish and Ukrainian declarations in favour of developing a 'special relationship'. Polish President Lech Wałęsa routinely referred to Piłsudski's famous maxim, 'There can be no free Poland without a free Ukraine', while his Ukrainian counterpart, Leonid Kravchuk, claimed in one of his first addresses as president that Ukraine regarded cooperation with Poland as more important than its relations with Russia. However, these grand words were followed by little action and until 1994 both countries were more preoccupied with Russia than with each other. Moreover, owing to its initial failure to dismantle its nuclear capability, Ukraine was seen as a pariah state not only by Russia but also by the United States and the EU. Poland, for its part, remained focused on securing independence and integrating with the West; its Eastern policy, though important, took second place to these goals during the early 1990s.[12]

This situation began to change in the mid-1990s. Having secured membership of NATO and knowing that EU accession was only a question of time, Warsaw could concentrate on developing a regional niche, and the most obvious starting point was the forging of closer ties with Ukraine. Particularly in the context of NATO membership, it had been made clear to Poland that its active Eastern policy would be an asset in its bid to join the alliance. At the same time Ukraine had ended its pariah status by signing a trilateral agreement with Russia and the United States that led to its denuclearization. That agreement allowed Poland to pursue a more active policy towards its neighbour.

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As a result of these developments, Poland and Ukraine intensified cooperation and Warsaw lobbied in favour of Kiev's establishing ties with Central European institutions, including CEFTA, which was widely perceived as a first step towards integration into the EU. In the military sphere, the Polish–Ukrainian battalion POLUKRBAT was formed by merging the Ukrainian Mechanized Border Regiment and the Polish Fourteenth Brigade in 1995; five years later the battalion joined NATO's Kosovo Force (KFOR) in the autonomous province, where it became part of the Multinational Brigade East. Furthermore, when Poland was preparing to join NATO, it successfully lobbied for a strengthening of Kiev's ties with the alliance. In July 1997 the Ukraine–NATO Charter was signed in Madrid at the same time as the enlargement documents.[13]

Trade between Poland and Ukraine grew sixfold between 1992 and 1997 and cross-border investment started to take off. In addition, Kiev and Warsaw began considering the joint construction of a pipeline to transport Caspian oil to Poland and from there to Western Europe. Given the two states' dependence on Russian energy, the project would have had far more than simply economic significance and would have added another strategic dimension to the Polish–Ukrainian relationship.[14]

The successes of the mid-1990s were followed by a period of uncertainty in Polish–Ukrainian relations caused by the two countries' divergent paths of development at the end of the decade. While Poland was completing its domestic reforms and integrating into NATO and the EU, Ukraine continued to pursue a policy of balancing its relations with Russia and the West and increasingly favoured the former over the latter. During Kuchma's second term as president, Ukraine's economic reforms were halted, if not reversed, particularly after Victor Yushchenko had been ousted as prime minister in April 2001. Even more worrying was the growing number of authoritarian practices and violations of democratic standards. In September 2000 President Kuchma was accused by his former bodyguard Major Mykola Melnychenko of engineering the assassination of the anti-regime journalist Georgiy Gongadze. At the same time Ukraine was alleged to have broken the UN embargo on the sale of arms to Iraq.[15] Kiev never convincingly denied these allegations; as a result, its European ambitions received a setback and US aid to Ukraine was frozen.

Thus Poland was faced with the dilemma of severing relations with Ukraine and undermining its own regional role or continuing to court Kuchma and risking a rift with the EU and the United States. Having apparently consulted both Brussels and Washington, Warsaw eventually assumed the role of facilitator between the Kuchma regime and the Ukrainian opposition in the hope of bringing about a peaceful change of guard in Kiev. To this end, the

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conference 'Ukraine in Europe' was organized in Warsaw in October 2002; the meeting brought together the Ukrainian government and opposition as well as the EU Council's Secretary General and High Representative, Javier Solana.[16] Washington's reconciliation with Kiev was subsequently ensured through the contribution of 1,500 Ukrainian troops to the Polish-led stabilization force in Iraq. However, as long as President Kuchma stayed in power, Ukraine's relations with both the US and Poland remained ambivalent and became increasingly patchy during Kuchma's last years in office.

Through its role in bringing the Orange revolution to a peaceful end in late 2004, Poland returned as a key player in Eastern Europe. Individual Polish politicians, including former President Lech Wałęsa, went to Kiev to show support for the pro-Yushchenko camp and to speak at demonstrations. President Kwaśniewski used his contacts with Kuchma to secure the latter's consent to international mediation. In addition, he won over Solana, who was initially reluctant to engage in the process, and persuaded the French and German leaders to support the Polish mission.[17] According to his own account, Kwaśniewski also played a role in preventing miners who supported Prime Minister Yanukovich from staging a march – an event that was likely to have led to violence.[18]

After the Orange revolution Polish–Ukrainian relations reached a new high point. Under Yushchenko, the Ukrainian government oriented itself strongly towards integration with the West and loosened its dependence on Russia. Poland emerged as a major supporter of Kiev's pro-Western orientation and established itself as the most consistent and most outspoken advocate of offering Ukraine the prospect of EU membership.[19] In this pursuit, Warsaw attempted to link the issue of Turkey's EU membership with that of Ukraine's.[20]

Until December 2004 rapprochement between Poland and Ukraine had been driven largely by the elite and had made only a limited impact outside the Polish and Ukrainian political classes. Genuine cooperation between the two nations was hindered by the burden of the past and, in particular, memories of the armed conflict between Ukrainian and Polish volunteers over the city of Lviv/Lwów in 1918, the ethnic cleansing of Poles carried out by the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (which was allied with the Nazis) during the Second World War and the post-war expulsions of Ukrainians from the borderlands. All these developments had created a paradox whereby the most pro-Western part of Ukraine, in the western part of the country around Lviv, remained deeply sceptical about Poland's intentions; at the same time Ukrainian nationalism, which was weak in the eastern part of the country, continued to be strong in western Ukraine but was historically anti-Polish. This difficult past, coupled with cross-border crime and Ukraine's rather

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stunted efforts at domestic reform, were key factors in the stereotyped and highly negative view of Ukrainians among the general public in Poland.[21]

Indeed, the shallowness of the official Polish–Ukrainian rapprochement before December 2004 was evident in the dispute over the renovation of the Polish Lychakov Cemetery in Lviv and the inscriptions commemorating the Polish volunteers who had died defending the town against Ukrainian forces in 1918. While an agreement was reached between Kuchma and Kwaśniewski to renovate the cemetery, this decision was resented in Lviv and subsequently blocked by the city council.

The Orange revolution had an indelibly positive effect on mutual perceptions and historical sensitivities and thus helped deepen the rapprochement between Poland and Ukraine. The revolution inspired genuine enthusiasm and widespread support among the Poles, while the Ukrainians did not fail to notice that Polish involvement in the uprising went beyond traditional diplomatic circles: many Polish young people, artists and opposition leaders went to Kiev to join the demonstrators. Having gathered more volunteers than were needed, Poland also sent the largest team of international observers to the rerun of the elections. As a result of these developments, mutual perceptions among the Polish and Ukrainian public underwent an almost immediate change. During the revolution 81 per cent of Poles expressed the belief that rapprochement with Ukraine was desirable and feasible. The proportion of Poles who expressed a negative view of Ukrainians declined by 17 per cent, while the number of those who had a positive perception of their eastern neighbours rose by some 10 per cent.[22]

Most importantly, it appears that the revolution may have had a long-term impact in the sense that Ukrainian nationalism became less anti-Polish and Poland began to be perceived as an ally. Moreover, Ukraine moved swiftly to complete the controversial renovation of the Lychakov Cemetery, which was officially reopened in June 2005. Not only did the city of Lviv, the cradle of Ukrainian nationalism, not object to the project on this occasion; it also ignored the negative opinion of the Ukrainian parliament on the issue.[23]

It remains to be seen in what ways the recent changes and subsequent setback to democracy in Ukraine will affect Polish–Ukrainian relations. However, the Kaczyński government has asserted that it will continue to work towards strengthening Kiev's relations with the West. Arguably, it is because of the Polish engagement in Ukraine that Poland's international status has improved and it is now perceived as a state with a regional specialism and the ability to shape its immediate environment. But there are at least two important caveats about the further strengthening of Poland's bridging role *vis-à-vis* Ukraine. First, one of the main reasons why Poland is an attractive partner for Ukraine is its position within the EU and its consistent advocacy

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of Kiev's integration with the union. However, since the French and Dutch rejections of the constitutional treaty, the EU has had little appetite for admitting Ukraine, even in the long term. If this anti-enlargement climate continues, Poland's influence and position *vis-à-vis* its eastern neighbours will clearly be affected.

