

Ties That Bind



25 Years

of the Polish-German Treaty of
Good Neighborly Relations
and Friendly Cooperation

From the Publisher

Understanding how Poles feel about Germany and Germans is impossible for anyone who lacks a Polish cultural and historical background. Whenever Poles talk about their country’s relations with Germany, the discussion takes a special angle, even though it has been 25 years since Poland and Germany signed their landmark treaty of good neighborly relations. For years, Poles used to think of Germany and Germans as their eternal enemies, despite the fact that, historically speaking, good cooperation with their western neighbors outlasted any conflicts. But when conflicts did happen, they were utterly horrible. Germans were involved in robbing Poland of its statehood and responsible for the deaths of millions of people in this country. They certainly earned their reputation as merciless enemies and hardly any little boy in Poland wanted to play as a German in backyard war games.

Just 30 years ago, any talk of friendship between Poland and Germany sounded like pure fantasy to Poles and Germans alike. Then came the first attempts and symbolic gestures such as the memorable handshake by Poland’s first noncommunist Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki and German Chancellor Helmut Kohl in the Polish town of Krzyżowa. And then, Poland and Germany realized they had a lot in common in terms of business and politics, and all of a sudden, opinion polls on respect and friendliness changed radically. The notorious German phrase *Polnische Wirtschaft* (literally “Polish economy”) for bad planning and poor management is losing its derogatory meaning in favor of the idea that things in Poland are in good order.



Andrzej Gornal

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25 Years of the Foundation for Polish-German Cooperation



FUNDACJA WSPÓŁPRACY
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This year marks the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Good Neighborly Relations and Friendly Cooperation between the Republic of Poland and the Federal Republic of Germany. In the treaty's preamble, both countries stated that they would work together to close painful chapters in their shared history and that they would draw from the best traditions of their centuries-long co-existence.

Poland and Germany are aware of their shared interests and of their mutual responsibility for building a new, free, and united Europe through human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The fostering of good neighborly relations and friendly cooperation between Poland and Germany through the promotion of dialogue between both societies is a fundamental goal of the Foundation for Polish-German Cooperation, whose establishment is a direct result of the normalization of Polish-German relations.

The foundation is also marking its 25th anniversary this year. Over the past quarter-century, it has helped finance more than 10,000 bilateral projects and contributed to Polish-German understanding. The primary goal of the foundation is to support valuable Polish-German initiatives. In particular, the FPGC supports partnerships between institutions and educational projects that disseminate knowledge about Poland and Germany and promote the Polish and German languages. The foundation also supports scientific cooperation and artistic and literary projects. It has initiated and carried out a wide range of projects including study trips, scholarship programs, publications and debates.



Krzysztof Miszczak

Through its projects and grants, the FPGC seeks to have an inspiring effect on Polish-German relations. The projects in which it participates improve the quality of Polish-German relations, narrow existing differences and ensure the symmetrical nature of bilateral ties. They also open Poles and Germans to European challenges in the context of their common difficult experience.

Prof. Krzysztof Miszczak
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Poland, Germany and European

The June 17, 1991 Treaty of Good Neighborly Relations and Friendly Cooperation between the Republic of Poland and the Federal Republic of Germany contained provisions that addressed security policy. In Article 6 of the treaty, the two countries specified their common security policy goals, defining them in terms of efforts to strengthen stability and increase security in Europe.

Today a key goal for Poland and Germany is to strengthen the political role of Europe as an international player in EU foreign, security and defense policies. Changes in the international European security system have forced Poland and Germany to reevaluate the methods they have used in their international activities.

After the political transformation of 1989 and 1990, Polish governments were generally supportive of the idea of developing Europe's common foreign policy and of the plan to establish a European rapid reaction force. However, Poland was unable to directly influence the development of European security policy. Moreover, the emerging European Security and Defense Policy did not offer realistic security guarantees for Warsaw and was not seen as an alternative to NATO. Poland was looking for firm security guarantees in its foreign policy, and such guarantees could only be provided by the Atlantic Alliance. In the initial period after the fall of communism, Polish governments had a relatively low level of trust in their partners in Europe amid fears of an increased strength of a reunited Germany, Poland's big neighbor to the west. That early period was also marked by an increased fear of renationalization in German foreign policy and worries over the imperialistic aspirations of Russia, Poland's giant neighbor to the east, under Moscow's "near abroad" doctrine. The choice of the NATO option propounded by the United States caused Poland to be skeptical of attempts to strengthen the second pillar of the EU (security). The authorities in Warsaw believed that building an independent European security policy would distance Western Europe from Transatlantic security structures and could consequently weaken NATO. All Polish governments after the fall of communism sought to secure an additional strengthening of national security in case the United States reduced its involvement in Europe's security.

