



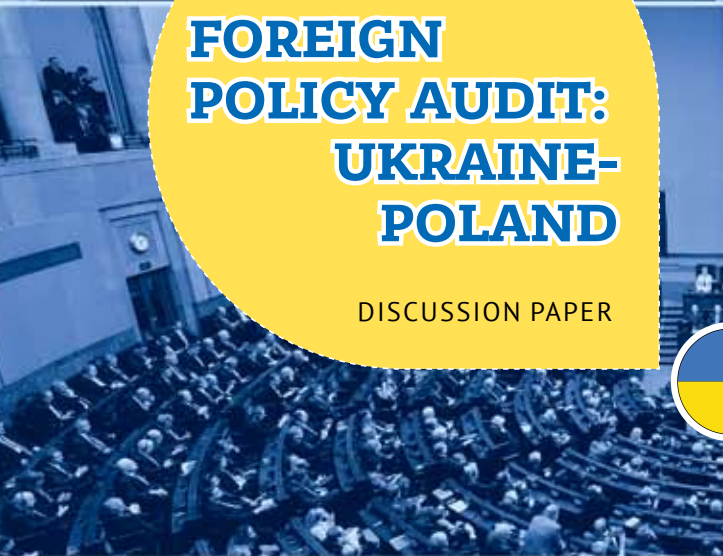
B | S | T The Black Sea Trust  
for Regional Cooperation  
A PROJECT OF THE GERMAN MARSHALL FUND



Kateryna Zarembo

# FOREIGN POLICY AUDIT: UKRAINE- POLAND

DISCUSSION PAPER





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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Unlike most bilateral tracks that Ukraine has with partner countries, the agenda of relations between Ukraine and Poland is shaped by neither economic interests, nor opportunistic factors. Ukrainian-Polish relations have a truly strategic dimension, although Poland has greater role than Ukraine in that. Being the first state to recognize the independence of Ukraine, Poland has been consistently supporting it ever since.

For instance, during the Orange Revolution, Aleksander Kwasniewski assumed the role of mediator between presidential candidates Viktor Yushchenko and Viktor Yanukovych and helped avoid the use of force against peaceful protesters. Furthermore, the resolutions of the European Parliament of 2005 and 2014 confirming the prospects of Ukraine's membership in the EU have been developed with the active participation of Polish MEPs<sup>1</sup>. Together with Sweden, Poland has been the flagship of development of the EU Eastern Policy, including the Eastern Partnership initiative. Kwasniewski and Pat Cox have made personal efforts to open a window of opportunity for signing the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU, as well as to convince Ukrainian authorities to implement necessary reforms. Last but not least, Poland has contributed in diplomatic efforts during the Revolution of Dignity, acting as a mediator between Viktor Yanukovych and three opposition leaders on February 21, 2014, together with Germany and France.

Poland has been remaining a lobbyist of Ukraine's interests in the EU even when the reputational risks of such support were relatively high. In particular, we refer to the efforts made by Aleksander Kwasniewski and his support for dialogue with Leonid Kuchma, even when the latter had been in international isolation. President Bronislaw Komorowski was the only leader of the EU member state to arrive to Kyiv and watch the final of Euro 2012 in the company of Viktor Yanukovych and President of Belarus Aliaksandr Lukashenka.

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<sup>1</sup> *Szeptycki A. Poland-Ukraine relations. Revista UNISCI/UNISCI Journal, N° 40 (Enero/January 2016). P. 74.*

Poland not only has been bigger lobbyist of Ukraine's European integration than Ukraine itself; unlike Kyiv, Warsaw has always been proactive in the bilateral relations.

The reason for that is rooted in Poland's strategic approach to the formation of foreign policy in general. After 1989, Polish foreign policy was based on the views of Juliusz Mieroszewski and Jerzy Giedroyc, Polish intellectuals who, in contrast to sentiments of many of their compatriots, in early post-war decades announced that Poland must abandon any claims for former Polish territories and vehemently support the idea of independent Ukraine, Belarus, Lithuania, and democracy in Russia as a pledge for Polish security<sup>2</sup>. Their views, expressed in Polish-émigré "Kultura" magazine, had become the ideological foundation of the «Solidarity» movement, which, in turn, provided such important supporters as influential supporters as Lech Walesa, Adam Michnik and Jacek Kuron to Ukrainian-Polish relations<sup>3</sup>. Thus, in the early 1990s, the cornerstone of Polish foreign policy was Europeanization, not memory. Polish diplomats emphasized that Ukrainian-Polish relations have "avoided the "bad memory"<sup>4</sup> paradigm," as historian Timothy Snyder praised Polish political elite for their ability to distinguish state interests from national memories in 2003<sup>5</sup>.

The nature of the bilateral relationship has changed with the advent of the Law and Justice (PiS) party led by Jarosław Kaczyński in 2015. Historical perspective with focus on historical truth and

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<sup>2</sup> Zhurzhenko T. *Memory Wars and Reconciliation in the Ukrainian–Polish Borderlands: Geopolitics of Memory from a Local Perspective*. In: Mink G. et al (eds) *History, Memory and Politics in Central and Eastern Europe*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2013. P. 174.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Burlyuk O. (forthcoming). *Same end, different means: the evolution of Poland's sponsorship of Ukraine at the European level* (draft on file with the author)

<sup>5</sup> Snyder, T. *The Reconstruction of Nations. Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus, 1569-1999*. Yale University Press, 2003. P. 274. Quoted from Zhurzhenko T. *Memory Wars and Reconciliation in the Ukrainian–Polish Borderlands: Geopolitics of Memory from a Local Perspective*. In: Mink G. et al (eds) *History, Memory and Politics in Central and Eastern Europe*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2013. P. 173-192.

justice around the events in Volyn in 1943 is currently the top issue for Ukrainian-Polish agenda.

Certainly, the strategic interests of Poland toward Ukraine remain unchanged. The Joint Declaration of the Presidents of Poland and Ukraine adopted on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of Ukraine's independence includes a clear formula that determines the policy of Poland toward Ukraine: "Poland believes that independent Ukraine is essential for its own security and independence."<sup>6</sup>

**Therefore, the interests of Poland toward Ukraine are as follows:**

- 1) independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine;
- 2) integration of Ukraine into the EU and the NATO;
- 3) democratic and economic transformation of Ukraine;
- 4) resolution of disputes on sensitive issues of common history, including the events in Volyn in 1943 and in Galicia in 1944.

According to Polish diplomats, Ukraine's place within European security, values, and cultural space are obvious and natural, although long-term, prospect for Poland.

**In turn, the interests of Ukraine toward Poland are as follows:**

- 1) bilateral relations based on strategic partnership;
- 2) support for Ukraine on its path toward European integration;
- 3) implementation of Ukraine's security interests by supporting Euro-Atlantic integration and cooperation in the field of security;
- 4) implementation of Polish experience of reforms and overcoming the post-communist legacy;

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<sup>6</sup> *Joint Declaration of President of Ukraine and President of Republic of Poland of August 24, 2016. The official web page of the President of Ukraine. Available at: <http://www.president.gov.ua/news/spilna-deklaraciya-prezidenta-ukrayini-ta-prezidenta-respubl-37975>*

- 5) cooperation in the energy sector;
- 6) protection of rights and interests of Ukrainian community in Poland.

This paper is aimed at providing an impartial analysis of key meeting points shaping the current Ukrainian-Polish agenda and identification of specific steps for implementation of common interests.



## 2. INTERESTS OF UKRAINE TOWARD POLAND AND INTERESTS OF POLAND TOWARD UKRAINE: THE MEETING POINTS

### 2.1. POLITICAL DIALOGUE: THE PAST CHASING THE PRESENT

After election of Andrzej Duda for the presidency in Poland and confident of victory of PiS in the parliamentary elections, political dialogue between Ukraine and Poland has been temporarily put on pause (Andrzej Duda first met with Petro Poroshenko almost six months after his inauguration), but has gained momentum later. Since December 2015, both leaders have met at least five times. Duda visited Kyiv twice, including on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of Ukraine's independence. In turn, the visit of Ukrainian President to Warsaw is scheduled for December 2016. An active inter-agency dialogue is being maintained; in particular, the Consultative Committee of Presidents of Ukraine and Poland has resumed its activities. Moreover, visits to Poland have been organized for Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada Andriy Parubiy and Prime Minister of Ukraine Volodymyr Groisman. Finally, Polish Foreign Minister Witold Waszczykowski has visited Ukraine in September 2016.

Both sides strongly emphasize exceptionality of the bilateral relations: in 2015, Bronisław Komorowski, then-President of Poland, selected Kyiv for his last foreign visit before the presidential elections and was invited to perform a speech at the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. Andrzej Duda's speech at the Conference of Ambassadors in Kyiv during his visit in August 2016 has been unprecedented, not to mention the fact that the Polish President was the only Western leader to attend the celebration of Ukraine's independence.

*The present Polish government, like its predecessors, remains an ardent advocate of Ukraine in the EU*

The present Polish government, like its predecessors, remains an ardent advocate of Ukraine in the EU. Polish officials never grow tired of repeating that Ukraine's membership in the EU is a long-term goal for Poland, and "without Ukraine, the project of united,

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free, and democratic Europe is not viable.”<sup>7</sup> Polish MPs have voted for ratification of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU almost unanimously (although in the previous convocation). Nowadays, Poland remains an unconditional advocate for two issues principal for Ukraine: maintaining the sanctions against Russia and the implementation of the visa-free regime for Ukraine.