Second, there is a price to pay for Poland's involvement in the East. As discussed above, Poland's role in the Orange revolution led to the deterioration of relations with Russia – a development that has serious economic implications. The revolution also triggered nervous reactions from the CIS countries that remain authoritarian. Of these countries, Belarus was quick to identify Poland as a major troublemaker in the region.

BELARUS: FROM AMBIVALENCE TO CONFRONTATION

With its Eastern policy focused on Russia and Ukraine, Poland gave low priority to its relations with Belarus until recently. In terms of Warsaw's conceptual approach, Belarus received the same treatment as Ukraine: Warsaw supported the country's independence, its nation-building and the development of civil society.[24] But Belarus is not as strategically important to Poland as Ukraine. Indeed, neither Piłsudski nor any other major Polish political figure has ever claimed that 'there can be no free Poland without a free Belarus'.

In the early 1990s Poland was one of the first states to recognize the sovereignty of Belarus. Subsequently, it offered to help develop the Belarusian armed forces. President Alyaksandr Lukashenka's accession to power in 1994 and Minsk's change of course – away from independence towards authoritarian government and closer relations with Russia – initially prompted protests from Polish officials but were eventually accepted with resignation in Warsaw. In the years that followed, Poland viewed Belarus as an exotic neighbour with a weak national identity, a Sovietized and obedient population and an unpredictable president.

Warsaw's position *vis-à-vis* Minsk was complicated by the presence of a large Polish minority in Belarus and the historical fact that there had been Polish rule over the region until 1795. As a former imperial power, Poland dominated Belorussia and competed for centuries with Russia over Belorussian territory. The Polish–Russian war of 1920 ended with the *de facto* partition of Belorussia and the incorporation of the western part of the country into Poland. After the Second World War the whole of Belorussia was subsumed into the Soviet Union along with the sizeable Polish population that remained on its territory. Despite the systematic de-Polonization of the areas incorporated into the Soviet Union, around half a million Poles remain in Belarus today; they constitute about five per cent of the country's total population.

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Poland is also tied to Belarus through economic interests. Most importantly, both countries lie on the transit route of Russia's Yamal 1 gas pipeline and remain dependent, albeit to different degrees, on Russian energy supplies. If Gazprom were to revive the project of the Yamal 2 pipeline, which, like Yamal 1, would run across Poland and Belarus, the two countries would become economically more interdependent.

Owing to all these factors, Poland's policy towards Lukashenka's Belarus has been mired in ambivalence and inconsistency. On the one hand, Warsaw has advocated a democratic and independent Belarus; on the other, it has sought to maintain good relations with Lukashenka's administration, clearly in the hope of softening his stance through engagement. Consistent with this dual position, Warsaw has often chosen to act independently and at odds with the EU. For example, when the EU imposed a visa ban on President Lukashenka and other members of his government in November 2002, Poland did not comply, citing its unique position *vis-à-vis* Minsk. The 2003 non-paper on Poland's Eastern policy officially confirmed Warsaw's two-track approach to Minsk: it would maintain high-profile contacts with Lukashenka's administration while supporting the pro-democratic opposition and the development of civil society in Belarus. In reality, however, Warsaw paid more attention to the former than the latter. Despite the EU ban, the Polish prime minister travelled to Belarus in October 2003 and Warsaw played host to the Belarusian minister of foreign affairs in February 2004.

Warsaw's neglect of its contacts with the anti-Lukashenka opposition has been marked. Its only meaningful gesture of support for the Minsk oppositionists was its invitation to the 'Coalition 5+' to visit the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs in December 2003. Moreover, Poland was slow to come forward with material support for non-governmental organizations in Belarus and at times did not try to conceal its irritation with the pro-democracy Polish NGOs if they were seen as 'spoiling' official relations with Minsk, which were deemed good.[25]

Meanwhile, Lukashenka occasionally flirted with Warsaw, particularly when he sought to strengthen his position *vis-à-vis* Moscow. Such was the case in mid-2002 when Russian President Vladimir Putin proposed his own model of a Russian–Belarusian 'union state', which, in effect, would have eliminated Minsk's independence from Moscow. While closer union with Russia was Lukashenka's goal, Putin's project would have diminished the Belarusian president's political significance and standing. Putin also suggested that economic relations between the two states be put on a commercial footing; in practice, this would have meant an increase in the price of Russian energy supplies, which at the time Belarus was receiving at 30 per cent below the market price.[26]

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Lukashenka rejected Putin's proposal for a 'union state', and for a while Minsk spoke about reorienting its foreign policy to establish more open relations with the EU. Although nothing came of such announcements and Belarus remained as closed to the West and as tightly controlled as ever, the Belarusian media referred to Poland in positive terms. For the time being Minsk tolerated the existence of the minority Union of Poles, which remained the largest independent organization in Belarus. Another sign of closer cooperation between the two countries was the mutual reduction in the cost of travel visas.

However, from 2004 onwards it became clear to Warsaw that its 'two-track' policy towards Belarus had yielded only limited results and needed to be revised. The high-profile contacts with Lukashenka's administration had failed to produce an intergovernmental agreement other than the visa regulation. Most important, Warsaw's courting of Lukashenka's officials had done nothing to erode the self-imposed isolation of Minsk, nor was there any sign of a rapprochement with the West. At the same time, Poland's non-compliance with EU policy was having a negative impact on its ability to influence Brussels' Belarusian agenda, thereby depriving Warsaw of a powerful ally in its policy towards Belarus. For example, despite the long tradition of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) operating in Belarus, not a single Polish NGO had been granted TACIS funding for activities in that country.[27]

Consequently, Poland's position *vis-à-vis* Lukashenka's administration toughened throughout 2004–5. But Warsaw continued to view its ability to act via Brussels as the most effective means of influencing developments in Belarus. Polish members of the European Parliament pushed for an active 'democratization' agenda to be adopted by Strasbourg, and Janusz Onyszkiewicz was elected head of the European Parliament's working group on Belarus. Polish MEPs were subsequently instrumental in securing the parliament's condemnation of the October 2004 rigged elections and referendum, which led to an amendment to the Belarusian constitution that allowed Lukashenka to remain in office for a third consecutive term. The elections were also condemned by the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs in a strongly worded statement.[28]

Following Ukraine's Orange revolution it was widely assumed in Warsaw that a pro-democratic change in Belarus was just a matter of time. This assumption prompted increased support for the opposition and the cooling of official relations with Lukashenka's regime. Warsaw also pushed for the more direct involvement of Washington and was credited with having played an important role in the toughening of the United States' position on Minsk. In November 2004 the US Congress adopted a resolution calling for 'regime

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change' measures to be pursued *vis-à-vis* Lukashenka's government and the State Department established a $40 million fund to promote democracy in Belarus.

The threat of a 'Ukrainian scenario' on Belarus territory, the growing international pressure and, not least important, the perceived role of Poland as an 'agent of the West' all contributed to Lukashenka's decision to confront Warsaw and target the Union of Poles in Belarus. In late July 2005 Minsk dismantled the union's independently elected authority and replaced it with Poles of its own choosing. When the union refused to recognize Minsk's decision, its headquarters in Grodno were stormed by the police and leaders of the union arrested.[29]

This incident prompted the most serious crisis in official Polish–Belorusian relations since their inception. Warsaw withdrew its ambassador from Minsk and lobbied in Brussels and Washington for a more resolute policy aimed at regime change in Belarus. Among other things, it proposed that the EU finance the Belorusian opposition as well as security and protection for the anti-Lukashenka forces. Warsaw also asked the EU to sponsor an independent radio and television station that broadcasts from Poland to Belarus and have Europol investigate Lukashenka's alleged involvement in drug-trafficking and money-laundering.

