

Ever Challenged Union: Exploring Ways Out of the Crises

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**EU policy and its national cause factor at the time of an urgent external challenge –
if and how has Poland impacted the EU position towards the crisis in Ukraine?**

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Abstract:

The article applies the concept of Europeanization to examine the impact of a national cause factor (Poland) on the EU response to the external challenge (the current crisis in Ukraine). It explains Poland’s strong interest in eastern policy (Section I), analyses Poland’s action towards enhancing EU’s Eastern Dimension (introducing the Eastern Partnership) (Section II), and further focuses on Poland’s attempts to stimulate the current EU policy towards the crisis (Section III). The study aims to identify the main logics of change implemented by Poland and discuss their significance for the upload of the national preferences onto the EU. Accordingly, Poland relies upon socialization based on the horizontal policy exchange across EU countries, where it offers them its own expertise and motivation. This exchange involves policy learning occurring through such patterns of behaviour as mutual support for parallel foreign policy projects, rapprochement of competing interests, promotion of own standpoint, mobilizing other actors for action etc. The article concludes that, although no direct causal relationship between Poland’s action and EU policy may be established (particularly in case of the current crisis), the above logics have more or less facilitated the projection of the national preferences on the EU level so that the EU response to the crisis has been by far compliant with the policy contents articulated by Poland.

INTRODUCTION

Area of research:

Whereas the Conference gives rise to questions about the EU response to external challenges, my research seeks the intra-EU dynamics which are responsible for that response. In particular, the article aims to identify the national cause factor and explain the mechanisms of its contribution to the (supranational) European response.

First, the case study covers the field of EU eastern policy and focuses on its two great challenges of (1) re-formulating and strengthening the eastern relations of the 2004 enlarged Union and, above all, (2) responding to the current crisis in Ukraine.

Second, the study includes one EU member state: Poland. It presents a unique case, because it is particularly interested in eastern policy (compared with other EU countries) what refers both to Poland's bilateral policies towards its Eastern neighbours as well as actions towards stimulating EU eastern relations. The article, however, focuses on the latter dimension only.

In this respect, the paper involves the following sections: Section I, which provides an introduction to the Polish theories of eastern policy and Poland's eastern policy preferences (also in relation to the EU), followed by Sections II and III, which both discuss the Polish attempts to upload its preferences to shape the EU response to the two above mentioned eastern policy challenges.

Relevance:

The article may contribute to the broader study on 'Ever Challenged Union' by stressing the importance of the national policy level for the formulation of common EU policy against new and urgent external challenges.

Moreover, the selected case demands urgent studies. As regards the crisis in Ukraine, although its topicality prevents from drawing ultimate and exhaustive conclusions now, its political significance for Europe as well as its dynamics and currently unforeseeable results demand efficient EU response and thus intensive studies on that.

Beyond that, the concept of Europeanization is applied, by contrast to many other studies, not to investigate long-term policy processes but to study on EU response to an urgent (unexpected) challenge. In addition, it involves its two dimensions, uploading and crossloading, and the interaction between them.

Methods and concepts:

As said, the article applies the concept of Europeanization. Given that the current literature provides its different definitions (which sometimes remain also vague), the concept should be defined more precisely for the purpose of this research. Accordingly, Europeanization is the process of change resulting from the interaction between the national and the European level. It involves an uploading dimension, that is, a 'bottom-up' direction of impact going from the national to the EU level. In this respect, the change itself occurs at the EU level (and constitutes the independent variable) and is caused by the national level (the dependent variable). In addition to above, the crossloading dimension of Europeanization is also applied in the research, which is understood as horizontal impact of EU member states on each other. Further, crossloading is expected to facilitate uploading, that is, the horizontal interaction determines in a longer perspective the vertical impact of member states on the EU level.

However, research questions focus not on change itself (the change in EU eastern policy has been already commonly identified) but on its national cause factors. Therefore, the article does not explore the independent but dependent variable and involves the intermediate factors (mechanisms responsible for the national contribution) – logics of impact/change¹. Here, the research identifies the factors primarily conceptualized by sociological institutionalism (e.g. socialization, learning, persuasion)².

What is more, the focus on the national factor requires better understanding of its main policy preferences determining the action. Therefore, an additional theory framework includes the theories of national foreign policies.

Central hypothesis is that Poland is a unique case particularly interested in stimulating EU eastern policy, and, above all, the logics of change identified by sociological institutionalism have allowed this country to enhance its priorities on the EU agenda. The problem is to unambiguously confirm the Polish impact on EU decision making, however, the amended EU eastern policy is by far compliant with Poland's vision what enables to draw some conclusions. Accordingly, the main question is what are the main logics of change implemented by Poland and what is their relevance for the national projection onto the EU.

Finally, both primary and secondary data are collected below. However, major part of the work includes my own discussion towards answering the above questions and, above all, applying the above conceptualization (logics of change), which has not been applied in the analysed sources. Moreover, I

¹ Bulmer, Radaelli, 2005, pp.349-350

² Hall, Taylor, 1996, pp.946-950; De Flers, Müller, 2010, pp.14-16; Moumoutzis, 2011, pp.613-614

would like to point out that the following article partly uses data collected by myself in my Diploma thesis³, those concerning the theories of foreign policy as well as the EaP-introduction. However, they are analysed, again, by applying a different conceptualization.

SECTION I: THEORY BACKGROUND

Polish foreign relations traditionally focus on two main geopolitical directions East and West, where relations to the East have historically been given priority. Over the centuries, they have developed complex theories. The significance of these theories lies in the fact that they, building on a rich historical experience of Poland's both power status as well as independence movements⁴, have allowed to shape a strong historical awareness and national identity among the Polish nation and consequently gained their political importance itself. Accordingly, the Polish theories of eastern policy have permanently conceptualized the political conditionality on Poland's international positioning (either the issue of regaining its state sovereignty or enhancing its international position and security, depending on the historical period) and fundamentally influenced the present political thought and behaviour. Given their political significance, the theories are briefly outlined below to allow to comprehend why Poland is so much interested in Ukraine.