Due to those and other expressions of support for Ukraine European Council on Foreign Relations has confidently placed Poland to the group of “leaders” among the EU member states supporting Ukraine, after Germany, the UK, and Sweden<sup>8</sup>.

Against this background, it seems almost paradoxical that many Ukrainians speak of deteriorating relations between Ukraine and Poland. The media background for Polish-Ukrainian dialogue has been shaped by different interpretations of the past events by Ukrainian and Polish parliaments, immediately picked up by Ukrainian and Polish media. This refers to the voting for the “decommunization laws” package, including the law “On the Legal Status and Commemoration of Fighters for Independence of Ukraine in the XX Century” providing the Ukrainian Nationalist Organization (OUN) and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) with the respective status and, among other things, prohibiting to criticize them, on April 9, 2015. The attitudes towards OUN and UPA in Poland are controversial to say the least, as these organizations are considered responsible for the extermination of Polish civilians in Volyn in 1943 and in Galicia in 1944. The worst for Poland was the fact that these laws have been adopted immediately after Bronislaw Komorowski’s speech in the Verkhovna Rada, which

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<sup>7</sup> Witold Waszczykowski: *Without Ukraine, the Project of Free and Democratic Europe is not Viable*. [In Ukrainian] *Espreso*, 18.09.2016. Available at: [http://espresso.tv/article/2016/09/18/vitold\\_vaschykovskyy\\_bez\\_ukrainyy\\_proekt\\_vilnoyi\\_i\\_demokratychnoyi\\_yevropy\\_nepovnocinnyy](http://espresso.tv/article/2016/09/18/vitold_vaschykovskyy_bez_ukrainyy_proekt_vilnoyi_i_demokratychnoyi_yevropy_nepovnocinnyy)

<sup>8</sup> Gressel G. *Keeping Up Appearances: How Europe Is Supporting Ukraine's Transformation*. European Council on Foreign Relations, 5th October 2016. Available at: [http://www.ecfr.eu/publications/summary/keeping\\_up\\_appearances\\_how\\_europe\\_is\\_supporting\\_ukraines\\_transformation](http://www.ecfr.eu/publications/summary/keeping_up_appearances_how_europe_is_supporting_ukraines_transformation)

has been perceived in Poland as an outright humiliation of the Poles and their leader<sup>9</sup>.

In turn, the resolution of the Polish Senate and the Sejm (7 and 22 July, 2016 respectively) "On establishing July 11 as the Day of Remembrance of Polish Victims of the Genocide Committed by the UPA" has caused massive outcry and has been perceived by Ukrainian public and media as the ruling party's step toward confrontation with Ukraine. A certain part of Ukrainian public did not understand what Ukraine has to do with the crimes against Polish civilian population, or how could the latter be connected with the UPA that has become a symbol of Ukraine's struggle for independence in the years of war with Russia. An indicative illustration of awareness of the events in Volyn in Ukraine is an informal survey conducted among the MPs of Ukraine by a journalist of *Ukrainska Pravda* on the eve of the voting for the declaration in response to the resolution adopted by the Polish Senate of July 2016: only the very few have demonstrated awareness about the events in Volyn region<sup>10</sup>.

In Poland, public consensus that crimes committed in Volyn are Ukrainians' genocide against Poles had been shaped back in the 1990s. An opinion poll conducted in 2013 by Polish Public Opinion Research Centre showed that 69% of Poles believe that they are well informed about this specific page of history or know something about it. Different groups of Polish voters vary not in definitions of the events in Volyn region, but in the level of importance of eliciting historical truth among their expectations of political forces. Such issues as commemoration of the victims of Kresy Wschodnie, i.e. the regions of interwar Poland located to the East of the current borders of Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine, and eliciting the historical truth about those events are mostly processed by the so-called "Kresy Organizations." It should be noted that the majority of Poles

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<sup>9</sup> A. Getmanchuk. *How We are Losing pro-Ukrainian Poland [In Ukrainian]*. *Yevropeyska Pravda*, 22.10.2015. Available at: <http://www.eurointegration.com.ua/articles/2015/10/22/7039792/>

<sup>10</sup> Y. Bilonozhko. *Events in Volyn in 1943: Versions of Ukrainian MPs [In Ukrainian]*. *Ukrainska Pravda*, 18.07.2016. Available at: <http://www.pravda.com.ua/columns/2016/07/18/7114841/>

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are convinced that their people have suffered the most during the Second World War.

The historical debate between Ukraine and Poland is not a new phenomenon. In 1997, then-Presidents Leonid Kuchma and Alexander Kwasniewski have signed the first joint statement "For Understanding and Unity."<sup>11</sup> In 2003, the parliaments of Ukraine and Poland have issued a joint statement for the 60th anniversary of the Volyn events<sup>12</sup>, and on the next day both presidents have made a joint reconciliation statement. It should be emphasized that all these statements referred to tragedy and commemoration of the fallen, but not to responsibility or absolution, which caused discontent of the Polish side, in particular in 2003. Resolutions on the events in Volyn have been adopted by the Polish parliament in 2009 and 2013.

One of the first inter-state misunderstandings on the historic basis was Viktor Yushchenko's posthumous awarding of the Hero of Ukraine title to Stepan Bandera. Then Polish President Lech Kaczynski has criticized this act, while the European Parliament has adopted a resolution calling on the leaders of Ukraine "to reconsider such decisions and maintain their commitment to European values," following the initiative of Polish MEPs<sup>13</sup>.

In turn, the resolution, adopted by the Polish Parliament in 2013 for the 70th anniversary of the events in Volyn, had more critical rhetoric, compared to the previous declarations, and called the events in Volyn "a crime with signs of genocide" laying responsibility for it on the OUN and the UPA.

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<sup>11</sup> *Joint Statement of the President of Ukraine and the President of Republic of Poland "For Understanding and Unity" of 21.05.1997 [In Ukrainian]. Available at: [http://zakon5.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/616\\_005](http://zakon5.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/616_005)*

<sup>12</sup> *Resolution of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine "On Adoption of Ukrainian-Polish Parliamentary Declaration on the 60th anniversary of the Volyn tragedy," [In Ukrainian] 10.07.2016. Available at: <http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1085-15>*

<sup>13</sup> *The European Parliament resolution of 25 February 2010 on the situation in Ukraine. Available at: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2010-0035+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>*

Therefore, the Volyn issue has been relevant in Poland with every government. With that in mind, it becomes clear why voting for the “decommunization laws” package on the day of Bronislaw Komorowski’s speech in the Verkhovna Rada has been perceived in Poland as a stab in the back, and why Kyiv City Council’s voting for renaming Moskovskiy prospekt to Stepan Bandera prospekt on the day of President Poroshenko’s visit to the Warsaw Summit in July 2016 has not had good timing.

However, with the arrival of the Law and Justice party in its current composition (it should be noted that most of PiS former elite died in a plane crash near Smolensk in 2010) historical issues have become a cornerstone of government policy. In this context, PiS is taking a step back, implementing the very scenario of relations with Ukraine in particular and foreign policy in general that has been avoided by Giedroyc and his followers after 1989. Today, power in Poland belongs to the people who will not ignore historical differences for the sake of good neighbourly relations; on contrary, they will emphasize them.

In order to understand the current stage of Ukrainian-Polish relations, the following key characteristics of Poland’s policy shaped by the Law and Justice party should be considered:

- It is state-centric rather than Euro-centric. Represented by PiS, Poland does not abandon the European project; however, it is interested in the EU as a community of strong members, not institutions. The pillars of today’s PiS are independence and sovereignty, not Europeanization, as it has been in the previous 25 years<sup>14</sup>;
- PiS and their electorate value historical issues. For instance, Polish Foreign Minister Witold Waszczykowski declared 2016 the year of “Polish historical diplomacy”

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<sup>14</sup> Balcer A., Buras P., Gromadzki G., Smolar E. *Change in Poland, but what change? Assumptions of Law and Justice party foreign policy*. Stefan Batory Foundation. Warsaw, May 2016. 18 p.

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during his annual speech in the Polish Parliament<sup>15</sup>. Importantly, historical policy of PiS penetrates all areas and external audiences and does not target Ukraine specifically;

- PiS's ideological doctrine is based not on the recent accomplishments of Poland in the area of European integration or overcoming post-communist heritage, but rather on certain historical "statelessness complex." Indicatively, certain political principles of today's Poland are, in fact, an extrapolation of the ideas of Jozef Pilsudski: for instance, the idea of the Intermarium Union. As explained by Andrzej Duda, "In the past, we were denied a state that was truly ours. We were denied security and the right to our own culture and language, at times the entire nation was in danger of annihilation. We were too often denied the right to determine our own fate."<sup>16</sup> This statement sheds some light on the causes of today's confrontation between Warsaw and Brussels and explains the PiS's slogan "Nothing about us without us!".