But Poland's voice was considerably weakened by Brussels' view that this was a bilateral conflict and by Warsaw's past mistakes in dealing with the Lukashenka regime. It did not seem credible to EU officials that, having initially defied the EU travel ban imposed on Belorusian officials, Warsaw should now demand the extension and tightening of the ban. Nonetheless, Poland was officially supported by the United Kingdom (which held the EU Presidency at the time) on behalf of the EU and by Washington.[30] While Brussels has shown no enthusiasm for a 'regime change' policy towards Belarus, Solana did consider ways of channelling funds to support the Belarusian opposition.[31]

As long as Lukashenka stays in power, Polish–Ukrainian relations are bound to remain strained. In the past, Poland sought to engage Belarus by appeasing its president and maintaining contacts with members of the opposition. Since 2004 and, in particular, since Ukraine's Orange revolution this two-track policy has proved unsustainable and has shifted towards stronger criticism of Lukashenka's regime. But the fact that Warsaw embraced a 'regime change' policy towards Minsk only after Lukashenka's crackdown on the Union of Poles considerably undermines the credibility of its new approach. Moreover, it remains unclear whether the current pro-democracy zeal in Warsaw's dealings with Belarus will continue in the longer term. After all, Warsaw has to deal with Belarus regardless of who is in power and

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its policy towards Minsk will continue to be determined – at least to some extent – by shared economic interests and the need to protect the Polish minority.

CONCLUSION

On account of its past and its post-Cold War relations with its three eastern neighbours, Poland occupies a special position in the context of the EU. As a former imperial power with historical boundaries that stretched well into the territories of its current eastern neighbours, Poland often acted as a linchpin between the West and the Eastern Orthodox world. At the same time, centuries of coexistence with the Lithuanians, Belarusians and Ukrainians have meant that Poland itself remains culturally complex and arguably more East-oriented than the other new member states of the EU.

From the seventeenth century onwards Polish policy towards the East was determined by its rivalry with Russia for influence over the so-called *Kresy.* Initially, it was the Polish–Lithuanian commonwealth that prevailed: its forces occupied Moscow in the mid-seventeenth century – an event that continues to be remembered as a national defeat in Russia. However, by the end of the eighteenth century the roles had been reversed; now it was Russia's turn to expand westwards, not only to the *Kresy* but also to Poland proper.

At the end of the Cold War this historical rivalry resurfaced and caused structural problems in contemporary Polish–Russian relations. But there are several important differences between the past and the present. Russia's approach to the region is best defined by its use of the term 'near abroad' to refer to Belarus and Ukraine (as well as the other countries of the former Soviet Union), whereas Poland believes its eastern neighbours should be integrated more closely with the West. In short, Moscow's apparent desire to maintain close ties with Ukraine and Belarus clashes with Poland's sustained goal of promoting independence and democracy in the region as well as closer ties with the West.

The situation is more complicated than this, however. As a state which has only recently gone through a transition and with a history of domination in the region, Poland has limited means and credentials to promote democracy in its eastern neighbourhood. Having realized this limitation, Poland has sought to internationalize its foreign policy agenda and to secure the support of both the EU and the United States. So far the latter has proved far more responsive, and it is clear that Polish and US views on the future development of the CIS are more or less in harmony. Yet Warsaw is keenly aware that the EU is far better suited than the United States to turning Ukraine and Belarus around. But to achieve such a goal, the EU would, arguably, have

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to reach for its most powerful transition tool – the promise of membership – just as it did in the case of Poland. The current ENP takes an ambivalent position on enlargement, and for this reason Warsaw regards it as an insufficient incentive for Ukraine, Moldova and eventually Belarus to carry out necessary and enduring reforms. Thus Warsaw will doubtless continue to push for the further eastern enlargement of the EU.

Poland's interests in the East have also contributed to its changing attitude to the EU's CFSP. Warsaw is aware that without Solana's intervention, the outcome of the crisis in Ukraine could have been very different and, moreover, contrary to Poland's objective. In fact, Solana's role in resolving the crisis and the desirability of a stronger CFSP were cited by Poland's formerly sceptical centre-right party Civic Platform (PO) as the main reason why it would be prepared to support the EU constitution. Aware of its own weakness *vis-à-vis* Moscow, Warsaw has long called for a common EU approach to Russia. The tendency of France and Germany to pursue 'occasional' coalitions with Russia and strike deals over issues that are clearly relevant to Poland and the other new member states has played an important part in convincing Warsaw that a more coherent and more centralized CFSP is indeed in its interest.

Finally, the current state of Poland's relations with its eastern neighbours should be mentioned. The governing coalition that came to power in the autumn of 2005 has drawn up a populist, nationally motivated policy agenda – one that is geared mainly to its domestic audience. But this seemingly reactionary agenda has impacted on Poland's foreign policy insofar as a more confrontational, less tactful style of diplomacy has emerged, especially with regard to Russia and, to a lesser extent, Germany. The most striking example of this new style was Polish Defence Minister Radek Sikorski's swift and sharp response to the Russian–German agreement to build a gas pipeline from Russia to Germany under the Baltic Sea. Sikorski likened the deal to the Molotov–Ribbentrop pact of 1939, which divided Poland between Nazi Germany and Russia.

Though strongly criticized in Germany and viewed by some in the EU as 'unhelpful', Sikorski's comment referred to an enduring theme of Polish foreign policy, namely the urgent need to create a robust and coherent multidimensional EU policy towards Russia. Indeed, such a goal is strongly supported by the Baltic states too. Seen in this wider context, Poland is far from being a 'spoiler' of EU efforts to coordinate policy towards Russia. Rather, it continues to be one of the most ardent supporters of creating a strategic EU relationship with Russia – one that is distinct from the union's broader neighbourhood policies.[32]

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Poland in the enlarged EU

As described in Chapter 3, Poland's path to gaining membership of the EU in May 2004 was characterized by a combination of high expectations and frustration. Whereas in the early 1990s Poland was often regarded as the 'jewel in the crown' or the 'grand prize' of enlargement,[1] this perception became somewhat jaded, especially in the run-up to EU enlargement, amid growing criticism and concern from some quarters about Poland's conduct in the accession process. As the entry negotiations intensified and bogged down over technical matters, Euro-scepticism grew among Poles, and Poland's interests and rigid negotiating positions increasingly clashed with those of some member states, particularly France and Germany. Together with Spain, Poland doggedly opposed the new voting system proposed by the European Convention to replace the Nice arrangement, which had formed the basis of Poland's national referendum on joining the EU. This led to deeper fissures, especially among Warsaw, Berlin and Paris, on the one hand, and to a meeting of minds between Poland and the United Kingdom, on the other, despite the fact that the new voting system would have benefited the latter. When Warsaw supported the United States over Iraq, relations between some of the existing and soon to be EU member states soured even further.

Not only did these developments fuel the impression that Poland was a zealous Atlanticist and would become the United States' 'Trojan horse' once it was admitted to the EU; they also contributed to Poland's being portrayed as a difficult, uncompromising and highly demanding player whose unwavering approach to negotiations was founded on the ambition to be taken seriously as a large and important member state.

It had always been expected that Poland's entry into the EU would have an indelible impact on the union. With a population of almost 40 million, Poland became the sixth largest member state of the 25-strong EU but was one of the poorest in terms of wealth per capita and had a large agricultural sector. As such, it was destined to stand out among the other new member

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states and was likely to tip the balance of EU policies in a number of areas. One expectation was that Poland would try to secure as much as possible from the EU budget and thus behave in a similar way to Spain. With regard to foreign policy, parallels were drawn with the United Kingdom; it was thought that Polish Atlanticism would steer Warsaw towards an overwhelmingly intergovernmentalist approach to foreign and security policy issues and that Poland would seek to encourage the EU to take a more coordinated and less compromising stance on Russia. Comparisons were also made with Denmark about the potential for Euro-scepticism to dominate the domestic scene and with Italy about an inefficient and ineffective public administration.[2] Finally, Polish policy on a wide range of economic and financial questions was expected to fall in line with states, such as the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, that were pushing for greater liberalization and were keen adherents of the Lisbon Agenda.[3]

Now that Poland is fully integrated into the EU, it is possible to begin to evaluate what kind of actor this new member state is becoming: the emerging partnerships and alliances that are defining Polish policy and the way in which Polish foreign and security policy priorities are responding to the opportunities and constraints of EU membership. On the economic front, Poland's gross domestic product has grown since EU membership and its trade with EU partners has increased. In the immediate wake of the collapse of the constitutional process and amid the wrangles over the EU budget, EU Commission President José Manuel Barroso praised Poland for seeking to patch up relations among France, Germany and the United Kingdom in order to put the budget debate back on track.[4] Not least important, notwithstanding the rapidly changing nature of Polish politics, the country's foreign policy has remained largely stable (despite the worsening relations with Germany and Russia). Poland's commitment to the EU has been underlined by both the president and prime minister, although they both remain critical of the European constitution.