A broader view of a long-term historical perspective allows to generalize that the Polish theories of eastern policy are the concepts of international order for Eastern Europe that serve an overarching objective of providing Poland with its geopolitical security, primarily against Russia. These concepts may be further contrasted by equivalent Russian foreign security models regarding the same geopolitical area. In general terms, the common neighbourhood has constituted an area of centuries-long security-related competitions between the Polish and Russian countries for their pre-frontier areas or spheres of influence⁵. In other words, the territories situated between Warsaw and Moscow have historically become the main target of the ('harder' or 'softer') geopolitical expansionisms of each of both countries⁶. However, the historical context for Polish recent concepts must be narrowed to the shorter period of the last more or less two centuries. During the then Polish-Russian rivalry, the Russian

³ Czułno, 2012

⁴ Poland's power status in the 15th and 16th century, the partition of Poland between Prussia, the Russian Empire and Habsburg Austria 1772-1795 followed by the occupation and the independence movements in the 18th to 20th century, difficult foreign relations of the Second Polish Republic 1918-1939, World War II, and finally the independence thought in the time of the communist-ruled Polish People's Republic

⁵ Bischof, 2006, p.104

⁶ unlike their alternative directions that have not been targeted by main waves of expansionism, that is, Poland's western neighbourhood or Russia's eastern pre-frontier areas, at least in the modern time, after the 'Far East' colonization

western expansionism has forced the Polish concepts onto the defensive. As a result, they primarily focused on questions about maintaining or regaining of Polish state independence against subsequent Russian states (Russian Empire, SFRS, USSR).

What is interesting is that the above broad framework may also serve a more extensive theoretical explanation of the Europeanization of eastern policy. Namely, it may be argued that, due to EU eastern enlargement, the above Polish-Russian rivalry has been transferred to the broader competition between the EU and Russia, wherein Poland as a new EU member takes actively part.

Studies on contemporary theories of eastern policy reveal their anchoring in the interwar political thoughts which, in turn, have reached back into the traditions of the 18th and 19th century independence movements. Since 1918, two main concepts 'Prometheism' and 'Realism' have crystallized (developed by Marshal Józef Piłsudski and Roman Dmowski⁷, respectively). Both visions, though competing, have theorized the role of Eastern European statehood in the light of Poland's security positioning against Russia.

'Prometheism' was based on the pro-independence, anti-Russian ideas developed in the time of the 19th century Russification of Poland⁸ as well as an interwar assumption that the resurgent Russian Empire will sooner or later again threaten the newly regained Polish state sovereignty. Piłsudski developed two complementary visions regarding the political order in Eastern Europe that sought to counteract the potential external threat. The first vision encompassed a federative 'Intermarium' concept which aimed at the dismemberment of the Russian Empire into its ethnic units followed by the resurrection of statehood of the Eastern European nations. The new countries would create an 'Intermarium' federation under the auspices of Poland which was expected to act as a counterweight to Russian and German imperialisms. The concept ascribed Ukraine a strategic role⁹. The second vision was 'Prometheism' itself. It relied upon complex and deep studies on the oppressed Eastern European nations to give support for their gradual emancipation from the Soviet Union and thus destabilization of the Empire¹⁰.

Unlike 'Intermarium'/'Prometheism', an alternative vision, 'Realism', has been by far implemented after the Polish-Soviet War 1919/1921. It offered an incorporative model that assumed the extension of Poland to annex territories that had been lost during the 18th century partitions. Dmowski claimed that only large unitary states (instead of federations of smaller ones) are able to face external

⁷ two Polish statesmen, key contributors to Poland's interwar independence

⁸ Kornat, 2008, p.78

⁹ Kornat, 2009, pp.226-227

¹⁰ Kornat, 2008, pp.81-84

imperialisms. In addition, he has developed an idea of a great Poland which forms security alliances with its greatest neighbours¹¹.

However, the 'prometheist' federative approach, though unrealised, has been consequently and intensively developed after World War II among the Polish intellectuals in exile, particularly in a Polish literary-political magazine 'Kultura' in Paris (Jerzy Giedroyc, Juliusz Mieroszewski). The slightly amended concept has promoted an active cooperation between Poland and the Eastern European nations (i.e. Ukrainians, Belarusians and Lithuanians) based on the community of fate and offered postulates for their gradual emancipation and evolutionary dismantlement of the communist bloc¹². In addition, the concept has strongly related to the broader European context by saying that the Polish-Ukrainian reconciliation would serve the purpose of strengthening Poland's geopolitical position across Europe¹³. In general, the ideas of Eastern European statehood have been continuously fostered after World War II, in spite of the unfavourable political conditions in Poland and geopolitical conditions in Central and Eastern Europe.

As regards Ukraine itself, the above concepts visibly ascribe this country the function of providing Poland with a security buffer against the potential Russian imperialism. However, another concepts can be also identified that seek to counteract the Russian threat through the democratization of Russia itself. Here, Ukraine is regarded not as a buffer but a springboard for further democratization processes. Such concept reaches back into the 19th century idea (promoted by Marcin Król) according to which the function of democracy transfer from Western Europe to the Russian Empire was assigned to an independent Poland (which was then under occupation). Based on that assumption, an equivalent function is now attributed by Poland to Ukraine¹⁴. Another argument in favour of the Ukraine's strategic positioning within the Polish concepts (put forward by Zbigniew Brzeziński) is that Ukraine is a key factor that determines Russian imperialism what means that independent Ukraine disqualifies Russia from its empire status¹⁵.

The above theories apply to studies on the current policy. That is because the 20th century concepts, though rooted in even earlier centuries and developed in very different geopolitical environments, have constituted a cornerstone for the political thought and eastern policy after 1989. They offer not only a category of ideas but also a tradition of shaping relations with the East of which the modern

¹¹ Zblewski, 2006, p.12

¹² Kornat, 2009, pp.233-235

¹³ Kerski, 2004, p.57

¹⁴ Bischof, 2006, p.109

¹⁵ Pankevych, 2008, p.266; Jackowska, 2010, p.92

eastern policy, correlated with the EU and NATO, is growing out¹⁶. What is more, the political elite of the Third Polish Republic has even clearly expressed its commitment to the 'Kultura' tradition¹⁷.

In this respect, Poland's eastern policy, oriented towards i.e. Ukraine, can be undoubtedly attributed with its very strategic character and lasting nature. Thus it tends to be permanent regardless of potential changes in its internal or external environment (such as changes of governments or in external environment). Such characteristics of the Polish eastern policy is worth underlining particularly by considering this policy as a potential cause factor of EU eastern relations.

Moreover, the theories allow to identify the main policy goals. Given that Poland's overarching objective is to prevent i.e. Ukraine from being pulled into the orbit of Russian influence, its strategic interest is to strengthen the Ukraine's sovereignty and stability. In terms of ideas, Poland advocates the values of democracy, the rule of law and fundamental freedoms, human rights, or the principles of free market economy¹⁸. Further, the following particular goals are identified: reinforcing economic, social and cultural cooperation, developing a cross-border cooperation, dealing with historical policy, or supporting diversification of energy supply¹⁹.