In fact, today Polish elites of PiS are going through a certain identity crisis caused by undiscussed historical issues, regarding which a part of Polish political elite and electorate seeks to elicit the ultimate truth. The fact that Poland and Ukraine (especially Poland) have not had a sustainable dialogue on historical concerns for 25 years has been called by one of Polish diplomats "a frozen conflict" between the two countries, which escalated while Ukraine has been considering the reconciliation issue long resolved<sup>17</sup>. On the other hand, historical policy of Poland (as well as glorification of the UPA in Ukraine) is a response to the social demand, not an attempt to confront the neighbour state. However, insufficient mutual awareness

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<sup>15</sup> *Information of the Minister of Foreign Affairs on the Polish Government's foreign policy in 2016. (29 January 2016). Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland. Available at [http://www.msz.gov.pl/en/foreign\\_policy/goals\\_of\\_foreign\\_policy/annual\\_address\\_2011/](http://www.msz.gov.pl/en/foreign_policy/goals_of_foreign_policy/annual_address_2011/) [http://www.msz.gov.pl/en/foreign\\_policy/goals\\_of\\_foreign\\_policy/annual\\_address\\_2011/](http://www.msz.gov.pl/en/foreign_policy/goals_of_foreign_policy/annual_address_2011/)*

<sup>16</sup> *Rozmowa z Prezydentem RP Andrzejem Dudą. "Musimy być głodni sukcesu." Polski Przegląd Dyplomatyczny, Numer 1 (67) 2016. <http://www.ppd.pism.pl/Numery/1-67-2016/Rozmowa-z-Prezydentem-RP-Andrzejem-Duda>*

<sup>17</sup> *Interview with Polish diplomat, 13.07.2016.*

of processes in both countries and their importance has led to their false interpretation on both sides.

It is important to take into account the fact that Polish historians had been working professionally on Volyn-related issues for the last twenty-five years and have accumulated a solid bank of materials and evidence, while Ukrainian historiography, as well as the humanities in general, lack resources due to constant underfunding. As a result, Polish-Ukrainian historical debate is characterized by asymmetry in awareness and reasoning, and (most importantly) has moved from universities to the parliaments.

*While the Poles struggle to believe that glorification of the UPA in Ukraine has nothing in common with anti-Polish sentiments, Ukrainians find it difficult to understand that the July resolution of the Parliament of Poland is not anti-Ukrainian*

The asymmetry of mutual understanding is also observed in attitudes toward current events in both countries. While the Poles struggle to believe that red and black flags in the streets during the Revolution of Dignity and glorification of the UPA in Ukraine as a source of inspiration for the modern struggle for independence of

Ukrainian state have nothing in common with anti-Polish sentiments, Ukrainians find it difficult to understand that the July resolution of the Parliament of Poland is not anti-Ukrainian.

In fact, PiS and a large part of other conservative and Christian-democratic political groups are truly convinced that such resolutions and historical dialogue, to which they encourage Ukraine, would actually have a positive effect on Polish-Ukrainian relations in the long term, as in their opinion, talking, finding answers and then closing this chapter in the history of bilateral relations is the only way toward true reconciliation<sup>18</sup>. This statement is supported, for instance, by the fact that the initiator of the resolution is Michał Dworczyk, the Chairman of Ukrainian-Polish Interparliamentary Cooperation Group from the Polish side, generally characterized as a pro-Ukrainian politician (!) by Polish experts.

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<sup>18</sup> Interview with Lukasz Adamski, Deputy Director of the Centre for Polish-Russian Dialogue and Understanding, 21.10.2016.

Another way to understand the true significance of the July Resolution is comparing the results of voting in the Sejm on that resolution and on a joint “Declaration of Memory and Solidarity” in Polish and Ukrainian parliaments on October 20, 2016. While the former has been supported by 432 MPs (10 abstentions and no votes against), the “Declaration of Memory and Solidarity” has been supported by 367 MPs, most of them representing PiS, Nowoczesna, and Civic Platform. While voting for the “Declaration of Memory and Solidarity” clearly demonstrates which Polish political actors are pro-Ukrainian, the voting on resolution on Volyn has been primarily addressed to the Polish voters, not to the foreign audience. Voting against the resolution declaring crimes committed in Volyn a genocide would be interpreted by Polish electorate not as a way to avoid conflict with Ukraine, but as a doubt that it was a genocide, and therefore, would cause indispensable reputation losses<sup>19</sup>.

Therefore, today's Ukrainian political elite should demonstrate maturity and wisdom in the dialogue with Poland, taking historical claims not as

*Voting on resolution on Volyn has been primarily addressed to the Polish voters, not to the foreign audience*

insinuations, but as calls for assistance and cooperation. A good example of such policy is September response declaration of the Verkhovna Rada, generally welcomed in Poland, including PiS politicians<sup>20</sup>. The balance demonstrated by Ukrainian and Polish diplomats in commenting on “Volyn” film as a piece of art that does not claim to historical accuracy is also noteworthy.

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<sup>19</sup> Interview with Polish politician, 28.10.2016.

<sup>20</sup> Interview with Polish politician, 27.10.2016.



## 2.2. SECURITY INTERESTS OF UKRAINE AND POLAND: MULTIDIMENSIONAL IMPLEMENTATION

In the context of Russian aggression in Eastern Ukraine, Poland is one of the few NATO member states that consider their contribution to the development of Ukraine's (and therefore, regional) security through the prism of both development of Ukraine's security and defence capabilities, and integration of Ukraine into Western security structures.

For instance, Poland (together with the UK, USA, Canada, Lithuania, and Estonia) has joined the Joint Coordination Committee on Defence Reforms in Ukraine<sup>21</sup>. In particular, in 2016, the soldiers of Polish Brygada Strzelcow Podhalanskich (mountain infantry brigade) have conducted a two-month training of soldiers of Ukrainian army at Yavoriv range<sup>22</sup>. Throughout the whole time of the war against Russia, Poland has been providing humanitarian aid to Ukraine, treatment and rehabilitation for soldiers injured in the ATO zone, and training for Ukrainian officers in Polish military schools.

An important component of security relations between Ukraine and Poland is cooperation in military industry sector. With that in mind, Defence Ministers of the two countries, Stepan Poltorak and Antoni Macierewicz, have signed a protocol amending the Agreement on Military and Technical Cooperation at the NATO summit in Warsaw. In particular, the protocol includes establishment of the Working Group on Military and Technical Cooperation within the framework of Ukrainian-Polish Intergovernmental Commission on Economic

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<sup>21</sup> Ministry of Defence of Ukraine. *International Cooperation*. [In Ukrainian] Available at: <http://www.mil.gov.ua/diyalnist/mizhnarodne-spivrobitnicstvo/>

<sup>22</sup> Polish military completed training of Ukrainians at Yavoriv range [In Ukrainian]. *Polish Radio*, 08.10.2016. Available at: <http://www.polradio.pl/5/38/Artykul/274486>

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Cooperation<sup>23</sup>. Poland and Ukraine are mutually interested in joint production of helicopters, unmanned aircraft systems, individual protection complexes, etc. Such cooperation is beneficial in both security and economic context. Polish investments into the joint project of Polish company Lubawa SA and State Concern Ukroboronprom aimed at production of military ammunition in Ivano-Frankivsk, which should be launched by the end of 2016, are estimated at EUR 1 million<sup>24</sup>. Furthermore, the intergovernmental Agreement on Cooperation in Defence Sector, the first bilateral agreement of this type signed by Ukraine since the beginning of Russian aggression, is expected.

On the other hand, the conflict in Eastern Ukraine has much less presence in the political and security discourse of Poland than e.g. increase in the NATO presence on its eastern flank. This is partially caused by Poland's detachment from the Minsk format. Today, the process of conflict resolution causes irritation rather than enthusiasm in the official Warsaw; however, this is not due to the purpose, but rather because of the means: Poland perceives the Normandy Format as another manifestation of the dominance of Germany and France in resolving vital issues in Europe<sup>25</sup>. Henceforth, Poland aims to join the negotiating process not only for the sake of the conflict settlement itself, but rather to assert its own weight in decision-making in the EU. Ukraine, in turn, believes that Poland's efforts to support Kyiv's position in Brussels, including on the issue of maintaining the sanctions, is much more productive for the conflict

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<sup>23</sup> *The Minister of Defence of Ukraine and the Minister of National Defence of Poland signed the Protocol on Military and Technical Cooperation. Ministry of Defence of Ukraine, 09.07.2016. Available at: <http://www.mil.gov.ua/news/2016/07/09/ministr-oboroni-ukraini-ta-ministr-naczionalnoi-oboroni-polshhi-pidpisali-protokol-shhodo-pitan-vijskovo-tehnichnogo-spirobitnicztva--/>*

<sup>24</sup> *EUR 1 million investment is planned for the joint venture of Ukroboronprom and Lubawa SA. Military navigator, 25.09.2015. Available at: <http://www.milnavigator.com/uk/v-sovmestnoe-ukrainsko-polskoe-predpriyatye-ukroboronproma-i-lubawa-sa-planiruetsya-investirovat-1-mln-evro/>*

<sup>25</sup> *Witold Waszykowski: Polish President Duda develops a new peace initiative to replace the Minsk Format. Espresso, 25.08.2015. Available at: [http://espresso.tv/article/2015/08/25/witold\\_vaschykovskyy\\_prezydent\\_polschi\\_duda\\_gotu\\_ye\\_novu\\_myrrnu\\_iniciatyvu\\_na\\_zaminu\\_quotminskomu\\_formatuquot](http://espresso.tv/article/2015/08/25/witold_vaschykovskyy_prezydent_polschi_duda_gotu_ye_novu_myrrnu_iniciatyvu_na_zaminu_quotminskomu_formatuquot)*

settlement than increasing the number of interlocutors at the negotiating table<sup>26</sup>.

The present Polish government, like its predecessors, insists on the “open door policy” of the NATO toward Ukraine. It is no secret that

*Poland as host country invited Ukraine to the NATO Summit in Warsaw even before the formal decision by all members*

Poland as host country invited Ukraine to the NATO Summit in Warsaw even before the formal decision by all members and lobbied Ukrainian issue on the agenda of the summit<sup>27</sup>. As a result of Poland’s efforts, Ukraine is getting engaged into practical defence cooperation: in addition to the

Polukrbat battalion, established in 2000 and having participated in operations in Kosovo, the opening ceremony for the Command of the Joint Lithuanian-Polish-Ukrainian brigade (LITPOLUKRbrig) has been held on January 25, 2016. In February 2016, the first training exercises of the new brigade have been conducted. The establishment of such an international unit for Ukraine is an example and an opportunity of practical integration to the NATO forces even without formal membership; it is a significant achievement, given the fact that such initiatives do not always find support among the NATO member states (e.g. the case of Bulgaria and Romanian-Ukrainian idea of the Black Sea Fleet).