A deeper evaluation of Poland's entry into the EU is not a straightforward task; indeed, it is riddled with complexities, not least because the union itself has become a far more complex and cumbersome entity since enlargement. From a Polish perspective, it has developed from what resembled an outward-looking club of liberal economies that Warsaw, Budapest and others aspired to join after 1989 into a more sophisticated and arguably more diverse organization. Moreover, a number of recent developments have rendered the EU and the future of integration an increasingly intricate affair. A key factor has been the rise and fall of discussions about how integration should proceed and how much 'flexibility' should be introduced.

As early as 2003 arguments for introducing 'flexibility' through the

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creation of a hard core of leading states – namely the original members of the European Economic Community – surfaced following the breakdown of the intergovernmental conference (IGC). Then, in the context of the European Convention discussions on the EU constitution, the ideas of 'flexibility' and 'enhanced cooperation' found their way into the draft constitutional treaty; their inclusion in that document would have had consequences for the CFSP and ESDP in particular.[5] Two years later the issue of flexibility, which was seen by some as the best way to take the EU forwards, gained fresh topicality following the French and Dutch referendum results; indeed, a core group of states began pressing for deeper integration and cooperation. In 2005 the debate focused on the question of whether the EU should admit new members after Romania and Bulgaria, exposing unambiguous dividing lines among member states on the issue of enlargement.[6]

Despite these shifting sands, the emerging contours of Poland's foreign and security policy and its overall strategic outlook as a member of a 25-strong EU can be identified by focusing on a number of key indicators. With this in mind, this chapter will shed light on some important questions. First, how has Polish policy responded to issues related to the way in which Europe is 'organized'? Or, put another way, what is the Polish perspective on ideas that have recently resurfaced in debates about the future of Europe such as 'flexibility', 'cores and peripheries' and 'multi-speed integration'? What is Polish policy on the issue of EU leadership and the idea that larger states should play the leading role in taking EU policy forwards? This implicitly raises the question of whether Poland is seeking to participate in any strategic alliances with other 'like-minded' states, such as the United Kingdom, along the lines of the traditional Franco-German motor or whether Polish policy favours shifting and varied partnerships and groupings depending on the policy context.

Another important indicator of Poland's emerging role and priorities within an EU of 25 members is its stance on the further enlargement of the union after the accession of Romania and Bulgaria and its view on the 'end point' of integration in Europe. Finally, there remains the question of the extent to which the Polish presidential and parliamentary elections of the autumn of 2005 has brought about a discernible shift in Polish foreign policy, as some pundits have mooted.

POSITIONING POLAND: NEW PATTERNS OF COOPERATION AND LEADERSHIP AFTER ENLARGEMENT

It was almost inevitable that the 2004 'big bang' enlargement of the EU – in which ten new member states were brought into the fold at the same

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time – would pave the way for new models of cooperation and new forms of integration and lead to the emergence of new foreign policy priorities. Even before the setback to the ratification of the proposed constitution, there was a fairly widespread expectation that a 25-strong EU would become more internally divided and fragmented than its predecessor and that, as a consequence, integration would have to proceed in a less uniform and more flexible way. A rather extreme view of this divide was proffered by US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld in 2003, when he made his 'Old Europe/New Europe' statement in the context of the divisions over Iraq. A less rancorous divide among the EU of 25 – but a divide nonetheless – was predicted by some commentators in France, Germany, Belgium and Luxembourg after the collapse of the IGC in 2003. It was suggested that integration could and should proceed at a quicker pace among a small 'hard' core of existing member states, leaving a larger, more fluid periphery to integrate at a slower rate.[7]

Although the themes of 'flexibility', 'enhanced cooperation' and 'variable geometry' continue to permeate the debate and commentary on the future of the EU, it appears that permanent or even semi-permanent divisions leading to clear-cut 'cores and peripheries' have not emerged since May 2004. Perhaps the main reason is the deficit of strong leadership by an individual member state or grouping of member states willing and able to take the EU forward.[8]

For some time the Franco-German partnership – the historical motor of integration – has been weakening. In particular, it came under pressure following the French failure to ratify the constitution, a situation that was exacerbated by the shaky domestic position at the time of both French President Jacques Chirac and German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder.[9] A full renaissance of Franco-German leadership in Europe seems unlikely following the German federal elections of 2005: Chancellor Angela Merkel, while declaring herself keen to put the relationship back on track, albeit 'on a new footing', has set about recalibrating Germany's relations with the United States. Moreover, France and Germany lost credibility, especially among the new member states, over the Iraq war: both claimed to 'speak for Europe' and berated the Central and East European states for supporting the United States. And when both countries breached the provisions of the Stability and Growth Pact in 2004 – seemingly with impunity – the newcomers were quick to make accusations of double standards.

It also seems unlikely that the Franco-German tandem could be transformed into a trio by involving the United Kingdom and thereby maintain a leadership position within the EU. While the three states see eye to eye on one of the most important and testing foreign policy issues to confront the West – namely Iran – and share the goal of reducing the size of the budget

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(albeit through different means), the extent to which they can work together in a strategic partnership to define the future of the EU is surely limited, not least because of their diverging perspectives on the question of enlargement. Furthermore, other EU states bitterly resent suggestions that the UK, France and Germany should play a leading role; in particular, Poland, Spain and Italy have made clear that a directorate of this kind is neither a welcome nor a workable model of EU leadership.

The Polish–German partnership, which was often compared to the Bonn–Paris axis, clearly did not fulfil its potential. Although reconciliation between the two countries paved the way for Poland's return to Europe in the 1990s and ultimately helped bring about EU enlargement in 2004, their relationship proved less than enduring in the face of difficulties and conflicts of interest; indeed, as noted in Chapter 3, rapprochement soon turned into bitter 'reproach-ment'. Another transient phenomenon was the partnership between Spain and Poland, which did not survive the convergence of interests over the Nice voting system and the war in Iraq. Although Spain and Poland have much in common – not least their size and perspectives on the EU budget – there are perhaps more factors dividing than uniting the two countries, especially with regard to the question of further enlargement.

Is there a potential for Poland to cooperate with the other new member states? While fluidity has tended to characterize relations among the newcomers, there has been little evidence of the group's acting as a bloc to promote common interests. Cohesion among the club of EU newcomers was rare once the accession processes had begun: as was to be expected, diverging interests fostered division and competition rather than unity and cooperation. While Poland continues to agree with many of its immediate neighbours – not least on the importance of a more robust Eastern policy, a common approach to Russia, a more cohesive energy policy as well as budgetary reform – it is true to say that the newcomers have increasingly ceased to act in unison within the EU of 25.

THE DRIVERS BEHIND POLISH POLICY

Within this evolving context, Poland's policy has been guided by four main tenets that derive from its security culture. First, successive Polish governments have been strongly determined not to allow Poland to be treated as a second-class member state; indeed, there is an underlying expectation that, given its relative size, Poland should be taken seriously as a middle-ranking EU power and have its voice heard. Second, on account of its lack of wealth (and hence its relative weakness within the EU), Poland wants the union's mechanisms and institutions for redistributing wealth and resources among

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the member states to be reformed to take account of enlargement. The third tenet of Polish policy is related to the theme of national sovereignty and the associated idea that European integration should advance along intergovernmental lines. However, as demonstrated throughout this book, Polish European diplomacy is more complex than that and continues to evolve. While Poland's politics tends to be ideologically Gaullist, its European diplomacy leans towards being pro-European Commission, for three main reasons: (1) the Commission is in favour of a larger budget, of which Poland would become one of the main beneficiaries (this is what the Poles refer to as 'European solidarity'); (2) the Commission is far more in favour of enlargement than the Council of Ministers and oversees the European Neighbourbood Policy; (3) the Commission advocates the idea of a common energy policy, of which the Poles are strong supporters. The fourth tenet of Polish policy is the belief that further enlargement is a good thing and serves Poland's interests. Crucially, all four drivers have steered Polish policy in diverse and, at times, opposite directions.

While size – as a factor of European integration – was always salient, it has arguably become more so since the enlargement of 2004 and the accompanying increase in the number of small states and more fluid coalitions. Poland's relatively large size, together with its economic weakness and limited political resources, have given rise to a strategy and a conception of its own role within the EU that are determined by 'big state' aspirations and expectations; however, Warsaw does not have the means to realize such aspirations. Because of its unique status as a 'new, large and weak' member state, Poland has adopted positions on EU institutions and their reform that are very distinctive.