Lastly and most importantly, a strong EU context should be depicted in this article. First of all, it is worth noting that the above strategic interests towards Ukraine are often generally formulated as the interests of Europeanization of that country in the sense of supporting common EU-recognized values. In particular, such Europeanization means nothing else other than Ukraine's more or less political, economic or social rapprochement to the EU with the aim of building its national and international stability and security²⁰.

There is also a second conceptual approach to the question on the EU context for Poland's eastern policy. The Europeanization is not only Poland's eastern policy objective of the so-called 'EU-ization' of Ukraine's internal political scene but also Poland's objective of 'EU-ization' of Polish action towards Ukraine itself. Namely, the implementation of the Polish goals in Ukraine can be significantly enhanced by using the EU framework and, further, correlating Ukraine with the EU. That means that the EU offers the greatest non-alternative power of attraction for Ukrainian internal political or economic reforms founded on the rule of law, freedom or democracy and thus the most efficient framework for the

¹⁶ Dębski, 2006, p.5

¹⁷ Kerski, 2004, p.58

¹⁸ Lang, 2004, p.53; Bischof, 2006, p.106; Kałużńska, Smyk and Wiśniewski, 2009, p.381

¹⁹ Bischof, 2006, pp.106-108

²⁰ Ziółkowski, 2002, p.309

implementation of Poland's eastern policy preferences. In addition, the EU's power of attraction incomparably exceeds the Polish or other national political capacities in this matter²¹.

Therefore, the latter conceptual approach is the focus of the article. Based on that approach, Poland seeks to transfer its eastern policy to the EU level. In more detail, the current literature suggests the two following similar perspectives of how Poland formulates the Europeanization of its policy. First, Warsaw aims to use the EU as a new supranational and multilateral instrument of its national eastern policy. Second, it wants to become an EU eastern policy instrument itself. The latter perspective goes further and means that Poland attempts to act as a key EU actor which drives EU eastern policy and thus performs it in accordance with its own interests²².

Finally, the above theorization and contextualization of Poland's current eastern policy allows for the identification of Poland's positioning towards the crisis in Ukraine 2014-2015. Following the above framework, the current strategy is advocating Ukraine on its current political path away from Russia and towards the EU e.g. by supporting internal pro-EU movement or acting against Russia's policy against Ukraine. That is why Poland definitely supports Kiev in its current political competition with Moscow.

SECTION II: POLAND AND EU EASTERN POLICY BEFORE THE CRISIS

Section II analyses two Polish attempts to Europeanise its eastern policy that have been undertaken before the current crisis in Ukraine. The first case is the presentation of an idea for the so-called 'Eastern Dimension' of the EU (on the eve of Poland's EU accession). The second point is the co-initialization of the Eastern Partnership (EaP) 2008/2009.

According to the first point, Poland has proposed a concept of 'Eastern Dimension' regarding a new European eastern policy. It was meant to take up the external challenge for the 2004 enlarged EU of reformulating its eastern relations towards new beneficiaries²³. The idea reached back into the opening of the accession negotiations between Poland and the EU in 1998²⁴. It was published in a non-paper and further presented as a detailed project of a new EU foreign policy instrument by Poland's

²¹ See more: Czułno, 2013, pp.35-36

²² Eisl, 2006, p.95; Lang, 2004, p.54; Kałużyńska, Smyk and Wiśniewski, 2009, p.375

²³ With the EU enlargement 2004 Poland's eastern neighbours became new direct neighbours of the EU. Thus the previous EU eastern policy which was oriented towards EU integration of the candidate countries in Central and Eastern Europe had to be totally reoriented towards another group of non-candidate countries in the post-Soviet sphere.

²⁴ the then Polish Foreign Minister Bronisław Geremek's speech

Foreign Ministry(2003)²⁵. As regards the policy content, first, the concept has above all incorporated the prospect of EU membership for the eastern neighbours. It relied upon the assumption about the EU's 'soft power' regarded as a 'power of attraction' and valued as the most efficient instrument of EU foreign policy²⁶. Second, Poland has opted for a stronger position of eastern policy within (just being reformulated) EU foreign relations (that is, also against an alternative 'Southern Dimension'). This included above all the proposal for 'upgrading' the EU eastern relations based on the Partnership and Cooperation Agreements to those based on the Association Agreements²⁷. Finally, however, the concept has not been accepted at the EU level. That is because the EU has introduced a new foreign policy framework called the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), the guidelines of which significantly differed from the above Polish postulates²⁸.

However, the main observation is as follows: Although Poland's attempts to upload its own concept of the 'Eastern Dimension' have not been accepted, they provided the first important argument for the claim that Poland, already before its EU accession, has assigned itself an active role in shaping EU response to the new external challenges (which was in this case the formulation of a new eastern policy). *"It is generally acknowledged that the foundation for the concept of the eastern dimension of the EU policy was laid mainly by Polish research centres and decision-makers in Poland."*²⁹ Here, the national projection onto the EU level can be interpreted only in the terms that Poland has intensified the European debate on eastern policy, where some postulates could be heard and at least partly recognized by the newly established ENP. In this sense, the logic of impact might be identified to a small degree only if Poland motivated another actors to such debate.

²⁵ Kapuśniak, 2010, pp.55-61; Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs, 2003, pp.15-23

²⁶ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, 2003, pp.88-89; Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs, 2003, pp.18-19; Kałużyńska, Smyk and Wiśniewski, 2009, p.376; Ziółkowski, 2002, p.314; Lang, 2004, p.53; Eisl, 2006, p.95; Włudyka, 2009, p.13; European Commission, 2003, p.5

²⁷ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, 2003, pp.87-88

²⁸ First of all, the ENP was meant as an alternative to further EU enlargement and ruled out membership prospect for its beneficiaries (See: European Commission, 2003, p.5; European Commission, 2004, p.3; Kałużyńska, Smyk and Wiśniewski, 2009, pp.377-378). In relation to above, the European neighbours in the East and the neighbours of Europe in the South have been brought together by the ENP, whereas the latter group is forbidden from accessing EU already on the basis of its non-European location (Article 49 TEU) (European Commission, 2003, p.5; Herdina, 2009, p.11). The second point is that – even within the same neighbourhood policy framework – the Eastern direction is weaker than its Southern alternative. Namely, unlike the Eastern direction, the Southern Dimension has already developed a stronger contractual basis and deeper cooperation (the Barcelona Process, longer EC/EU foreign policy traditions), additional, stronger instruments (Association Agreements) (Kałużyńska, Smyk and Wiśniewski, 2009, p.377; European Commission, 2004, p.5; European Commission, 2004, p.4, 7; Lippert, 2007, p.4; Cholewa, 2009) and, finally, better funding (substantial financial differences between the 'Southern' MEDA and the 'Eastern' TACIS funding programmes) (European Commission, 2004, pp.23-25, 32; Cholewa, 2009)

²⁹ Kapuśniak, 2010, p.60

Finally, it should be noted that the above paragraph deals with a very short period of Poland's European activity. Admittedly, it might be noted that Poland has expressed its motivation to propose its own policy concept already during the accession period, however, given that the ENP has been introduced simultaneously with the EU enlargement, Poland as a full EU member has had no time to undertake attempts to Europeanize its concept.