Another important initiative offered to Ukraine by Poland is the idea of the Intermarium Union, or ABC in Polish (Adriatyk – Bałtyk – Morze Czarne). The objective of this project, as defined by Andrzej Duda, is to strengthen political subjectivity of Central and Eastern Europe within the framework of the Euro-Atlantic community. In other words, it is not an alternative, but an additional security structure to help the countries of Central and Eastern Europe catch up the Western part of the continent in terms of development. In addition, it is not a defensive structure, but security one in the broadest sense (military, energy, economic, infrastructure, and socio-historical), following the North-South axis, not East-West one. An example of this project implemen-

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<sup>26</sup> Interview with Ukrainian diplomat, 07.10.2016.

<sup>27</sup> <http://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-politycs/2094336-andrij-desica-nadzvacajnij-i-povnovaznij-posol-ukraini-v-polsi.html>

tation, according to Duda, could be high speed railway between Tallinn and Dubrovnik, with spurs to Vienna, Kyiv, Bucharest, Sofia, and Belgrade<sup>28</sup>.

The first step toward implementation of this initiative was the summit of leaders and high representatives of 12 states of Central and Eastern Europe on August 25, 2016 in Dubrovnik. Despite being invited, Ukraine has not delegated a representative. However, Andrzej Duda in his speech at the Conference of Ambassadors in Kyiv has clearly stated that the initiative is open for Kyiv and engagement of Ukraine is welcomed by Poland, emphasizing at the same time the sovereign right of Ukraine to choose the partners for alliances<sup>29</sup>. It should be noted that Poland considers the Intermarium Union as an organization of equal members with integration process being an initiative of all stakeholders<sup>30</sup>. Official Kyiv generally welcomes this initiative; however, successful engagement of Ukraine requires a clear vision of its contribution. It is important for Ukraine to participate in the next summit of the initiative scheduled for June 2017 in Wrocław. Appropriate preparations should be immediately added to the agenda of Ukrainian-Polish cooperation.

*Another important initiative offered to Ukraine by Poland is the idea of the Intermarium Union, or ABC in Polish*

In particular, one of the pillars of security cooperation with Ukraine within the Intermarium project should be energy component, especially considering both the opposition of the countries in the region to the Nord Stream 2 project and significant increase in the transit of Russian gas through Ukraine (17.9% increase in the first nine months

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<sup>28</sup> Rozmowa z Prezydentem RP Andrzejem Dudą. „Musimy być głodni sukcesu”. *Polski Przegląd Dyplomatyczny*, Numer 1 (67) 2016. Available at: <http://www.ppd.pism.pl/Numery/1-67-2016/Rozmowa-z-Prezydentem-RP-Andrzejem-Duda>

<sup>29</sup> Wystąpienie Prezydenta RP w Akademii Dyplomatycznej w Kijowie, 24.08.2016. Oficjalna strona Prezydenta Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej. Available at: <http://www.prezydent.pl/aktualnosci/wypowiedzi-prezydenta-rp/wystapienia/art,67,wystapienie-prezydenta-rp-w-akademii-dyplomatycznej-w-kijowie.html>

<sup>30</sup> Interview with Polish diplomat, 27.10.2016.

of 2016, compared to the same period last year)<sup>31</sup>. Ukraine is interested in development of interconnectors between itself, the Visegrad countries, and Romania (the so-called Eastern European gas hub project). In December 2014 an Agreement on cooperation between the Ukrainian and Polish gas transportation operators ("Ukrtransgaz" and "Gaz-System S.A.") was signed which envisages the construction of an interconnector between Bilche-Volytsia underground gas storage facilities (Lviv region) and Drozdowicze transfer point on Ukrainian-Polish border. The start of the Ukrainian part construction is scheduled for 2017, the commercial usage of the interconnector is planned from 2020. Moreover, Ukraine aims to join the GIPL project for construction of a gas pipeline between Lithuania and Poland supported by the European Commission. Implementation of this project would provide Ukraine with gas supplies from Klaipeda LNG terminal through the pipelines in Belarus and Poland.

Furthermore, Ukraine makes efforts to increase supply of its own energy sources to Poland and other EU states, e.g. by transporting electricity from Khmelnytsky NPP. Signing of the memorandum between the respective public companies is on the bilateral agenda since 2014; however, the Polish side has not yet completed the inter-ministerial consultations.

### 2.3. REFORMS AND THE ECONOMY: THE OPPORTUNITY FOR A COMMON SUCCESS STORY

A successful reform process in Ukraine remains undoubtedly a top priority for Poland. And among such reforms, the priorities for Poland are to reduce bureaucracy, combat corruption, and establish effective

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<sup>31</sup> Ministry of Energy and Coal Mining of Ukraine. Statistical data for January-September 2016. Available at: [http://mpe.kmu.gov.ua/minugol/control/uk/publish/article.jsessionid=B3E81631E5788D1973AFE5BE8699FE0B.app1?art\\_id=245154681&cat\\_id=35081](http://mpe.kmu.gov.ua/minugol/control/uk/publish/article.jsessionid=B3E81631E5788D1973AFE5BE8699FE0B.app1?art_id=245154681&cat_id=35081)

## 2. Interests of Ukraine toward Poland and interests of Poland toward Ukraine: the meeting points

governance.<sup>32</sup> Ukraine is included in the list of 10 priority recipients in Poland's development aid program for 2016-2020. The Polish Government even includes the post of Special Representative for the Support of Reforms in Ukraine, which is currently held by Deputy State Secretary of the Ministry of Finance Wiesław Janczyk.

In its turn, Ukraine has always been highly interested in Polish reformatory practices, which reached its epitome this past year with the hiring of former Polish members of Government in the country's own reform process. For instance, the "architect of Polish economic reforms," Leszek Balcerowicz, was invited by President Poroshenko to head a Strategic Group of advisors to support reforms in the Cabinet of Ministers. In addition to Balcerowicz, the group includes a former Interior Minister of Poland, ex-governor of Malopolska Voyevodstvo, Jerzy Miller and a one-time member of the Polish Sejm, Mirosław Czech.<sup>33</sup> In 2015, Sejm MP Marcin Swiecicki led a group of Polish experts to help Ukraine institute decentralization reforms. In July 2016, the former CoB of the Polish Railway, Wojciech Balczun, was hired to run UkrZaliznytsia, the state railway, while in October, former Polish Transport Minister Sławomir Nowak became the acting director of UkrAvtoDor, Ukraine's roadways agency.

*A successful reform process in Ukraine remains undoubtedly a top priority for Poland*

Meanwhile, 2015-16 also saw a revival in Ukrainian-Polish trade relations. Polish investors pulled back in 2014-15, but by mid-2016, their investments in Ukraine were up to US \$791 million, more than had been invested in all of 2015 (see Figure 1<sup>34</sup>).

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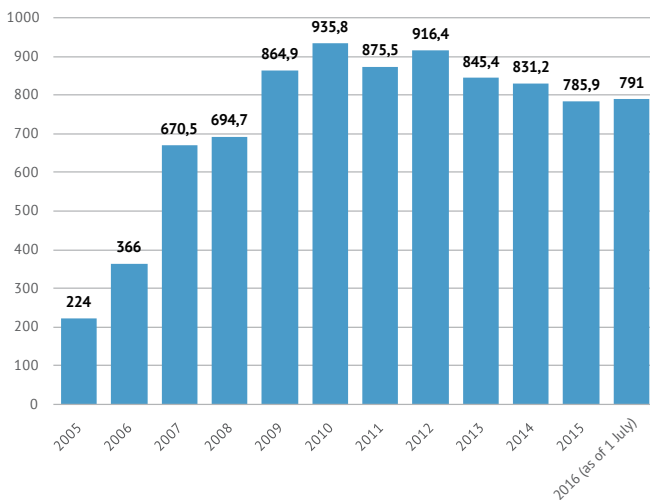
<sup>32</sup> *The way the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine (NABU) was set up was partly based on Polish practice and NABU staff have traveled to Poland for training.*

<sup>33</sup> *Two more well-known Polish politicians will be working in Ukraine as well [In Ukrainian]. Ukrainska Pravda, 25.04.2016. Access at: <http://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2016/04/25/7106668/>*

<sup>34</sup> *Embassy of Ukraine in Poland, Trade and economic cooperation between Ukraine and Poland. Access at: <http://poland.mfa.gov.ua/ua/ukraine-pl/trade>*

Poland remains one of the top 10 investors in Ukraine, and by July 1, 2016, its investments were worth 2.4% of all FDI to Ukraine.<sup>35</sup>

**Figure 1.** Total volume of Polish investment in Ukraine (2005-2016 in millions of USD)



By comparison, Ukrainian investments in Poland are insubstantial, not even in the Top 20 for that country. Nevertheless, Ukrainian diplomats note that Ukrainian investments in Poland that are not included in official statistics for various reasons are, in fact, more than US \$1 billion.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>35</sup> DerzhStat is the state statistics bureau of Ukraine. Foreign direct investment (FDI) or share capital from EU countries invested in Ukraine as of July 1, 2016 [In Ukrainian]. Access at: <http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/>

<sup>36</sup> Embassy of Ukraine in Poland: Trade and economic cooperation between Ukraine and Poland [In Ukrainian]. Access at: <http://poland.mfa.gov.ua/ua/ukraine-pl/trade>

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According to the Ukrainian Embassy in Poland, Polish capital in Ukraine is predominantly seen in five areas: 45.5% in financial services and insurance, 33.5% in manufacturing, 9.7% in trade, motor vehicle and motorcycle repairs, 3.9% in agriculture, forestry and fisheries, and 1.8% in administrative services. The biggest Polish manufacturing facilities include, among others: Cersanit, which makes ceramics for construction; Barlinek, a lumber plant; Noviy Styl, a furniture plant; Ken-Pak, which makes packaging; Inter-Hroklin, which makes car parts; Polimex-Mostostal, which processes metals; Sniezka-Ukraine, a paint manufacturer; Credobank and Idea-Bank, which provide financial services and PZU Ukraine, an insurance company; and LPP SA, Poland's biggest retailer.