The contrasting perspectives and preferences of the 'small' and 'large' states had already led to major differences in the context of the European Convention, particularly over the reform and relative powers of the European Commission and the Council of Ministers. In late 2003 Polish views began to evolve in earnest and started to diverge from those of other newcomers, mainly – it is argued here – because of the discrepancy in size. The intergovernmental conference in Rome at the end of 2003 signalled a turning point in Poland's strategy. It became clear that the new members from Central and Eastern Europe would not be a cohesive bloc within the EU and that Poland would no longer seek to play the role of spokesman for the new states *vis-à-vis* the larger and older member states. As discussed in Chapter 4, Poland's passionate objection to the proposed new voting system was a test of its potential to become a major player. Its stance demonstrated a strong preference for integration to proceed along intergovernmental lines and for the powers of the larger member states to be significantly strengthened.

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In parallel with this development, the other newcomers began reappraising the role of the European Commission. On the path to EU membership, these countries had largely been told what to do by the Commission – an experience that had fuelled resentment over its 'hard face' and its high demands. Gradually they came to realize the value of the Commission, the role it played in the creation of a 'level playing field' and, not least, the benefits of such an environment to the smaller and weaker member states in particular.[10] The fact that Poland had taken on the role of a large state, in keeping with its intergovernmental vision of the EU, suggests that its policy had shifted from opposing the idea of integration based on flexibility or multi-speeds to acceptance. However, this shift did not take place until Poland seemed assured of full-fledged membership.[11]

When the French and Dutch referendums on the EU constitution failed in May–June 2005, it seemed that the union's response would be to 'muddle through' in an attempt to preserve the status quo. EU debates returned to the idea of 'size matters' and the prospect of the larger states shaping the EU in such a way as to promote their own interests, however diverse those interests might be. Poland, for its part, sought to secure itself a voice commensurate with its status as the sixth largest EU member. In June 2005, eager to assert itself, it offered to give up one per cent of its proposed funding in order to pave the way for a new compromise deal on the EU budget for the period 2007–13. This willingness earned Warsaw the praise of European Commission President Barroso and helped establish Poland's credentials as a team player who was able to work for the common good. The Polish initiative was less about money than, as Prime Minister Marek Belka commented, about rescuing the budget: Warsaw was attempting to bridge the gap between France and the United Kingdom and thereby reinstate a sense of cohesion and solidarity across the EU to prevent deadlock. By performing the role of 'honest broker', Poland was able to demonstrate its leadership skills; however, despite encouraging some states to make a similar compromise on the issue of the budget, Warsaw was unable to persuade the French or British to change their positions.

FINDING NEW FRIENDS: THE UNITED KINGDOM AS A 'LIKE-MINDED STATE'?

The current challenge for Poland – namely to carve out a role for its policy within a group of large EU member states – is by no means an easy task. The six largest member states, France, Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom, Spain and Poland, have little in common other than their relative size. Thus the suggestion (once made by Nicolas Sarkozy, among others) that they should

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be configured into a group of 'leading' EU states that would take integration forward is flawed.[12] While France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom share the goal of wanting to reduce the overall size of the EU budget, both Spain and Poland, as net beneficiaries, are firmly opposed to such a measure. The six are also divided over socio-economic issues: Poland adheres to the UK's vision of a larger and economically more liberal EU, which is in line with the goals of the Lisbon Agenda, rather than subscribing to the idea of a 'social Europe' advocated by France (and Germany under Chancellor Schröder).

On agriculture, however, Polish policy is closer to that of France since both countries want to see the continuation of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). For its part, Warsaw regards that policy as a much-needed tool to revitalize and regenerate Poland's rural economy and infrastructure, while the prevailing view in some EU capitals is that the CAP is a means of maintaining the status quo (thereby perpetuating inefficiencies). With regard to institutional reform, Polish policy is determined by a principled attachment to national sovereignty, but it has also sought to strengthen some of the existing EU institutions when such an approach serves its own interests – a position that is linked to that of Spain, Italy and Germany. In the sphere of foreign policy, the picture is less clear. The United Kingdom, France and Germany have, in effect, built a coalition to formulate a common European policy on the major diplomatic issues. But on matters related to the ESDP and the question of how to institutionalize security and defence policy, Poland is closer to the UK's position than either France or Germany.

Successive Polish leaders have taken great pains to confirm that Polish policy will have a 'pro-Polish orientation'[13] – a dictum that has been hyperbolized by the current governing coalition's nationalist rhetoric. But EU states, especially Poland (with its limited resources), need partnerships that are more than tactical alliances and are able to achieve shared objectives. Until 2006 France failed to heed this requirement: Paris's lukewarm approach to enlargement and perceived penchant for pursuing policies that served only to enhance the status of old members meant there was little goodwill between France and Poland.

As mentioned above, the idea that Germany and Poland could work together as an Eastern variant of the Franco-German partnership had ceased to be credible by the end of the 1990s. There were several reasons for this development. First, the Poles opposed the creation of a centre to commemorate the Germans who had been expelled from Poland after the Second World War and were critical of the debate within Germany about whether Germans could be seen as 'victims' in the Third Reich. Second, there has been a conflict of interests over energy: the German preference has been to obtain

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more gas from Russia as a way of diversifying its energy sources, while Poland has wanted to release itself from dependency on Russian gas. However, since Angela Merkel came to power, a window of opportunity has opened for an improvement in Polish–German relations. Differences over relations with the United States have been resolved to a certain degree by Berlin's profession of a NATO-first policy – a position that is in harmony with the Polish stance. Also, Merkel, a former dissident and an East German, has arguably a much better understanding of the new member states' continued fear of Russia than her predecessor. Indeed, she demonstrated this understanding when she spoke critically about human rights issues in Russia during her visit to Moscow in January 2006, something that Schröder would never have done.

The similarity of the Polish and British approaches to the EU has been apparent for some time. Indeed, Tony Blair's call for a renewal of the EU after the French rejection of the constitution dovetailed with requests by Poland's European Minister Jarosław Pietras and Foreign Minister Adam Rotfeld for a period of 'reflection' and a fresh approach to leadership in Europe. Although considerable differences remain between London and Warsaw, the United Kingdom might be an obvious choice if Poland felt the need to foster a partnership with another large state. But does the desire to form such a partnership exist?

This book has already noted that British support for EU enlargement in the 1990s was aimed directly at diluting European integration; as a result, the United Kingdom did not appear on Poland's radar screen as a potential partner until Germany ceased to be Warsaw's main post-Cold War advocate. In the 1990s Poland's European policy focused on gaining EU membership as well as improving relations with Berlin. Reconciliation between the two countries was based on mutually advantageous interests and saw Berlin become the motor of EU enlargement. But the change in Germany's political orientation in 1998 was to have consequences for Polish–German relations. When the Red–Green coalition came to power that year, Germany's European policy became more nationally focused and German interests began to be articulated more clearly. Among other things, the new government's policies threatened to retard the process of EU enlargement. At the same time, Berlin stepped up its efforts to cultivate the Franco-German relationship. When the war in Iraq divided Europe, Poland and Germany found themselves in opposite camps.

Against this background, the United Kingdom has become more attractive to Poland as a potential partner and vice versa. From 1997 onwards London took a more constructive approach to European integration following Tony Blair's accession to power. While French and German elites challenged the viability and desirability of enlargement, UK policy maintained a positive

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attitude. A commonality of Polish and British approaches to European integration was evident in 2003 when Blair chose Warsaw as the setting for a speech on the future of the EU. His address highlighted three converging priorities of the European policies of the United Kingdom and Poland: the establishment of a union of nations rather than a federal Europe, the importance of pursuing the Lisbon Agenda goals and the continued significance of NATO and the transatlantic alliance.[14] When Blair outlined his idea of how the EU should proceed in a speech to the European Parliament in June 2005, Polish commentators argued that he was the only European statesman to have a vision of Europe.[15]

Above all, Poland and the United Kingdom have a common idea of how the EU should develop. They both desire an enlarged, dynamic and open EU with a liberal economic order that is not over-regulated. Indeed, London adhered to that principle when, immediately after 1 May 2004, it became one of only three old member states to open its labour market to workers from the new member states. British and Polish policies also cohere in the area of security policy and on the issue of what kind of foreign policy actor the EU should be. Although London and Warsaw now support the development of the ESDP, they continue to regard the pre-eminence of NATO's role and the preservation of the transatlantic relationship as essential. Arguably, Poland and the United Kingdom remain Washington's closest allies in Europe; indeed, they are the only European countries in which the political consensus over Iraq has held. Furthermore, all the main political forces in London and Warsaw support the further enlargement of the EU. And although they differ over which countries should be admitted after Romania and Bulgaria – London favours Turkey while Warsaw seeks to prioritize Ukraine – Poland and the United Kingdom are united in the belief that enlargement is essentially a 'good thing'.