As regards the second point, the co-initialization of the EaP provides another example of Poland's attempts to Europeanize its eastern policy. Here, the national projection is substantially more visible. Therefore, more visible are also the logics of impact. In general, studies on the process of introduction of the Polish project of the EaP allow to identify some European 'ways of doing things' adopted by Poland's foreign policy making such as searching for a consensus, building permanent coalitions, pursuing a policy of balance etc. As it is demonstrated below, these processes have allowed Poland to apply certain logics of impact.

The first step is the process of building a regional coalition of Central and Eastern European EU member states, primarily the Visegrad Group and Baltic States. The leading motives of such coalition are shared experience and common interests in the EU³⁰. The coalition aimed to work out common strategies for the EU summits³¹. It was further extended on the Warsaw Foreign Ministers Meeting 2008 to include another countries in the region (Bulgaria, Romania, Sweden, and Slovenia with an observer status). Their joint letter has confirmed shared interests and announced strengthened eastern policy cooperation at the multilateral level³². Accordingly, this example clearly shows that shared policy contents constitute (or, at least, are perceived by the above countries as) the necessary condition for upload of the national preferences onto the EU level.

Another examples show consensus-seeking among those EU countries which do not share the same interests with Poland. Amongst them, the first case presents Poland's policy of balance within the ENP (that is, between its two by far competing dimensions: Eastern and Southern). It is worth analysing, since Poland has expressed here its parallel interest at the Southern Dimension (being outside of its natural interests) to draw the attention of another countries to eastern policy. In other words, Polish diplomacy wished to gain support from strong Western European EU countries (which are mainly

³⁰ Poland. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009

³¹ Cianciara, 2008, pp.10-11

³² Visegrad Group, 2008

traditionally oriented to the South) for its eastern policy vision in exchange for Poland's reciprocal support for the Southern Dimension³³.

There are some examples that confirm the above logic. First, Poland has backed the reinforcement of the Southern Dimension, that is, the introduction of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM). According to the literature, the Polish support has visibly been motivated with the expectation that Western partners will give a reciprocal support to the EaP³⁴. Second, the Spanish and Polish presidencies of the Council of the EU³⁵ indicated their mutual support for the two competing ENP policies. Namely, Spain (oriented towards the UfM) hosted an EaP meeting. In turn, Poland (oriented towards the EaP) organised an UfM meeting³⁶. At the latter meeting, what is noteworthy, Poland's Foreign Ministry has underlined the need for the parallel development of both EU foreign policy directions what suggests that it aimed to follow the rule of reciprocity among the EU countries of divergent foreign policy interests³⁷.

It should be underlined that building support among the main advocates of the Southern Dimension (i.e. France, Italy, Spain) is the more important as they are one of the biggest EU countries and thus constitute a potential great opposition to the Eastern Dimension (Polish interests). That is because they express no traditional interests in eastern policy and, even if so, tend to favour their relations with Russia over those with Ukraine or other ENP beneficiaries. The literature even confirms that these countries have rationally calculated to agree to the EaP in exchange for support for the UfM³⁸.

It may be concluded from above that Poland was able to successfully contribute to EU external policy (vertical impact going from the national to the EU level), once it has initialized the policy exchange between countries of different interests (horizontal impact at the national level). This exchange has relied upon the (mutual) transfer of own eastern policy interests to another countries so that these interests admittedly did not begin to be actively pursued by those countries (they obviously still have their own primary interests) but became recognized and supported.

Moreover, the political motivation alone has also been transferred between the countries. Namely, the countries have been so much determined to upload their policies that they have voluntarily given support even to the interests going beyond their traditional fields of interest. And such determination has been responded by equivalent behaviour of another EU countries.

³³ Kałużyńska, Smyk and Wiśniewski, 2009, p.383

³⁴ Cianciara, 2008, p.11

³⁵ in the first half of 2010 and the second half of 2011, respectively

³⁶ Kaca, 2011, p.21

³⁷ Poland. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011

³⁸ Wojna, Gniazdowski, 2009, p.26, 30-31, 53-54

In addition, it is worth underlining that the national actors have without doubt learned the policy contents (interests and maybe also their motivations) represented by another actors even if they did so not in order to genuinely acknowledge/face policy challenges identified by other countries but only with the particular aim of enforcing their own interests.

Another conclusion is that the above policy exchange might have enabled to change the mutual perception of both foreign policy directions. Thus Eastern and Southern Dimensions could be not regarded as competing anymore but symbiotic or even convergent. That would mean that support for one policy (given by its traditional opponent) conditions reciprocal support for another policy.

In result of the policy exchange, Poland has persuaded its Western European partners to support its eastern policy concept that they would have otherwise not supported. And inversely. Taking a broader view, the policy exchange fosters the mutual recognition for divergent if not contrary interests and thus allows for upload of the (different but not opposing anymore) foreign policy concepts onto the EU level.

The third example is a remarkable shift in Polish policy against Russia (after 2007, before the current crisis). This case can also be put into the context of Poland's European policies (attempts to upload the national eastern policy). Again, it involves a policy of balance, this time not between the two ENP Dimensions, but between two main by far competing directions of broadly defined EU eastern relations, that is, the ENP Eastern Dimension (the EaP) and the EU strategic relationship with Russia.

In general, Poland has reoriented its policy against Russia towards a more friendly, non-confrontational approach (i.e. by lifting veto on EU-Russia partnership agreement negotiations and returning to the bilateral meetings at the highest level³⁹). This change meant the recognition for a policy which, on the one hand, may be seen as concurrent with the above Polish eastern policy preferences⁴⁰ but, on the other hand, is pursued by most Western European EU actors. Thus the change was mainly orientated not towards Poland's relations to the East but Poland's approach to the multilateral dimension – it aimed to gain support from EU partners (those of a rather pro-Russian tenor) for the Polish eastern policy vision (oriented towards i.e. Ukraine).