The most significant Ukrainian investment projects in Poland include: Guta Czenstochowa, a steel plant, and Stocznie Gdanske, a shipbuilding plant, in which ISD has invested; Guta Pokuj, in which Privat has invested; Helios, a lighting plant in which Iskra has invested; TB Fruit Dwikozy, a fruit processing plant in which TB Fruit, owner of the Yabluneviy Dar brand, has invested; and Ostrowia, a cheese-processing plant in Masowiecki in which the Milkiland Group has invested.

For Ukraine, Poland is the fourth largest trading partner in the world after Russia, China and Germany. By volume, Poland is the second biggest partner in the EU after Italy. Over 2014-15, trade volumes fell, down 24.7% in 2015 from 2014 volume, and that was after a major contraction in 2014. This situation was mainly a reflection of the state of Ukraine's domestic economy: in 2015, both exports and imports grew in Poland.<sup>37</sup> However, positive trends were seen in Ukraine during H1'16: trade in goods between the two countries grew 8.8% compared to the same period of 2015, while trade in services jumped 38.6%.

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<sup>37</sup> Central Statistical Office of Poland: *Foreign trade turnover of goods in total and by countries in 2015*. Access at <http://stat.gov.pl/en/topics/prices-trade/trade/foreign-trade-turnover-of-goods-in-total-and-by-countries-in-2015,2,8.html>



***The Polish government has openly admitted that Ukrainians are needed on the Polish labor market***

Ukrainian migrant workers are a separate component of the Polish economy. The Polish government has openly admitted that Ukrainians are needed on the Polish labor market, to replace the thousands of Poles who have migrated to Western Europe to seek their fortunes. Ukrainian workers are valued on the Polish labor market, not just because they are professional and proper, but also because there are no major problems with language or day-to-day integration.<sup>38</sup> According to former Polish Ambassador to Ukraine Henryk Litwin, more than 900,000 Polish visas were issued to Ukrainians in 2015, more than half of which were working permits. This means that these Ukrainians already had an invitation from an official employer when they submitted their applications and so we are talking about legal employment. Ukrainians are filling both office jobs and positions requiring skilled and semi-skilled labor in construction, farming and manufacturing.

The exact number of Ukrainians currently working in Poland is hard to calculate, but Ukrainian and Polish diplomats quote a figure of 1 million. In 2015, the volume of private money transfers to Ukraine from Poland was US \$55.1mn, which was up considerably from 2012-2014, when the annual average was around US 40mn.<sup>39</sup>

Students constitute a separate group: over 2015-2016, more than 30,000 students from Ukraine were registered in degree programs in Poland and they constitute the top foreign group there. They also account for 50% of all Ukrainians studying abroad.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> *Polish ambassador explains why Warsaw is happy to see hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian migrants [In Ukrainian]*, TSN news, June 3, 2016. Access at: <http://tsn.ua/politika/posol-polschi-v-ukrayini-poyasniv-neobhidnist-kroktiv-z-legalizaciyi-ukrayinciv-zarobitchan-666158.html>

<sup>39</sup> *National Bank of Ukraine: Private transfers of money [In Ukrainian]*. Access at: <https://bank.gov.ua/doccatalog/document?id=19208357>

<sup>40</sup> *More than 30,000 Ukrainian students are studying in Poland*, Polish Radio, April 27, 2016. Access at: <http://www.polradio.pl/5/38/Artykul/250445>

## 2. Interests of Ukraine toward Poland and interests of Poland toward Ukraine: the meeting points

One of the leading obstacles to taking advantage of their migration and economic potential further by engaging the border areas is how ineffectively the crossing points currently work along the Ukrainian-Polish border. The throughput capacity is reduced both by the poor state of roads on the Ukrainian side and the lack of border infrastructure in general. Moreover, among the current eight automobile crossings, only in four are customs and border control combined, and that on the Polish side alone. Joint border checks allow those crossing to go through both countries' official checkpoints at once, on the exit side of the border, significantly speeding up the entire process. Ukraine aims to institute joint control on all border crossings with Poland and on both sides. Right now, it is waiting for the draft of a new bilateral agreement on establishing joint customs and border controls.<sup>41</sup>

*Ukraine aims to institute joint control on all border crossings with Poland and on both sides*

In addition to this, the Polish Government has allocated a €100mn credit to build approaching roadways and equip the crossing points. By comparison, the European Union allocated Ukraine €66mn for 2011-2017 to support border administration policy as part of one of its sectoral budget support programs.<sup>42</sup> Ukraine has introduced the necessary changes to the budget. The creation of a joint expert group on the realization of the project was agreed on last meeting of the Ukrainian-Polish coordination council on the international cooperation issues (October 28, 2016). It's now extremely important that this money be used effectively, in accordance with transparent procurement and construction procedures.

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<sup>41</sup> Interview with Ukrainian diplomat, October 7, 2016.

<sup>42</sup> Mission of Ukraine to the European Union. EU's Assistance to Ukraine. Access at <http://ukraine-eu.mfa.gov.ua/en/ukraine-eu/eu-policy/assistance>. Accessed 03.11.2016

### 3. WHO'S WHO? INTERESTED PARTIES AND GROUPS OF INFLUENCE

#### 3.1. POLITICAL PLAYERS: WHO INFLUENCES POLISH POLICY TOWARDS UKRAINE?

Since its new Government came to office in 2015, Poland no longer has any political heavyweights like Radoslaw Sikorski or Bronislaw Komorowski who might want to make battling for Ukraine part of their political image. Partly, this is because for the PiS party, especially for its leader, Jaroslaw Kaczynski, the priority is domestic policy. Partly, this was also affected by both the vote in the Verkhovna Rada during Komorowski's last visit and Viktor Yushchenko's Decree granting Stepan Bandera Hero of Ukraine status during Donald Tusk's time in office: Ukraine began to be seen as a partner that, in return for friendly policies, could respond with something humiliating.<sup>43</sup>

Polish experts also explain the clear shortage of PiS politicians who might be responsible for working with Ukraine because the country's portfolio is less prestigious than certain other foreign policy areas. What's more, because of ideological differences, PiS has not been looking to the Civic Platform for potential appointees, although the party has a serious pool of experts on Ukrainian issues. In particular, Marcin Wojciechowski, who had been approved by a Sejm commission as Poland's ambassador to Ukraine, was recalled because of his work in the Polish Foreign Ministry under Sikorski. Instead, they appointed Jan Pieklo, a well-known Polish public figure and expert on Ukrainian-Polish relations who does not belong to any party.

Although within PiS, far from all party members are critically disposed to Ukraine, few are prepared to openly declare support as this could lead to a loss of reputation for them.<sup>44</sup> What's more, some

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<sup>43</sup> Getmanchuk A., "How we are losing pro-European Poland," [In Ukrainian] *Yevropejska Pravda*, October 22, 2015. Access at: <http://www.eurointegration.com.ua/articles/2015/10/22/7039792/>

<sup>44</sup> Interview with Lukasz Adamski, deputy director of the Center for Polish-Russian Dialog and Mutual Understanding, October 21, 2016.

PiS members, such as Senator Jan Zaryn, clearly see cooperation with Ukraine, including on security issues, as conditional on this country's readiness to "come to terms over historical truths."<sup>45</sup>

Still, this does not mean that PiS has no politicians at all who are ready to speak up about supporting Ukraine. One example is Malgorzata Gosiewska, a Sejm MP from PiS, who has been consistently supporting Ukraine. During the Euromaidan revolution, she spent several days on the Maidan as a sign of solidarity with ordinary Ukrainians. She also initiated the preparation of the report "Russian war crimes in the East of Ukraine", which she personally handed over to the Hague tribunal in April 2016.<sup>46</sup>

Among the ranks of Civic Platform MPs, Marcin Swiecicki is probably most engaged in the Ukrainian affairs. He is personally familiar with the situation in Ukraine because he directed the UNDP Analytical and Advisory Center in Kyiv over 2007-2011. He was also one of not many Poles who called for the term "genocide" not to be used in the Sejm's July resolution.<sup>47</sup> The three MEPs from the Civic Platform, Michal Boni and Jacek Saryusz-Wolski also offer active support to Ukraine.

In Ukraine, the Nowoczesna party, Poland's most pro-European party today led by Ryszard Petru, is also seen as a potential partner. During the last election, it was elected to parliament with 7.6% of the popular vote.