These common interests are important since they allow Poland and the United Kingdom to speak with one voice in vital policy areas. However, differences between the two countries remain: for example, London supports a slimmer budget and wants to maintain its budget rebate, while Poland has demanded sustained aid transfers, more solidarity and an end to the UK's rebate. (Indeed, on the issue of the budget, Poland's policy has recently converged with that of France.) Agricultural policy is another important area in which British and Polish policies diverge sharply. While the UK is pushing for a thorough overhaul of EU financing mechanisms within the context of CAP reform, Polish policy favours a large budget and the continuation of the CAP, which Warsaw argues is essential for developing and modernizing the countryside and rural economy not just of Poland but also of the future member states Romania and Bulgaria.

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Despite such differences, Poland and the United Kingdom appear to be like-minded states within an EU of 25. Their national perspectives converge in a number of important policy areas. Amid the shifting coalitions within the union, British and Polish policies may frequently become aligned. But given that differences will continue to exist, UK–Polish relations are likely to resemble something less than an enduring partnership but something more than an interest-based alliance.[16]

ENLARGING THE EU

The further enlargement of the EU after the accession of Romania and Bulgaria has drawn another dividing line among the current members. The year 2005 witnessed calls from some quarters for a complete halt to the enlargement process, while others saw the setback to the ratification of the constitution as a chance for renewal. From a Polish perspective, the collapse of the constitution offered an opportunity to press ahead with the enlargement agenda and expand it to include a larger number of states.

As currently framed, the question of whether to enlarge the EU has become inextricably linked to the broader question of the future of European integration; arguably, this development has taken place at a more fundamental level than ever before. The issue of 'deepening versus widening', which provided the framework for the earlier and more recent discussions on enlargement, has been joined by a passionate debate as to whether a state truly qualifies as being 'European' and whether an integration 'end point' is needed to delimit the future size and geographical scope of the EU. This shift in the focus of discussions has consequences for Poland as a frontline EU state with a consistently far-reaching and ambitious pro-enlargement policy.

Poland's enlargement policy is determined by its vision of the EU as a dynamic and open entity and (as discussed above) the need to develop a coherent and more ambitious EU Eastern policy that goes beyond the objectives of the ENP. Foreign Minister Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz set out the Polish government's official position on EU enlargement in September 2004:

> Europe should not be perceived exclusively in its geographic aspect. We are not just dealing with a single continent – but rather with a group of states sharing the same values and wanting to work for common goals. Poland wants EU enlargement to continue and be treated as a priority in the future … The European Union should send out a strong message that it is open to further integration.[17]

From this emerges an image of Poland as perhaps the most vociferous and passionate pro-enlargement member state within the enlarged EU.

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Kwaśniewski, who was Polish president until 2005, sketched out his country's vision of the EU as a union whose core goal should be to admit Turkey as part of a 'pluralistic, open and new Europe'. Identifying a final grand ambition of his presidency, he boldly supported Turkey's bid to become an EU member – not least, of course, in the hope of putting the question of Ukraine's membership on the negotiating table. In September 2004 he argued that if the EU proceeded with Turkish membership (thereby confronting associated problems and overcoming obstacles), the EU could and should confront the question of what to say to Ukraine, despite doubts about that country's democratic credentials and nervousness about Russia's reaction in the event of Kiev's moving closer to Europe.[18]

Poland's skilful diplomacy and high-profile role during and after the Orange revolution helped draw more attention to Ukraine within the EU. Polish diplomacy was also influential in bringing about a more positive German attitude towards Kiev. Since democracy took hold in Ukraine, a number of Polish–German initiatives and reciprocal visits have taken place, leading to calls for improving Ukraine's 'European perspective'. Although German policy stops short of advocating EU membership for Ukraine, the prevailing view in Berlin is that when compared with Turkey – whose EU membership it does not endorse – Ukraine does at least qualify as European and 'one of us'. By all accounts, however, support for Ukraine's EU membership does not go beyond Poland and Lithuania. The issue is either completely out of the question, as in the case of France, or is simply not seen as a priority of the current enlargement agenda, as in the case of the United Kingdom, where the focus is on Turkey. Both the European Commission and the Council of Ministers have remained taciturn on the issue; thus the ENP will continue to govern relations between Ukraine and the EU – a reality that Polish policy will need to take into consideration.

Poland's enlargement policy and its support for Turkish membership have been characterized by a crusade-like manner, spearheaded by former President Kwaśniewski. Despite such overt promotion, there has been no significant domestic debate on the question of Turkey; as a result, neither Polish elites nor society at large have fully appreciated the implications of Turkish membership – not least of issues related to religion and identity. Rather, Turkey is viewed as a means of opening up the accession process to Ukraine. Kwaśniewski's concept of an 'open and pluralistic [enlarged] Europe' suggests that Warsaw has paid little attention to how Turkish membership could curtail the economic benefits that Poland currently enjoys from EU membership. As and when Turkey's bid to join the EU gathers pace and yields more details about costs and technicalities, the tenor of Poland's current pro-Turkish enlargement policy may become more subdued.

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FINDING A ROLE IN THE ENLARGED EU: THE PARADOXES OF POLISH EUROPEAN DIPLOMACY

This chapter has attempted to plot Polish perspectives and postures on a number of key issues related to EU integration after the 2004 enlargement. Perhaps the first conclusion to draw is that Poland as an EU member has been a 'headline grabber' and already made a significant impact on the union. However, this impact has had both positive and negative sides, which, it is argued here, reflect the ongoing development of Polish European policy in an evolving Europe. Significantly, Poland's approach to the EU shifted once again after the 2005 parliamentary and presidential elections, which have led to a more national, if not nationalist, dimension to Polish politics. On key issues such as further integration, enlargement and the budget, Warsaw's approach has been increasingly described as lacking in diplomacy, 'bullish' and signalling a clearer and more aggressively pursued vision of Polish interests.[19]

While the new government adopted a relatively Euro-sceptic trademark on assuming power, it would perhaps be inaccurate to claim that there has been a radical departure from the European policies and postures of the previous government and president. The central drivers of Polish EU policy remain constant:

- the strong determination not to be treated as a second-class member state;
- a relatively weak economy;
- the sacrosanct nature of national sovereignty;
- a belief in the merits of enlargement and the necessity of maintaining the enlargement dynamic.

At the same time, these drivers have become more pronounced and the rhetoric somewhat nationalist since 2005. Poland's voice has been increasingly uncompromising on key issues, and frequently alliances have been switched and unlikely partners found. But it is important to note that not everything has been negative and destructive. Poland's more bullish diplomacy has also yielded positive results, a prime example being the approval of the EU budget in December 2005.

During the protracted and complicated debate on the union's budget for the period 2007–13 Poland clearly reaped benefits. Whether by design or default, Polish diplomacy – which over the past few years has blended compromise with toughness – helped bring about a satisfactory financial solution. Poland's teaming up with France to oppose British proposals at the end of 2005 proved successful, but the support received from German Chancellor Merkel was arguably more important since it helped secure an

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additional €100 million for Poland.[20] The budget debate demonstrated that Poland was tough but not ineffective and could switch alliances depending on the issue and Polish interests. Warsaw also showed a commitment to the CFSP by agreeing to send troops to the Democratic Republic of Congo in the spring of 2006.[21]

On a negative note, economic protectionism has intensified in Poland since the 2005 elections, prompting a warning from the EU that this development might affect Poland's prospects of joining the euro zone. Also of detrimental consequence was Warsaw's proposal for an EU energy policy, which, though regarded as a good idea in principle, ultimately failed. Under the Polish proposal, the union's energy policy would have been open to all NATO members; thus at its core would have been the principle of solidarity and common defence against Russia. However, other EU member states viewed the idea as bizarre and unhelpful, arguing that it would give NATO more influence in the EU's domain and appear anti-Russian.

Poland's position in the EU has also suffered following the autumn 2005 elections. Almost immediately the new governing coalition of the Gaullist PiS and two smaller populist parties – Samoobrona and the LPR – was labelled by the Western media as xenophobic, homophobic and anti-European.[22] While it is true that the new government is pursuing a rather conservative agenda – one that is at variance with other European states on a number of social issues – much of the negative commentary on the new government fails to grasp the specific nature of both Polish society and Polish politics. Moreover, on the whole the current government is not interested in foreign policy and cares little about the opinion of the Western media. For these reasons, it has made few efforts to change any unfavourable perceptions.