³⁹ Cianciara, 2008, p.11; Kaczmarek, 2009, pp.24-25; Ochmann, 2010, p.5

⁴⁰ The eastern policy principles do not leave out the relevance of bilateral Poland-Russia relations themselves, however, they reveal the strategic role of Poland's 'pro-Ukrainian' policy and its positioning within Poland's European policies. In order to follow the research questions, this chapter analyses not the bilateral Polish-Russian cooperation but the impact of the (amended) Poland-Russia relations on Poland's attempts to upload its 'pro-Ukrainian' eastern policy concept onto the EU.

Poland primarily aimed to persuade other EU countries that its eastern policy concept is not oriented against Russia. Namely, the introduction of the EaP could not be regarded as development opposing the strategic relationship with Russia. That is because such 'anti-Russian' approach would harm the EU's interest to develop parallel both directions, or even certain national interests that favour Russia⁴¹. Bearing in mind the strong European pro-Russian interests, it is highly probable that in case of the confrontation between the two eastern policy directions (where EU countries would have to choose to support one of them only), Poland would lose support for its 'pro-Ukrainian' concept.

In this case, the policy exchange relies, again, upon the mutual recognition for divergent policy interests, this time in the broad area of EU eastern relations. This means the approximation of different national positions with the ultimate aim of achieving a EU compromise on relations both with Russia and the ENP beneficiaries. EU countries are expected to mutually respect and – at least partly – adopt another (opposing) eastern policy interests.

Through the above policy exchange, Poland has sought to identify and adapt the far 'pro-Russian' policy contents from other EU actors in order to be able to push through – in return – its 'pro-Ukrainian' concept. Accordingly, Poland has modified its approach to Russia to gain more acceptance among EU partners. In particular, Warsaw has changed its emotional, russophobic rhetoric (which has not been accepted and understood by Western Europeans) to act more pragmatically and thus promote itself as an objective and credible policy-maker. In result, the amended image of Poland would enable the EU actors (both countries and institutions) of different/opposing eastern policy preferences to change their perception on the Polish vision and, further, accept it.

It is worth adding that, paradoxically, Poland's severe criticism of Russia does not directly contribute to EU's more sceptical stance towards this country (although it may, of course, put the issue on the EU agenda). In contrast, any change in this matter may be conditioned by the long-term process of (mutual) learning among various (national and supranational) actors. Again, Poland would be expected recognize the interests of others to gain reciprocal acceptance for its own interests. In other words, if Poland seeks to relativize the European pro-Russian views, it must first become a less anti-Russian player – that is, a more pragmatic actor which recognizes divergent interests and thus gains credibility towards them – and only then it may successfully act as a critic of Russia and upload its own content.

Finally, the problem is to draw any 'hard' conclusions from this case. The sources do not provide any unambiguous evidence for a direct cause-effect relationship between the reorientation in Poland's

⁴¹ The proof of an EU conciliatory stance is the fact that (a) the documents of EU bodies, i.e. the European Commission, accent the need for parallel developments (European Commission, 2008, p.3), and that (b) the strongest EU countries tend to favour EU-Russia relations what suggests that they can oppose 'anti-Russian' EU foreign policy concepts (Legucka, 2011, p.8, 21; Kowal, 2014, pp.78-80, 85)

policy towards Russia and the EU's or Western European states' decision to support the Polish concept (as it was the case in the previous example). The sources enable only for the identification of the policy change (that there is a discrepancy in views on Russia/EU policy against Russia among various EU actors, and that the positions have been to some degree approximated and, finally, that the EU has accepted the Polish proposal for the EaP) as well as offer some vague comments on the significance of the Polish change for Poland's positioning towards the EU⁴². Based on that, the above proposed framework attempts to explain the necessary (even if not the only one and direct) conditions for the national contribution to creating a more or less common EU position.

To sum up, Section II has demonstrated the main patterns of impact which are identifiable in the Polish attempts to strengthen the EU's Eastern dimension. Moreover, Section II has confirmed that these patterns have allowed Poland to upload its eastern policy concept onto the EU level, since they have made possible to build a European consensus and gain necessary support from another EU partners for the EaP project to finally introduce it by the EU.

These patterns are the processes of learning and the expression of strong motivation across different EU countries which both serve the aim of the mutual exchange of divergent policy contents. An outcome of that policy exchange is either mutual recognition and support for the national policies or rapprochement of different positions so that both lead to the creation of a common EU standpoint. Thus, by following the above logics of change, the national state has been able to upload its preferences onto the supranational level.

SECTION III: POLAND, EU AND THE CURRENT CRISIS IN UKRAINE

Section III demonstrates Poland's attempts to influence the EU response to an unexpected and great challenge which is the crisis in Ukraine: social unrests in Kiev and other cities followed by Russia's annexation of Crimea and the military competition in the eastern part of the country.

The following chapter seeks to indicate (confirm) the patterns of change presented above but also face a challenge to identify their impact on the EU level (in other words, to identify that Poland itself, its action towards the EU, has determined the EU response to the crisis). The previous section – which dealt with a certain foreign policy project that has been proposed by Poland and next introduced by the EU – enabled to identify a clear causal relationship between the national and European level. This section, however, deals with some general national views, tips, patterns of behaviour etc. which are

⁴² Kaczmarek, 2009, p.25; Kwaśniewski, 2011, pp.83-94; Cianciara, 2008, p.12

not to be just uploaded onto the EU level in form of a single, precise policy framework and thus they do not allow to draw a direct causal link between both policy levels. What is more, there is no official information which would allow to indicate which EU actors have determined certain EU decisions. Accordingly, only some vague conclusions are expected below that the EU response to the crisis, which became more or less compliant with Polish preferences, might have been in fact influenced by Poland through the implementation of the identified logics of change.

First of all, according to the concept of Europeanization, the main logic of Poland's impact on the EU relies upon socialization of other actors. That is because Poland consequently perceives itself as an actor which offers knowledge and experience in shaping policy towards Eastern Europe. Namely, it has experienced Soviet dominance as well as the successful transition of the political and economic system from the Soviet-ruled bloc towards the EU. This experience allows Poland to understand the current Ukrainian problems and dilemmas and thus establishes it as a country capable of presenting certain solutions. In addition, also Ukraine puts more trust in Poland than Western European EU countries⁴³. In other words, the strength of Poland in the EU is that although it has little experience as a EU member, it possesses strong expertise in Eastern European issues such as overcoming communism and undergoing transition⁴⁴.