Among the openly anti-Ukrainian parties in the Sejm is the nationalist Kukiz 15. Despite its rhetoric, its leader, a rock musician by the name of Pawel Kukiz, gained 21% of the vote during the

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<sup>45</sup> Senator Jan Żaryn, "Launching a historical offensive!" on *Prawy.pl*, October 6, 2015. Access at: <http://prawy.pl/11096-senator-jan-zaryn-przeprowadzimy-ofensywe-historyczna/>

<sup>46</sup> Zhuhan V., "Together against the Kremlin. How the Poles are helping Ukraine," [In Ukrainian] *Espresso*, April 19, 2016. Access at: [http://espresso.tv/article/2016/04/19/razom\\_protiv\\_kremlya\\_yak\\_polyaky\\_dopomagayut\\_ukrayini](http://espresso.tv/article/2016/04/19/razom_protiv_kremlya_yak_polyaky_dopomagayut_ukrayini)

<sup>47</sup> I. Isayev, "Liberalism Polish-Style: Why Warsaw see the resolution on 'genocide' as 'soft,'" [In Ukrainian] *Yevropeiska Pravda*, July 22, 2016. Access at: <http://www.eurointegration.com.ua/articles/2016/07/22/7052503/>

presidential election in 2015. Kukiz 15 was the only faction that gave no votes at all in support of the Ukrainian-Polish “Declaration in honor of Memory and Solidarity,” while its MP Janusz Sanocki was heard trying to persuade his colleagues in the legislature that Ukraine was not at war with Russia.<sup>48</sup>

The Polish MP responsible in the Sejm for Poland’s side of bilateral relations is Michal Dworczyk (PiS). Meanwhile, the Ukrainian side of this MP-level bilateral group is currently without a leader: Borys Tarasiuk, its previous chair, resigned from his position in the interparliamentary relations group for Poland as a sign of protest against the July revolution in the Sejm.

Key decisions regarding Ukraine are made in Poland in the Office of President Duda. Similarly, the Presidential Consultative Committee, whose work was revived after the election of Andrzej Duda, is responsible for establishing strategic directions in bilateral relations.

In the Polish Foreign Ministry, relations with Ukraine are personally handled by the Undersecretary for security, eastern policies and Europe, Marek Ziolkowski. Notably, by the size of its staff, the Polish Embassy in Kyiv and the Polish delegation to the EU are the biggest Polish diplomatic missions.

Finally, Poland has an entire series of research institutes and think-tanks that are studying Ukraine issues and influence state policies towards Ukraine. Among these are the Center for Eastern Studies (OSW), the Polish Institute of International Affairs (PISM), the Institute for Public Affairs (ISP), and the Stefan Batory Foundation.

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<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

### 3.2. PUBLIC SENTIMENTS TOWARD UKRAINE IN POLAND AND TOWARD POLAND IN UKRAINE

During the times of independence Ukrainians were traditionally friendly towards Poles. According to the Rating sociological service, 54% of Ukrainians feel “warm” or “very warm” towards Poland. Moreover, Poland is #1 in terms of positive feelings among Ukrainians, ahead of Belarus, the EU as a whole, Canada, Georgia, Lithuania, the US, and Germany. Only 4% of Ukrainians feel “cold” or “very cold” towards Poland.<sup>49</sup>

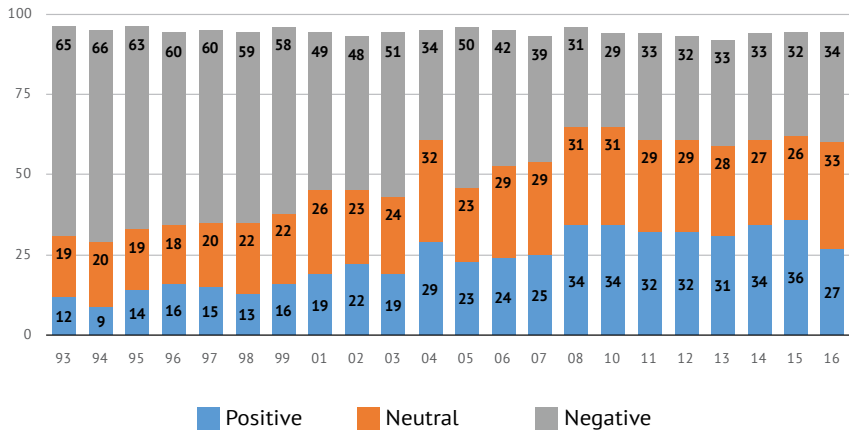
Attitudes of Poles towards Ukrainians are not a mirror image. Changes in Polish attitudes towards other nationalities can be seen in the annual polls taken by the Polish think-tank CBOS (see Figure 2). Starting in the early 1990s, Polish opinion of Ukrainians has gradually improved and the number of those who support Ukraine grew from 12% in 1993 to 34% in 2008. Since 2008, the proportion of Poles who felt either sympathy or antipathy towards Ukrainians has been more-or-less equal. Together with those who were neutral, the three groups each represented about one third of Poland's population. In 2016, however, the trend began to reverse: the number of those feeling positive towards Ukraine went down to 27%, while the proportion of those Polish citizens who feel negative inched up to 34%.<sup>50</sup>

*In 2016 those feeling positive towards Ukraine for the first time in 8 years were outnumbered by those feeling negative. However, it would be premature to talk about a sharp and irreversible worsening in attitudes towards Ukrainians in Poland*

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<sup>49</sup> *Trends in public opinion in Ukraine, May 28–June 14, 2016 [In Ukrainian], Rating Sociology Group. Access at: [http://ratinggroup.ua/research/ukraine/opros\\_iri\\_demonstriruet\\_skepticizm\\_ukraincev\\_s\\_probleskami\\_nadezhdy.html](http://ratinggroup.ua/research/ukraine/opros_iri_demonstriruet_skepticizm_ukraincev_s_probleskami_nadezhdy.html)*

<sup>50</sup> *Data from “Relations with other peoples,” CBOS, #53/2016. Access at: [http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2016/K\\_053\\_16.PDF](http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2016/K_053_16.PDF)*

**Figure 2.** Trends in Polish attitudes towards Ukrainians, 1993-2016<sup>51</sup>

This kind of trend could be the consequence of both PIS's traditional rhetoric and policies, and of a growing anti-immigration mood in Poland itself, largely the result of the immigration crisis across the European Union. According to an International Organization for Migration (IOM) poll in 2015, 35% of Poles felt that Ukrainians could constitute a threat to them, although this indicator slipped back down to 30% in 2016.<sup>52</sup> Meanwhile, the number of Ukrainians in Poland grew significantly from 2014 to 2016. By comparison, in 2013, Ukrainians were granted 223,000 temporary work permits, whereas in 2014 the number jumped to 372,000 in 2014 and 430,000 in 2015.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>51</sup> The data for 2000 and 2009 is absent in the original source.

<sup>52</sup> "Survey of attitudes towards foreigners in Poland," Ipsos for the IOM, Warsaw, September 2016. Access at: [http://poland.iom.int/sites/default/files/IOM\\_Cu-dzoziemcy\\_raport\\_IX\\_2016.pdf](http://poland.iom.int/sites/default/files/IOM_Cu-dzoziemcy_raport_IX_2016.pdf)

<sup>53</sup> "Main groups of citizenship granted first residence permit in the EU-28 and main EU Member States issuing the permit," 2015, Eurostat. Access at: [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/File:Main\\_groups\\_of\\_citizenship\\_granted\\_a\\_first\\_residence\\_permit\\_in\\_the\\_EU-28\\_and\\_main\\_EU\\_Member\\_States\\_issuing\\_the\\_permit\\_2015.png](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/File:Main_groups_of_citizenship_granted_a_first_residence_permit_in_the_EU-28_and_main_EU_Member_States_issuing_the_permit_2015.png)

Given the migration crisis in the European Union and the influx of refugees from Syria, there's a temptation for Polish politicians to use statistics on Ukrainian migrants to argue that Poland is in no position to also accept migrants from the Middle East and North Africa. For instance, during debates in the European Parliament on January 19, 2016, PM Beata Szydło announced that Poland had taken in nearly a million refugees from Ukraine,<sup>54</sup> although this is simply not true. In fact, according to Poland's Office for Foreigners, only 18 (!) citizens of Ukraine were granted such status over 2014-2015, out of a mere 5,500 applicants.<sup>55</sup>

In fact, it's premature to talk about a sharp and irreversible worsening in attitudes towards Ukrainians in Poland. One way or another, Polish society has always had a relatively large group of people who felt hostile towards Ukrainians. But in recent years, radical groups that tended to be marginalized until not long ago have begun to grow more popular. This includes, for example, the portal Kresy.pl, which started as a niche Kresovian resource and has turned into one of the mouthpieces of the radical right movement in Poland. One of the most infamous personages promoting anti-Ukrainian propaganda is Father Tadeusz Isakowicz-Zaleski.<sup>56</sup>

So far, the degree of tension is rising mostly in the internet and social networks, but it is also showing up in real life. Cases of aggressive behavior on the part of Poles against Ukrainians have grown more frequent. For instance, in January 2016, a group of Ukrainian workers were attacked in Kutno<sup>57</sup>. In June, some hooligans tried to disrupt a procession of Greek-Catholic and Orthodox Ukrainians in

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<sup>54</sup> Chapman A., *Poland quibbles over who's a refugee and who's a migrant*, Politico, January 22, 2016 Access at: <http://www.politico.eu/article/poland-quibbles-over-whos-a-refugee-and-whos-a-migrant-beata-szydlo-asylum-schengen/>

<sup>55</sup> *Report on the Current Situation in Ukraine, October 30, 2016, Office for Foreigners*. Access at: <http://udsc.gov.pl/en/statystyki/raporty-specjalne/biezaca-sytuacja-dotyczaca-ukrainy/>