From this mixed picture of Poland's EU policies it should not be concluded that Poland is becoming a 'spoiler' of EU integration or that Warsaw is losing friends and allies. What it shows is that Polish European diplomacy is continuing to evolve and, more importantly, that there is a mounting tension at the core of Polish thinking that needs to be taken into account. In other words, a growing contradiction has emerged among some of the key tenets of Poland's security culture.

Perhaps the most serious potential implication of Poland's evolving EU policy is the determination to see integration proceed in a manner that is consistent with Poland's rather rigid and traditional concept of national sovereignty. Herein lies what we call the paradoxes of Polish European policy.

To recapitulate, Poland's policy in the enlarged EU has been shaped to a large degree by the country's relative size, which gave rise to a strategy determined by 'big state' ambitions. Once membership was assured, Polish elites aspired to see Poland become one of the leading large states in a Europe

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of nation-states. However, Polish European policy is flawed in this respect: Poland does not fit neatly into the group of large member states. Although it is the sixth largest EU member, Poland (like Spain) is not in the same league as the 'paymaster states', namely the United Kingdom, Germany and France. Indeed, Poland is large but economically weak; thus it can be argued that, as a factor in determining Polish policy, 'size' has become a hindrance.

Viewed objectively, Poland's weakness and lack of resources should mean a growing preference for more supranational methods and the strengthening of EU institutions.[23] Indeed, this stance began to develop during the previous administration and could be detected in a speech given by Jan Rokita in April 2005. Rokita, who became famous for introducing the slogan 'Nice or death',[24] pointed to the dangers that arose if EU states made rules that suited themselves and were based on national egos. He called for more solidarity and for regulations to be applied to all members, large and small.[25] Based on a rational and sober view of Poland's budgetary needs, agricultural interests, pro-enlargement policy and Eastern agenda, his argument was that stronger European political institutions were needed, rather than intergovernmental tactics and manoeuvres.

Two main conclusions can be drawn from Poland's approach to the EU in 2006. First, while public support for European integration remains strong and continues to grow, the governing coalition that has been in power since autumn 2005 has reintroduced a Euro-sceptic dimension to Polish politics. At best, the coalition parties are merely suspicious about the EU, as in the case of PiS, which is a member of the Union for Europe of the Nations group in the European Parliament; at worst, they are overtly anti-EU, as in the case of the LPR, which belongs to the Independence/Democracy group. Thus the government beats the nationalist drum at home and seeks to promote the idea of a strong, nationally focused Poland within the EU.

However, it is also important to note that the government of Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz did not instigate anything resembling a revolution in Poland's EU policy, which continues to bear the hallmark of continuity. In fact – and this is the second main conclusion – Poland has arguably supported stronger and closer integration through its contribution to the budget debate, its proposal for a common energy policy and its calls for a stronger CFSP *vis-à-vis* Russia. And as already noted, Marcinkiewicz's successor, Jarosław Kaczyński, while emphasizing that Poland will guard its sovereignty in the cultural sphere, has announced that it will be an engaged and constructive member of the EU – one that will support further enlargement and help overcome the post-constitutional crisis.[26]

How will this balance between interests and a radicalizing domestic context play out? Since joining the EU, Poland's interests have led to a more

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emphatic embrace of closer integration and, to the surprise of many in the union, to the advocacy of the 'community method'. But there is no doubt that some of the radical members of Kaczyński's government, especially ministers from Samoobrona and the LPR, will push for the adoption of a more aloof Polish posture *vis-à-vis* the EU. However, rather than undergoing a marked shift, Polish European policy is likely to show two contrasting faces: an overall constructive approach towards Brussels based on a rational view of Polish interests, and a sceptical, populist attitude manifest at the domestic level.

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Conclusion

Although Poland is a relatively new member of NATO and joined the EU only in 2004, it has already been profiled as a state that 'makes a difference' and has a distinctive foreign and security policy. Of the new entrants to NATO and the EU, Poland is not only the largest but also the most vocal and most self-confident. It has sizeable armed forces, which, as demonstrated in the case of Iraq, Afghanistan and, more recently, the Democratic Republic of Congo, it is not afraid to send abroad to carry out combat or peacekeeping duties even in missions that are deemed controversial. Owing to its history and its current frontline position on the easternmost border of the EU, Poland has also sought to play an important regional role by acting as a bridge between the West and the former Soviet republics and by attempting to energize the EU's policies towards Ukraine in particular. However, while pursuing such bold foreign policy objectives, Poland remains one of the poorest members of the EU and has a needy population that is keen to reap the perceived economic and social benefits of membership of the union.

The purpose of this Chatham House Paper was to identify and examine Polish foreign and security policy in the context of Poland's entry into Western institutions, especially the EU. The focus was not only on how accession to such institutions has shaped Polish priorities but also on how Poland's membership has, in turn, influenced European foreign and security policy perspectives. Our starting point was the idea that Poland has already made a significant impact on these institutions and, more broadly, on the Euro-Atlantic community and will continue to do so in the foreseeable future. Based on this premise, there was a strong case for 'Poland watching' in order to provide insights into the sources of Polish foreign and security policy since 1990 with a view to suggesting how policies and perspectives might evolve further.

A main theme of this study was Poland's Atlanticism, which emerged as a central tenet of Polish foreign and security policy shortly after the Cold War

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and became particularly pronounced after 9/11. Indeed, Poland's brand of Atlanticism was so marked in the first years of the twenty-first century that, for some, Warsaw's close adherence to US foreign policy called into question the credibility of Poland's intention to be a good European and a reliable EU member state. For these reasons, this study sought to extrapolate the origins of Polish Atlanticism from competing foreign policy traditions and critical junctures in Poland's complex national history. Herein lay a second hypothesis on which this study was premised. The Atlanticist instincts which had guided Poland's post-1990 foreign and security policy reached a zenith over Iraq. Polish Atlanticism then entered another period of evolution in response not only to the challenges and opportunities presented by EU membership but also to the Bush administration's ongoing disregard for multilateralism and its weakening attachment to transatlantic relations. Consequently, the Atlanticist direction of Poland's policy and the formulation and pursuit of its foreign and security policy priorities are in flux.

The other aspect of Poland's specificity, if not exceptionalism, is its social conservatism and strong religious (Catholic) identity, which is beginning to rub against the mainstream secularism and liberalism of the EU. There is no doubt that Poland is one of the most religious countries – perhaps even the most religious – in Europe and that Polish society's attitudes towards homosexuality, abortion and euthanasia are far more conservative than average attitudes in the EU; in fact, they are close to those of the United States and Latin America.[1] Even before Poland joined the EU it raised such socially motivated concerns as the need for a reference to Christianity in the draft text of the EU constitution. It is worth pointing out that it was a left-wing government made up of former communists that felt obliged to stick its neck out as a defender of religion. It therefore should have been no surprise that the right-wing government which came to power after the autumn 2005 elections and was formed by parties that make no secret of their socially conservative agenda would stand out in an EU context.

The ruling PiS party, President Lech Kaczyński and his brother Jarosław Kaczyński, who became prime minister in July 2006, have all made clear that they have no intention of accepting gay marriage, the liberalization of the abortion law or stem cell research. As a consequence of such announcements, the Polish government has been widely berated in Western Europe. Criticism went as far as to suggest that it is xenophobic, anti-Semitic and anti-European. However, we believe that while some elements in the government (especially from the populist LPR) do indeed fit this description, they are somewhat marginalized and have no real influence on Warsaw's foreign policy.

Aside from these substantive points, which suggested the need for a thorough appraisal not only of Poland's foreign and security policy but also

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of its cultural exceptionalism, the significance of this Chatham House Paper is enhanced by the dearth of informed commentary on Poland as an EU member. Although commentators made predictions about how Warsaw would conduct itself after gaining EU membership, little of note has since been written. Indeed, much of the recent commentary on and analysis of Poland has focused on negative stereotypes, reinforcing the widespread impression of the new members' supposed greediness, of the social and economic threats that enlargement poses for the existing member states and of Poland, in particular, as a 'difficult' and surly new member. Following the autumn 2005 elections another stereotype took root – one that depicts Poland as a country of xenophobes and religious fanatics.

This book's analysis of Poland aimed to offer a more nuanced and more accurate reading of Warsaw's foreign and security policy, which it examined in the dynamic and rapidly changing context of European integration and transatlantic relations. It has demonstrated that Poland's membership of the Western community has indeed 'made a difference' to the EU and NATO in the realm of transatlantic relations. However, it is important to realize that Poland has proved relatively skilled at adapting its foreign and security policy priorities to new circumstances.