According to above, observers agree that Poland demonstrates its strong commitment in EU policy towards the crisis. This means that Warsaw is, if not just hawkish, then more insightful than other European actors and that the rest of the EU should attach more attention to Poland's understanding of the East⁴⁵. This may refer to the commonly recognized role of Poland as Ukraine's leading advocate within the EU (by analogy to the pre-2004 Germany's advocacy of Poland's EU aspirations).

Already at the beginning of the crisis, Poland has been pursuing an active policy towards stimulating the EU into action. For example, Warsaw has quickly responded to the failure to sign the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement (which created a source of the social disturbances in Kiev). Already on 22 January 2014, Poland's National Security Council⁴⁶ has declared that the EU should continue to offer Ukraine the agreement, even in spite of dramatic developments in this country. In addition, thanks to the commitment of Polish diplomacy⁴⁷, the EU Foreign Affairs Council meeting on 10 February 2014

⁴³ McMahan, 2014

⁴⁴ EurActiv, 2014

⁴⁵ Ibd.

⁴⁶ advisory body to the Polish President

⁴⁷ Kowalczyk, 2015, p.3; Poland. The Chancellery of the Prime Minister, 2014

concluded that the Association Agreement “...does not constitute the final goal in EU-Ukraine cooperation.”⁴⁸ The latter would suggest that the EU has quickly responded – in compliance with Poland’s position – to the risk of its policy failure. Namely, it has decided to strengthen its power of attraction and offer Ukraine further integration even after the association policy is implemented. The above examples clearly show that Poland reacted quickly to the first symptoms of EU eastern policy failure and sought to mobilize the EU to respond.

Amongst several attempts that have been undertaken by Poland to Europeanize its position against the crisis, most remarkable was the case where Polish Foreign Minister Sikorski has personally co-represented the EU (together with his German and French counterparts, Frank-Walter Steinmeier and Laurent Fabius) during multilateral negotiations in Kiev in February 2014. On behalf of the EU, the politicians have signed an agreement on the settlement of the crisis which, although quickly renounced, has significantly changed further developments in Ukraine⁴⁹. Sikorski alone, so some experts, has played a key role in these negotiations⁵⁰. In fact, he has been undoubtedly very engaged, given that he did it also in a quite controversial way⁵¹, to motivate the disputing parties to build a compromise.

Sikorski’s mediation is a sign of Poland’s great motivation as well as strong contribution to EU response to crisis. Such strong foreign policy impact is perceived by observers as a clear success of Polish diplomacy, particularly taking into account that it has even exceeded Poland’s traditional capabilities of shaping external political order⁵². Given that Poland’s ‘hard’ policy pressures, compared with those of the strongest EU members, are relatively weak, one may suggest that the EU, in its decision to send Sikorski, might have appreciated Polish ‘soft’ tools such as large experience or strong motivation in eastern policy making. Thus the more important becomes the hypothesis that experience and motivation are crucial factors for the Polish projection onto the international arena.

Next, another argument in favour of Poland’s motivation to impact the EU response is that Warsaw has held numerous intense consultations about the crisis with other capitals. A very good example is Donald Tusk’s European tour on Ukraine which the Polish Prime Minister has initiated already during

⁴⁸ Council of the European Union, 2014

⁴⁹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, 2014; Kowalczyk, 2015, pp.4-5

⁵⁰ McMahon, 2014

⁵¹ According to Sikorski’s statement: “If you don’t support this [deal] you’ll have martial law, the army. You will all be dead,” (Oliphant, Strange, 2014)

⁵² Kowalczyk, 2015, pp.4-5

the first tensions in Kiev. Within 5 days, Tusk met the Heads of State or Government of 12 European countries (including Germany, France, or Great Britain), the Heads of main EU institutions, and also US Secretary of Defence. In general, the meetings aimed to establish a common EU response to the crisis⁵³.

Another examples concern, on the one hand, the 'telephone diplomacy' such as the conversation between Donald Tusk and Joe Biden, US Vice President, in February 2014, where Tusk sought to enhance Poland's role as an active EU and international player⁵⁴, or, on the other hand, numerous personal meetings such as the visit of Poland's Foreign Minister Radosław Sikorski to his British counterpart William Hague in March 2014, where Sikorski strove for a single Polish-British voice on the EU forum⁵⁵. Among many other similar meetings, noteworthy are frequent Tusk-Merkel consultations that primarily dealt with nothing else other than the problems of EU response to the challenge in the East⁵⁶.

One may conclude that the above (mostly bilateral but also multilateral) consultations have constituted for Poland one another platform to enhance its national contribution to the European/EuroAtlantic response to the crisis. The quick launch and high frequency of the meetings as well as the high policy level on which they have taken place suggest that Polish political leaders have been very strongly motivated towards shaping EU policy.

In addition, the meetings between Donald Tusk and other political leaders took on a different dimension once the Polish Prime Minister has been appointed as president of EU Council. This fact raises another question on Poland's role in EU eastern policy. Admittedly, Tusk as EU politician should not represent the interests of his country anymore, however, it is not surprising that he continues to demonstrate his personal ('Polish') sensitivity to eastern policy issues. Indeed, the new Council President has already indicated his commitment in providing strong European voice for Eastern Europe and he still develops his close cooperation with national leaders, for example German Chancellor or French President, on that issues⁵⁷. But, in addition, it should be noted that his new post requires him to take a more European (supranational) than national perspective, what means more orientation towards achieving a transnational compromise and, in result, more coherent EU policy.

Therefore, given that Donald Tusk as Council President may bring together the more or less 'pro-Polish' stance on eastern policy on the one hand and a more efficient, 'European' way of policy making on the

⁵³ Poland. The Chancellery of the Prime Minister, 2014

⁵⁴ Kowalczyk, 2015, p.4

⁵⁵ Kowalczyk, 2015, pp.5-6; Great Britain. Government, 2014

⁵⁶ Germany. The Federal Chancellor, 2014

⁵⁷ Croft, 2015; Sharkov, 2015; Freudenstein, 2014; Puhl, 2014

other one, it may be concluded that his appointment (indirectly) adds great value for the potential successful upload of the Polish preferences onto the EU level.

As regards the relevance of the above high level meetings, it should be pointed to their most 'visible' outcomes which are final conclusions or declarations. Due to the initialization or just active participation in many international meetings, Poland has significantly impacted joint declarations of European leaders and, in result, common positions of the European countries (representing different interests) on the EU forum (e.g. at Council meetings). And, in order to achieve such joint declarations or positions that correspond with Polish principles, Poland must first have (at least partly) persuaded other actors to its own standpoint. The persuasion takes place, again, through the process of learning.