<sup>56</sup> Boyko S., *Agents of Putin: The Polish network*, "[In Ukrainian] Glavkom, September 1, 2016, Access at: <http://glavcom.ua/publications/agenti-putina-polska-merezha-370242.html>

<sup>57</sup> *Poles attack Ukrainians*, TVN24, January 28, 2016. Access at: <http://www.tvn24.pl/wyp-ukrainskie-kur-ukrainscy-pracownicy-zaatakowani,614485,s.html>



Przemysl.<sup>58</sup> In addition to these two incidents, at least 14 acts of vandalism took place on Ukrainian graves and memorials to UPA soldiers over 2014-2016. Indeed, vandalism began simultaneously with Russian aggression in Ukraine and at least one incident was claimed by an ultra-right Polish organization, Oboz Wielkiej Polski or the Great Polish Camp (OWP), which has also been cooperating with the two self-proclaimed-republics in Russian-occupied Donbas, DNR and LNR.<sup>59</sup>

The good news for Ukraine is that the authoritative Polish press, whether right or left—*Rzeczpospolita*, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, *Newsweek*, *Krytyka Polityczna*, *Dziennik*—, generally publish objective materials concerning Ukraine and have their own correspondents in Ukraine who know the language, the political situation, and so on well. Their focus Ukraine mostly in three areas: the war in Donbas, the situation in occupied Crimea, and reforms. *Gazeta Wyborcza* reporter Piotr Andrusieczko won the Polish “Journalist of the Year” award in 2014, for his reports on events in Eastern Ukraine.

What’s more, the Polish literary market has seen a boom of eye-witness works from Polish journalists about the Euromaidan and the war in Eastern Ukraine<sup>60</sup> in the last few years. Books such as “Fire of Maidan” by Michał Kaciewicz and “To Kill a Dragon. Ukrainian Revolutions” by Katarzyna Kwiatkowska-Moskalewicz are dedicated to the theme of Ukrainian revolution. Zbigniew Parafianowicz and Michael Potocki focused on the current and previous leaders of Ukraine in their books, “Wolves live outside the law. What game was Yanukovich playing?” and “The Crystal Piano. The betrayals and victories of Petro Poroshenko.” The subject of war was revealed in the books

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<sup>58</sup> *In Przemysl, people try to interfere in the honoring of the Sich Riflemen*, Polish Radio, June 26, 2016. Access at: <http://www.polradio.pl/5/38/Artykul/258966>

<sup>59</sup> *Declaration of the Ukrainian Institute for National Memory On the Acts of Ukrainian Graves Destruction in Poland* [In Ukrainian]. The Ukrainian Institute for National Memory. Access at: <http://memory.gov.ua/news/zayava-ukrainskogo-institutu-natsionalnoi-pam-yati-z-privodu-nishchennya-ukrainskikh-mogil-na-t>

<sup>60</sup> Y. Savytskiy, “Poland is trending books on the Maidan and the war in Donbas,” [In Ukrainian] *RL/RFE*, December 10, 2015. Access at: <http://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/27419666.html>

"Greetings from Novorossiia" by Pawel Pieniazek, and "Crimea: Love and Hate" by Macej Jastrzebski.

Although these books have not yet been released in Ukrainian translation, the Polish Book Institute, a state agency that promotes Polish literature around the world, has supported the publication of 146 Polish works translated into Ukrainian in the last 11 years.<sup>61</sup> Only the Czech language saw more books translated from the Polish.

Contemporary Ukrainian writers like Oksana Zabuzhko, Yuriy Andrukhovych and Sofia Andrukhovych are also known and translated in Poland. Among Ukrainian intellectuals, Mykola Riabchuk and Yaroslav Hrytsak, a historian who has been able to find a balanced approach to historical issues that sounds persuasive even to conservative Poles, are popular in Poland. All told, the literary market reflects the general trends in Ukrainian-Polish relations: more is read and written about Ukraine in Poland than about Poland in Ukraine.

Among Polish intellectuals and community activists, Pawel Kowal, Iza Chruslinska, the author of book-length interviews with Oksana Zabuzhko and Yaroslav Hrytsak, Alexandra "Ola" Hnatiuk, Bogumila Bredychowska, and Miroslaw Skura all publicly express support for Ukraine.

One group of historians working today towards Polish-Ukrainian understanding is the Ukrainian-Polish forum of historians established by the National Institutes of Memory in Poland and Ukraine.<sup>62</sup> The Ukrainian side is represented by professors Ivan Patryliak, Ihor Ilyushyn, Leonid Zashkilniak, Bohdan Hud and Yuriy Shapoval, and Volodymyr Viatrovych, a candidate of historical studies. The Polish

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<sup>61</sup> O. Slyvynskiy, "The Polish version of freedom, or A different view of ourselves," [In Ukrainian] *Ukrainska Pravda*, July 5, 2016. Access at: <http://life.pravda.com.ua/culture/2016/07/5/214555/>

<sup>62</sup> "Dialogue among Ukrainian and Polish historians over complicated issues from the common past is revived," *The Ukrainian Institute of National Memory*, November 4, 2016. Access at: <http://www.memory.gov.ua/news/vidnovleno-dialog-istorikiv-ukraini-ta-polshchi-shchodo-skladnikh-pitan-spilnogo-minulogo>

side is represented by professors Grzegorz Gryciuk, Grzegorz Mazur, Grzegorz Motyka, Waldemar Rezmer, and Jan Pisulinski, and Mariusz Zajackowski, PhD.

Polish culture and Polish-Ukrainian cooperation are promoted by the Polish Institute in Kyiv, which holds a large number of cultural, arts, academic and other events, and offers student and research grants, including some under the special “Polish Erasmus for Ukraine” program, which is aimed at Ukrainian students from the East and Crimea.

The “Voice of Ukraine” in Poland is the Ukrainian embassy headed by Andriy Deshchysia and a number of NGOs representing both the old Ukrainian diaspora, such as the Union of Ukrainians in Poland headed by Petro Tyma, and Ukrainian activists who moved to Poland relatively recently, such as Euromaidan Warsaw and the Our Choice Foundation. Amongst current Ukrainian politicians, nobody is a public authority in Poland, although Polish media did highlight the fact that President Poroshenko knelt to honor the memory of victims in Volyn during his visit in July 2016. They also reported about Nadia Savchenko whose acceptance speech when receiving the Jan Karski award in Lublin included an apology to Poles for “offenses caused by Ukrainians during our long and difficult history.”<sup>63</sup>

Advocating Ukrainian reforms in Poland is Leszek Balcerowycz, who has been personally involved in instituting them. For PiS, however, he is an ideological opponent, so his statements in favor of Ukraine are not accepted by the Polish government. The same can be said for the efforts of Jerzy Miller and Sławomir Nowak.<sup>64</sup> Both of them worked in the Civic Platform Government, which is already unacceptable for PiS. But PiS also accuses Miller of being negligent in the investigation into the Smolensk airplane crash in 2010, in which Lech Kaczyński and 95 other top Polish politicians and public

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<sup>63</sup> “Savchenko asks forgiveness of the Poles for historic wrongs,” *Polish Radio*, June 26, 2016. Access at: <http://www.polradio.pl/5/38/Artykul/258912>

<sup>64</sup> O. Babakova, “Trolls or idiots? How Kyiv continues to spoil relations with Warsaw,” [In Ukrainian] *Yevropeiska Pravda*, October 21, 2016. Access at: <http://www.eurointegration.com.ua/articles/2016/10/21/7056224>

### 3. Who's Who? Interested Parties and Groups of Influence

activists were killed. For PiS, and personally for Jaroslaw Kaczynski, investigating and establishing responsibility for this catastrophe is of utmost importance. Meanwhile, Nowak is known in Poland because of a corruption scandal that forced him to resign as Minister of Transport. Whatever the reasons for these appointments to the Ukrainian Government, they are all more of a hindrance than a help in developing relations with the current Polish Government.

## 4. EXISTING AND POTENTIAL RISKS AND CONFLICTS

### 4.1. GROWING PROBLEMS IN RELATIONS BETWEEN UKRAINE AND POLAND THROUGH PERSISTENT CONFRONTATIONAL HISTORICAL RHETORIC.

Historical issues have always been the Achilles' heel in Polish-Ukrainian relations, while for the Law & Justice Party (PiS), the historical policy is the cornerstone of its platform. Moreover, the subject of Volyn, picked up by both the media and radical forces, and further aggravated by Wojciech Smarzowski's film Volyn, may become even more rooted in the public discourse of Poland and used by radical and pro-Russian forces to damage relations between the two governments and their societies.

**Probability** Mid to high. Clearly, from the moment that PiS came to power in Poland, historical dialogue has become first and foremost a "battle of parliaments" and it is possible to hope that, after the "Declaration of memory and solidarity," the spiral of accusations will stop, at least for a time. Meanwhile, provocations from ultra-right and pro-Russian forces in both governments can be expected, and a return to the subject of Volyn in the run-up to July 11, which in Poland is considered the peak of 1943 events in Volyn.

**Prevention** Both Ukrainian and Polish politicians need to avoid any steps that could be wrongly interpreted by the other side. Certainly, Ukraine has the right to continue its own policy of memory, but it should avoid any lapses or provocations, such as taking steps that could be interpreted ambiguously in Poland just when the Polish press is focused on Ukraine. At the same time, PiS's ramping up of attention to historical discourse could destroy all the social capital of trust in Ukrainians in Poland, which slowly developed over the course of more than 10 years, thanks to Ukraine's civil society efforts the Orange Revolution and the Euromaidan. The discussion of historical questions needs to move from the political realm and into academic circles,

including the Ukrainian-Polish Forum of Historians. At the same time, both sides need to be aware that the Forum's work involves painstaking research that may not be able to dot all the i's on issues of historical grievances in the short or even medium term.