Chapter 2 reviewed the historical antecedents of contemporary policy, focusing on the way in which history and geopolitics have shaped and continue to shape Polish foreign policy thinking. In this context, it was posited that the two contending visions of the Polish state and its international relations proffered by Roman Dmowski and Józef Piłsudski provided the frameworks within which Polish foreign policy was constructed. These prescriptions were moulded further by the effects of the Second World War and its aftermath – developments that from 1989 onwards gave rise to a Polish foreign and security policy that to a large extent remained indebted to traditional concepts of independence and sovereignty and at the same time revealed a strong Atlanticist attachment.

Chapter 3 continued with the theme of Atlanticism, which established the overarching strategic orientation of Polish foreign and security policy from 1990 onwards. Adherence to US foreign policy and Washington's active support for NATO enlargement proved crucial in tackling the problem of Poland's historical 'geopolitical trap'. The deepening of European integration after the Cold War, unified Germany's further commitment to this process and Bonn/Berlin's determination to secure Poland's EU membership were also essential factors that helped Warsaw take enormous strides towards resolving its historical-geopolitical dilemma. As a consequence, Polish foreign and security policy-makers were able to 'find their feet' in the 1990s, and to articulate priorities that, though aimed at EU membership,

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were guided by an Atlanticist, NATO-first strategy and the belief in the superiority of American over European leadership and security guarantees.

Chapter 4 focused on the development of EU security policy and Poland's response to this development. As an EU outsider with a strong Atlanticist preference, Poland pursued a policy that initially sought to negate the EU initiative and reinforce the role of NATO and the US contribution to European security; it also strove to ensure that Polish perspectives were taken fully into account. The late 1990s saw Polish troops deployed in Kosovo, launching a trajectory of commitment that continued into the twenty-first century when Warsaw readily aligned itself with US foreign policy by contributing forces to both Afghanistan and Iraq. But when the ESDP was further elaborated and witnessed 'in action', Warsaw became less rigidly opposed to the EU's ambitions. The invasion of Iraq and its aftermath, coupled with Poland's entry into the EU, led to a reappraisal of the value and purpose of the ESDP, while Poland's previously staunch commitment to Atlanticism and its keen adherence to US policy slackened somewhat. By the time of Poland's accession to the EU in 2004, Polish policy no longer saw the EU and NATO as security institutions in discrete 'boxes'; rather it had begun to appreciate the benefits of belonging to both institutions and, in particular, the virtues of the EU's foreign and security policy potential.

Chapter 5 focused on what we identified as Poland's 'specialism', namely Eastern policy. The key point here was that while Poland's geopolitical location proved a source of profound insecurity in the past, the changes brought about by the end of the Cold War have meant that its location has the potential to be an asset rather than a liability. With secure borders and no immediate threats to its territory, Poland is able to use its geographical position between Germany and the non-EU East to play an instructive role in bringing the former Soviet states closer to Europe. Although this is not always an easy task, not least because of the 'Russian factor', which often dominates the EU's approach to Eastern Europe, Polish perspectives have been crucial in securing both Washington's and Brussels' attention to and investment in the region. Membership of the EU has enabled Warsaw to firm up its priorities in Eastern Europe and to get its interests heard and voice amplified, as was the case in the Ukrainian revolution. Poland's Eastern specialism will remain a key characteristic of Polish foreign and security policy. In this context a priority for Warsaw will be to work towards a coordinated EU approach towards Russia as well as on the issue of Ukraine's EU membership.

Chapter 6 attempted to put a number of threads and ideas discussed in the previous chapters into the context of an enlarged and evolving EU. One of its main observations was that shortly after its enlargement in 2004, the EU began to change as new patterns of cooperation and conflict emerged –

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changes and uncertainties that were amplified by the French and Dutch rejections of the EU constitutional treaty. A consequence of these developments has been a lack of clear leadership, which has had implications for Poland. Meanwhile, Polish foreign and security policy priorities have led Warsaw to pursue various temporary partnerships and alliances. Crucially, from the vantage point of 2006, Polish European policy has vacillated between alignment with other large member states, which stems mainly from its obsession with 'status and role', and what may be a more level-headed approach of siding with smaller and poorer member states to strengthen community institutions.

The following are our concluding comments about the state of Polish foreign and security policy at the beginning of the twenty-first century and its possible future direction.

The vibrancy of the past

Poland's foreign and security policy thinking is marked by a strong association with the past. Traditional concepts of sovereignty and national identity are and will remain buoyant. While the long-term implications of this trend are unclear, Poland's societal conservatism and religiosity are beginning to have an impact on its posture and especially its self-perception in the context of the EU.

Polish Atlanticism is evolving

The 'emergence of a new Atlanticist' succinctly summarizes the Third Republic's post-Cold War strategic orientation, but today it is clear that Polish Atlanticism is evolving and will continue to change. In retrospect, Poland's adherence to US policy over Iraq may prove to have been a high point of Polish Atlanticism and a crossroads after which the pro-US Atlanticist option of Polish policy may have irreversibly weakened. Poland's elites and its public are now more mindful of the perils of unconditionally supporting US foreign policy, while in the realm of European security the tenor of Polish policy has become more constructive and less divisive. That said, Warsaw's decision to remain in Iraq and its continued interest in the US missile defence system demonstrate that Polish foreign policy will remain Atlanticist in essence.

The escape from the geopolitical trap

Poland's 'return to Europe' after 1990 helped the country to escape to some degree from its geopolitical trap, which historically had been a source of

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immense insecurity. The alleviation of the geopolitical threat through NATO and EU enlargement enabled Polish elites to establish less encumbered and less defensive priorities. Nonetheless, Warsaw continues to be preoccupied with Russia as a possible threat or source of instability – a preoccupation that has led to conservative thinking about its largest eastern neighbour. Beyond Russia, Poland's geographical location has allowed Warsaw to pursue an active policy towards Ukraine, which, in turn, has demonstrated to Polish elites the value of EU membership and the necessity of enhancing both the CFSP and the EU's collective voice, especially in the union's immediate neighbourhood.

Keeping enlargement alive

EU enlargement will continue to preoccupy Polish policy-makers. Bringing Ukraine into the fold by supporting the membership of Turkey is a long-term strategy that may lose momentum when the full costs and complexities of enlargement to these states – not to mention the implications for poorer members such as Poland – become apparent. Poland will have to work hard at lobbying for Ukrainian membership and will need to garner support from partners to ensure that the question of Ukraine's relationship with the EU remains alive.

A question of size

What will continue to shape – perhaps even haunt – Polish foreign and security policy is the discrepancy between 'ambitions' and 'resources'. Achieving the status of important EU player will be an arduous task, given Poland's economic and social needs, which leave little scope for large-scale commitments to developing European and transatlantic security. Thus the potential exists for a disconnect between the pursuit of high policy at the intergovernmental level and economic realities, which, owing to the lack of resources, may thwart the kind of foreign and security policy objectives pursued so far.

Towards a more nationally focused foreign policy?

Perhaps the most difficult conclusion to draw is the one related to the possible implications of the 2005 parliamentary and presidential elections for foreign policy. An outstanding trait of Polish politics after 1989 was a remarkably unstable domestic context (no government has been re-elected since the inception of the Third Republic), which contrasted with the

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remarkably stable and predictable foreign policy. Governments came and went but foreign policy remained consistent and continued to be guided by the same principles – Poland's geopolitics, its past and the ideology of Józef Piłsudski.

Some Western commentators have argued that the foreign policy of the current government signals a break with this tradition.[2] It is certainly true that in comparison with its predecessor, the current government is far more domestically focused and less interested in the EU. It is also true that relations with Germany, historically Poland's strategic ally in the EU, have suffered. President Kaczyński insists that as long as Germany prioritizes Russia – a policy which, he argues, is evidenced by Berlin's involvement in the Baltic pipeline – the Polish–German relationship will remain problematic.[3]

These developments notwithstanding, the PiS government and the Kaczyński presidency have so far not brought about a revolution in Poland's international relations, as some expected. In other words, despite assertive and occasionally aggressive rhetoric *vis-à-vis* the outside world, the foreign policy of the current government differs only marginally from that of its predecessor. Inclusion in the government seems to have mollified the populists from Samoobrona and the far-right LPR. Samoobrona has now officially declared that it is in favour of European integration, while the leader of the LPR has apologized for his party's anti-Semitic past. However, there is no doubt that some prominent members of the governing coalition have a history of harbouring anti-European, anti-American and nationalist sentiments and thus are followers of Roman Dmowski rather than Józef Piłsudski. But whether this right-wing domestic revolution will affect Poland's external policies in the long run remains an open question.

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Notes

1 INTRODUCTION

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