In other words, the political meetings serve the exchange of policy contents such as national views, positions, or interests. Here, Poland particularly aims to raise the issues of Russia's faults and Ukraine's difficulties and draw attention of Western Europeans to the security dimension of the crisis. That means that Warsaw presents its particular view that the crisis threatens the European security, it explains that view by demonstrating its own historical experience, and transfers that knowledge to another countries (i.e. to those EU partners which traditionally do not share this position).

This has been exemplified not only by above meetings and their declarations, but also international calls from Polish politicians. Among others, worth mentioning are: Foreign Minister Sikorski's appeal on Russia in which he clearly says about the risk of Russia's aggression⁵⁸, Sikorski's declaration which directly informs that Russia's aggression is already taking place⁵⁹, Sikorski's call for honouring the Budapest Memorandum security guarantees⁶⁰, Tusk's warning that the war in Ukraine may spread over other countries and Tusk's comparison between the current crisis and pre-1939 developments⁶¹, or, more generally, Poland's warning against new military competition in Europe⁶².

Another area of research is Poland's positioning towards the EU anti-Russian sanction policy. A question will be followed below on the potential impact of Poland on the introduction of sanctions on the EU level. Given that, as said, there is no clear evidence that Poland has directly contributed to the sanctions, some factors must be identified below which suggest such (at least indirect) causality.

⁵⁸ Poland, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2014a

⁵⁹ Goettig, 2014

⁶⁰ Poland, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2014b

⁶¹ Siberski, 2014

⁶² Nougayrède, 2015

First of all, what is worth noting is that many sources point to the fact that leading Polish politicians have been very vocal about EU sanction policy. Namely, around repeated sanction talks, they have either (1) justified the need for adopting sanctions, or, afterwards, spoken out for their strengthening⁶³, or (2) criticized the 'Russophile' stance of another countries⁶⁴.

In particular, according to the above sources but also numerous other declarations, interviews, media reports etc., Poland's President, Prime Minister, Foreign Minister and other leading politicians have repeatedly pointed out the need for building a firm and coherent EU response to the new challenges in the East which should be primarily based on imposing sanctions against Russia. They argued that sanctions are an only good solution to be implemented under current circumstances. According to Donald Tusk, Poland should persuade other European policy-makers to such policy. A decisive stance to be presented by Poland should in turn speed up EU decision-making.

In this respect, the Polish politicians have consequently drawn attention of various European actors to EU's internal and external challenges connected with the Ukrainian crisis with the aim of mobilizing these actors to a more decisive stance towards the crisis to be articulated by their support for sanctions on the EU forum. Respectively, they reminded about EU solidarity based on common values such as democracy and sovereignty as well as paid attention to identifying and overcoming obstacles in building consensus across 28-nation EU. Moreover, as said, they indicated Russia's current faults and Ukraine's difficulties and warned against potential risks in the East. The strong canvassing for a sanction policy strongly suggests that Poland must have been a motivating factor (at least one of the factors) for the growing European support for sanctions.

However, as said, there is no unequivocal evidence that would clearly demonstrate Poland's direct impact in this matter. What is obvious is that the official EU documents such as Council meeting conclusions do not inform about back-room decision-making, for example by saying that Poland has exerted a decisive influence on EU's ultimate political decision to impose sanctions. Only secondary sources include observations that Poland, in fact, insisted at the EU Foreign Ministers meetings on as tough as possible sanctions and it has thus contributed to their introduction⁶⁵. Again, this would confirm Poland's strong motivation.

Moreover, some conclusion about Polish projection may be drawn from the comparison between the political capacities of European supporters and opponents of sanctions. Namely, only few EU countries have initially inclined towards supporting sanctions. Alongside with Poland, they included Britain,

⁶³ Beker, 2014; Poland. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2014c; npr.org, 2014; Sobczak, 2014; Sobczak, 2015; EurActiv, 2014; euobserver, 2015

⁶⁴ Rettman, 2015; Prague Post, 2015

⁶⁵ EurActiv, 2014

Denmark, Ireland, Lithuania, Sweden⁶⁶, and also Romania, Latvia, Estonia⁶⁷. Another countries (including the strongest EU members) were either reluctant or did not present clear and unchangeable position on that issue. Accordingly, given that the 'Polish' group of supporters of sanctions has ultimately pushed through its viewpoint against the larger group of (in some cases stronger) EU actors, and that Poland has been one of the strongest members within its own group, one may assume that Poland's voice must have been broadly recognized on the EU agenda. Thus, again, the above example shows that the socialization of actors based on policy learning as well as very strong motivation has more or less contributed to the national projection onto the EU level.

Finally, this section should touch upon one important counterargument which says that the presence of Poland on the international arena has been lately reduced. This fact refers i.e. to the initialization of the so-called Normandy Format (in July 2014) between the heads of the four countries: Germany, France, Russia, and Ukraine⁶⁸. This format has constituted a new, strong platform for the crisis regulation that excludes Poland.

Such move has triggered quite different reactions among Polish politicians. Initially, Polish diplomacy has admittedly claimed that Warsaw is keeping its finger on the pulse i.e. by consulting with Kiev the proceedings from the format's meetings⁶⁹. Beyond that, Poland's absence has been also justified by providing the argument that this format does not serve Poland's objective to raise the 'pro-Ukrainian' perspective on the EU agenda⁷⁰. However, other politicians have visibly demonstrated their discontent that the new platform does not include Poland⁷¹. Given such divergent opinions, the absence of Poland from the above international negotiations seems to be problematic but, nevertheless, not crucial for Poland's further attempts to contribute to a common supranational response to the crisis. There are two following approaches to that issue.

On the one hand, with the new institutional arrangements, Poland's position has been, with no doubt, limited. The Normandy Format has constituted an important international policy framework as it encompasses the two strongest EU member states as well as the two most important Eastern European actors involved in the crisis. Given that, Poland has been excluded from a leading initiative (or at least one of the leading initiatives) which, in fact, includes the actors from the European Union.

⁶⁶ euobserver, 2015

⁶⁷ Kowalczyk, 2015, p.16

⁶⁸ Kowalczyk, 2015, pp.10-11

⁶⁹ TVN24, 2014a

⁷⁰ TVN24 Biznes i Świat, 2014

⁷¹ Kowalczyk, 2015, pp.10-11; TVN24, 2014b

In that sense, Poland's abilities of contributing to the European resolution of the current crisis have been significantly reduced.