#### 4.2. POLAND'S WEAKENING POSITION IN THE EU AND HENCE WORSENING RELATIONS WITH UKRAINE

One of Ukraine's interests in Poland and its potential in the EU is gaining support for its Eurointegration ambitions. However, relations between Warsaw and Brussels have already suffered due to PiS's rejection of the previous government's commitments to migration quotas, as well as PiS's attempts to control the Constitutional Court and the press: under a new law, owners of public media outlets are appointed by the Government. The confrontation between Poland and the EU has been exacerbated by conflicts between Jarosław Kaczyński and European Council President Donald Tusk. This is further exacerbated by the decline of the Weimar triangle as a source of influence over EU politics. Whereas for the Civic Platform and especially for Radosław Sikorski, the EU's eastern policy was a personal hallmark, relations with Ukraine are not such an important item on PiS's agenda with Brussels.

**Probability** Low to mid. Most likely Warsaw will conflict with Brussels up to a certain point, as Polish diplomats are aware that, for Poland, anti-European policies would be suicide. For example, in 2015 Poland contributed €3.78 billion to the EU budget, while receiving €13.4bn back from the EU.<sup>65</sup> Paradoxically, PiS not only wants the EU to survive, it actually wants to take an active part in reforming the Union, specifically in devising a new

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<sup>65</sup> *Poland, Overview, Official Website of the European Union. Access at: [https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/countries/member-countries/poland\\_en](https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/countries/member-countries/poland_en)*

instrument for dealing with EU neighbors to the east.<sup>66</sup> However, its current domestic policies are working mostly to reduce the country's political significance in EU policy-making.

**Prevention** Although Ukraine has no influence over domestic policies in Poland, it does have to continue to underscore the value of that country's support for its Eurointegration ambitions and Poland's strong position in the EU.

#### 4.3. LOSS OF POLISH SUPPORT FOR LACK OF SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS IN REFORMS

While Ukraine would like most of all to see Poland as a political force, Poland's key wish is for Ukraine to reform. As to what could improve Ukraine's image in Poland, the unanimous response from Polish experts and diplomats is: getting rid of the oligarchs and reforming. After both the Orange Revolution and the Euromaidan Revolution, there were great expectations in Poland for Ukraine. Right now Poland wants to see how irreversible the changes in Ukraine are.<sup>67</sup>

**Probability** Mid to high. For Warsaw, reforms are now at the top of its bilateral agenda with Ukraine. Realistically, Poland supports reforms in Ukraine less for altruistic than for geopolitical and security reasons. The intensity and quality of reforms in Ukraine will affect, not so much the fact of support from Poland, as its enthusiasm and its ability to lobby Ukrainian interests in Brussels. The likelihood of losing Polish investment and buyers on the Ukrainian market is far higher.

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<sup>66</sup> Interview with Polish diplomat, October 27, 2016.

<sup>67</sup> "Poland expects concrete changes in Ukraine, says Deshchytisia," [In Ukrainian] RL/RFE, August 26, 2016. Access at: <http://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/news/27948589.html>

**Prevention** The solution is quite simple: carry out reforms, don't just imitate them. Given that reforms in Ukraine are one of the topics on which the Polish press focuses attention, trends in Ukraine will shape, not just the attitude of the Polish elite towards the country, but also attitudes among ordinary Poles, whose impression of Ukraine is already more inclined to be negative. According to a survey commissioned by the Institute of World Policy in 2015, Polish people predominantly associate Ukraine with war and poverty.<sup>68</sup>

#### 4.4. WORSENING ATTITUDES AND DISCRIMINATION AGAINST UKRAINIANS IN POLAND

Against the background of the migration crisis in the EU, the influx of Ukrainian migrant workers and the aggravation of the historical narrative, attitudes towards Ukrainians among Poles could change for the worse, which could lead to manifestations of discrimination and violent incidents.

**Probability** High. According to IOM data, 82% of Poles believe that foreigners constitute a threat to their security, while 35% see them as competitors on the labor market<sup>69</sup>. Moreover, Polish support for taking in refugees from countries caught up in armed conflict dropped from 72% in May 2015 to 33% in April 2016, although willingness to take in refugees from Ukraine has stayed stable at 60%.<sup>70</sup> Despite the fact that the presence of Ukrainian refugees in Poland is a myth and the a Polish

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<sup>68</sup> "What does the EU think about Ukraine?", *Institute of World Policy*, 2016. Access at: <http://iwp.org.ua/ukr/public/1630.html>

<sup>69</sup> *Badanie na temat postaw wobec cudzoziemców w Polsce. Ipsos dla International Organization for Migration*. Warszawa, wrzesień 2016. [http://poland.iom.int/sites/default/files/IOM\\_Cudzoziemcy\\_raport\\_IX\\_2016.pdf](http://poland.iom.int/sites/default/files/IOM_Cudzoziemcy_raport_IX_2016.pdf)

<sup>70</sup> *Polish Public Opinion 4/2016*, CBOS, Warsaw. Access at: [http://www.cbos.pl/PL/publikacje/public\\_opinion/2016/04\\_2016.pdf](http://www.cbos.pl/PL/publikacje/public_opinion/2016/04_2016.pdf)



employer's official invitation to work implies that there are no local applicants for the vacancy, the likelihood of aggression and discrimination towards Ukrainians appearing is fairly high. This is especially true in the eastern provinces of Poland, where conservative attitudes are stronger. Moreover, the Polish government is responding mutedly to such incidents, effectively encouraging certain kinds of Poles to engage in further incidents against Ukrainians.<sup>71</sup>

**Prevention**

The best recipe for preventing these risks lies in the same steps already noted, especially pushing through reforms and creating new jobs in Ukraine itself, including with the help of Polish investments. In the short term, Ukraine's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ukrainian Embassy in Poland must continue to respond promptly to manifestations of hate towards Ukrainians and the Ukrainian cultural legacy in Poland. They must also urge the Polish government to publicly bring guilty parties to justice.

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<sup>71</sup> O. Hnatiuk [Poland/Ukraine] "Do not condone violence," [In Ukrainian] *Istorychna Pravda*, July 11, 2016. Access at: <http://www.istpravda.com.ua/columns/2016/07/11/149136/>.

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Given that the most problematic link in bilateral relations today is the dialogue between their legislatures, Ukraine needs to increase interparliamentary cooperation. Among others, the chair of the interparliamentary relations group with Poland needs to be appointed without delay. The Ukrainian side needs to be proactive on joint events and meetings with its Polish counterparts. This includes preparations to set official days to honor the memory of the Volyn events and the victims of the nazi and soviet regimes.
2. Ukraine can show that it is ready for constructive dialogue with Poland by voting on amendments to the Law "On the Legal Status and Commemoration of Fighters for Independence of Ukraine in the XX Century." The bill was registered to the Rada back in July 2016 and includes an amendment that the status of fighter for an independent Ukraine does not extend to individuals whose actions qualify as a crime against humanity.
3. Ukraine needs to develop its own vision of how to participate in the Intermarium project and to present this at the next meeting of regional leaders in Wroclaw in 2017, especially since Ukraine has already developed joint projects in energy and defense. By joining forces in economic and infrastructural cooperation with other Intermarium countries, Ukraine will increase its chances of becoming part of the 16+1 format initiated by China under the "One Belt, One Road" strategy. Since both Beijing and Warsaw are positive about including Ukraine, the chance that Ukraine will turn into a European infrastructural hub are fairly high. Nevertheless, it will depend primarily on concrete initiatives on the part of Ukraine.
4. For Ukraine and Poland, it is fundamentally important and beneficial to persuade EU member countries that the two are defending the eastern border of the EU from an influx of migrants. Effective cooperation in equipping the Polish-Ukrainian border will not only reduce queues at border crossings, but will

also become a success story for Poland and Ukraine as their contribution to the defense of the EU's eastern border.

5. Ukraine needs to provide clear and substantial success stories in its reform process, especially in conditions for doing business. Setting up a Ukrainian-Polish investment fund would be a good move towards returning Polish investments to Ukraine.
6. Ukraine is extremely lacking in professionals who might specialize in bilateral relations with Poland and monitor domestic trends in Poland on an ongoing basis. Given Ukraine's strategic interest in effective cooperation with its neighbor, setting up a Center for Polish Studies similar to the Polish Center for Eastern Studies (OSW) makes sense, as well as encouraging the study of Polish and so on.
7. Cooperation among Ukrainian and Polish think-tanks needs to be strengthened with the purpose of running joint studies and events.
8. Ukraine needs to strengthen its voice in Poland, since Poles primarily learn about Ukraine from other Poles today. Some steps that might help in this would be opening a Center for Ukrainian Culture in Poland, public events organized in various Polish cities with the participation of Ukrainian experts, activists, academics, journalists and so on. Ukrainian-Polish relations desperately need platforms for civil society to communicate. A good example of this is the annual conference organized by the Stefan Batory Foundation, but that is simply not enough for ongoing dialogue between Ukrainian and Polish opinion leaders.
9. The Ukrainian government needs to understand that by underfunding the humanities in Ukraine – history, political science, philosophy and so on –, it encourages the continuous existence of an Iron Curtain between western academic discourse and Ukrainian views. Among others, divergences in the progress of Ukrainian and Polish historiography are already working against Ukraine. In strategic terms, Ukraine needs to allocate resources to develop the humanities as a bulwark, including, among others, for successful foreign policy.

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