On the other hand, however, it is worth emphasizing that the Normandy Format has no official EU mandate what means that it primarily acts on an intergovernmental basis. Thus the absence of Poland does not provide a strong argument against the article's hypothesis about Poland's impact on the EU itself. Instead, Poland is still undertaking attempts to impact on a common, supranational policy towards the crisis, where it is still implementing the above logics of change.

In this respect, the continuous meetings/consultations between Polish and other European leaders (also on the EU forum) may still serve the aim of mobilizing others to action as well as working out common positions for example between Poland and Germany or Poland and France towards the crisis. In particular, what is noteworthy is that Minister Sikorski has officially expressed its view on that Germany as Normandy Format participant should face up to its political responsibility and work out an efficient solution to the crisis. What is more, he said that Poland 'demands' from Germany such action.⁷² This is a good example showing that Warsaw has aimed to still mobilize other (here, leading) actors to a more active policy, in spite of the fact that Warsaw did not sit down at the negotiation table. Beyond that, the above step could be also regarded as Polish attempt to influence on the position of Germany to be represented in the negotiations in which Poland itself does not participate, as far as Poland did offer Germany its own proposal or view on a possible solution.

Another example is that Poland has still opted for extending the format of negotiations to include i.e. the EU and the USA⁷³. Again, Warsaw has sought to activate the EU in the concerned policy area. Also the presence of Poland itself within some broader platform for negotiations has been again promoted e.g. by Poland's present Foreign Minister Grzegorz Schetyna⁷⁴.

The case of Normandy format negotiations shows that such intergovernmental initiatives, despite curbing Poland's capacity to influence directly (that is, at the negotiation table) the crisis resolution, do not negate Poland's (weaker or stronger) impact on common EU response to the crisis. Instead, this case only confirms the conclusions made above in this section that Poland is not strong enough to exert 'hard' foreign policy pressure on other international actors but, instead, it may still impact others through the implementation of the 'soft' logics of change.

⁷² Kowalczyk, 2015, pp.10-11; GazetaPrawna.pl, 2014

⁷³ PolskieRadio.pl, 2015; Poland. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2015

⁷⁴ Gawlik, 2014

Accordingly, to summarize Section III, it has demonstrated that Poland has primarily relied upon socialization of other actors in order to influence the EU response to the current crisis in Ukraine. Socialization means here, first, policy exchange/policy learning (where Poland, based on its rich historical experience, has offered its expertise on the Eastern European issues), and, second, motivation (where Warsaw has paid attention, among others, to the external risks connected with the crisis in Ukraine).

As far as the impact of these logics cannot be directly confirmed (there are no official political statements reporting EU back-room decision making), such examples as Polish Foreign Minister Sikorski's action in Kiev on behalf of the EU, Council President Tusk's activity at the EU level, Poland's strong commitment to EU sanction policy, or, finally, numerous intense consultations on Ukraine with other EU leaders, allow to draw conclusions that Poland must have been at least one of the most important factors determining a more active and firmer EU response to the crisis.

SUMMARY

The article has analysed the role of Poland as a national cause factor in contributing to the EU level response to the external eastern policy challenges.

First of all, Poland takes central stage in expressing the national interest towards the present EU eastern relations, i.e. the policy towards Ukraine. Namely, particularly for Poland, Ukraine has traditionally constituted an area of conflicting interests between, generally, Eastern and Western Europe, i.e. between Russia and Poland itself. Thus, over the centuries, Poland has deeply theorized its policy towards Ukraine and its competition with Russia and, in result of that, unlike any other EU member, it possesses a strong expertise in dealing with the current eastern policy challenges. In addition, given that Poland's eastern policy theories mainly refer to the security dimension connected with such fundamental issue as state sovereignty, Warsaw expresses its extreme motivation to pursue this policy. In fact, one of the priorities of Poland's EU integration is to enhance its national security by involving the EU in stabilizing and strengthening Ukraine's statehood.

In this article, experience and motivation are nothing else other than the main logics of impact implemented by Poland in its attempts to Europeanize its policy towards Ukraine. First, Warsaw has undertaken attempts to strengthen the newly formulated EU eastern policy by proposing its own formula. Second, it has quickly reacted to the crisis in Ukraine through stimulating the EU to a firm response.

Poland's ambitions to shape the external political order are undoubtedly greater than its traditional foreign policy capacities. The country is a relatively weak and unexperienced EU member, compared

with the strongest ones. Thus its 'hard' foreign policy tools cannot be as influential as the 'soft' tools. Indeed, Poland has put emphasis on stimulating the (mainly horizontal) policy exchange followed by the (vertical) impact on the EU agenda through the processes of policy learning, persuading, or mobilizing other actors.

In case of the EaP-introduction, Warsaw has fostered mutual recognition (policy learning) for divergent policy interests. Either (1) it has opted for the mutual support for alternative foreign policy developments (the EaP and UfM) or, (2) in case where, due to certain European interests, the policy directions could not be regarded as competing, it has supported the rapprochement of both contrary positions (the EaP and the EU strategic relations with Russia). Poland's strong motivation, in turn, has been expressed in the fact that in both cases the country has gone beyond its main fields of interest to mobilize support from other countries for its preferences. In result, the acceptance of all EU countries has enabled Poland for upload its own eastern policy concept onto the supranational level.

During the current crisis in Ukraine, the policy exchange has relied i.e. upon the strong promotion of Polish eastern policy priorities among other actors. Poland has offered its expertise in relations to the East based on a rich historical experience but also, on the other hand, its strong motivation to stimulate the EU into action. Warsaw has appealed to Europe by reminding on common EU values, identifying obstacles in the intra-EU policy making as well as informing about the risks related to the external crisis. To give examples, (1) Poland has reacted very quickly to the crisis and mobilized the EU to give response to Ukraine by offering it more power of attraction, (2) Foreign Minister Sikorski has co-represented the EU in mediations in Kiev, (3) Polish politicians held numerous intense consultations with European and non-European leaders to raise the issue of the conflict and (4) opt for a firm and coherent sanction policy (perceiving it as an efficient foreign policy tool). In result, the EU response to the crisis is by far compliant with Poland's priorities what can be observed i.e. on the sanctions. Though there is no unequivocal evidence about the Polish direct impact onto the EU, the above logics of change have contributed to the fact that many European leaders have declared on their meetings with the Polish politicians some (general) policy contents that have been later (more or less) articulated in detail in form of the official EU decisions.

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