As a member of NATO and the European Union, Poland continues to focus on fixed security guarantees from the alliance in the form of allied deterrence and developing EU civilian and military capabilities complementary with regard to NATO. Warsaw began to take an active part in building the European Rapid Reaction Force, also known as the Battlegroups, and

it also took part in EU civilian and military operations.

When the conservative Law and Justice (PiS) party was in power in Poland from 2005 to 2007, Polish-German relations worsened, which had a direct effect on cooperation with Germany as part of EU foreign and security policy. In this area, Germany turned out to be an unreliable partner for its eastern neighbor because it preferred to develop cooperation with Russia at the expense of Poland's security interests. Germany chose to pursue close energy cooperation with Russia, based on the construction of the Nord Stream I gas pipeline bypassing Poland. Another sign of diverging interests in European foreign and security policy was that Poland and Germany had completely different views on the process of ultimate integration within the European Union, in terms of whether the bloc should be a union of nation states (as Poland would have it) or a political union (as Germany suggested). This was accompanied by different perceptions of the history of both countries and their divergent historical narratives. Warsaw accused Germany of hegemonic inclinations in European policy and underscored its own policy of putting an end to an era of "servility" in Polish-German relations.

At the same time, Poland was confronted with a new situation in Europe that confirmed its worries about a lack of solidarity on the part of Germany in common security policy and clearly showed that Poland had a limited influence on German foreign and security policies. This new situation also testified to the political cynicism of Poland's western neighbor. Poland was especially concerned about energy policy and a common European policy vis-à-vis Russia. In March 2006, at an EU economic summit, a Polish government led by Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz came up with a proposal to create what it termed an "Energy NATO." This was followed by an initiative by the government of Jarosław Kaczyński to create a 100,000-strong European army linked to NATO. The army was to be responsible to the president of the European Commission, while EU operational units were to be subordinated to NATO's headquarters. Both proposals were rejected.

When the centrist Civic Platform (PO) and the rural-based Polish People's Party (PSL) were in power from 2007 to 2015, Polish-German relations warmed up.

Security and Defense Policy

However, the level of mutual trust was still limited, especially in European and security policies. This was due to Germany's policy toward Russia on issues such as the construction of gas pipelines, energy security and a German-Russian raw material alliance as well as the establishment of an "anti-missile shield." There were continued differences on European policy, especially with regard to the vision of reforms in Europe.

During that period, Poland highlighted challenges to international security that were the consequence of Russian policies. This involved energy security and the diversification of energy sources, in addition to the Polish-Swedish Eastern Partnership initiative, the development of the EU's rapid reaction force, civilian and military cooperation, and the implications of the Georgian crisis. Poland worked to update and adapt the 2003 European Security Strategy to new challenges, taking into account dramatic changes in the political situation in Europe and in its immediate neighborhood in the wake of destabilization in North Africa, a conflict in the Middle East, an unresolved crisis in the Caucasus, and political instability in Eastern Europe. The authorities in Warsaw believed that the strategy should also take into account the increased qualitative contribution of the European Union to the construction of a new international order.

At the same time, steps were taken to enhance European cooperation in the arms industry and to promptly implement the "pooling and sharing" initiative based on the joint use of military capabilities. Poland was also pushing for work to improve the EU's crisis management structures and to boost the operational capabilities of the Battlegroups and ensure their practical use on the battlefield.

Efforts to secure German support for Poland's position were unsuccessful as Germany was skeptical about intense EU military operations outside EU territory. The decisions of the European Council's June 25-26, 2015 summit were limited to conclusions about continuing the process of strategic reflection with a view to preparing an EU global strategy on foreign and security policy in close cooperation with member states. This project, being prepared by Poland, Sweden, Spain, and Italy, provides for the development of a common security architecture for Europe.

Today Germany's security interests in the broad sense are primarily defined by Euro-Atlantic geopolitical security guarantees provided by the United States and by geo-economic energy and raw material security offered by Russia. The limits of cooperation in this area are not clearly defined and depend on how the international situation develops. The dependence of

the German economy on the supply of energy and raw materials from Russia remains a constant element of Moscow's neo-imperialistic policy despite a fundamental geopolitical change in Europe whereby a neo-imperialistic Russia is challenging the foundations of the postwar international order.

The annexation of Crimea by Russia and the ongoing war in eastern Ukraine—with the political and military conflict with Russia over its continued logistic and military support for the separatists in eastern Ukraine, combined with Moscow's failure to abide by the provisions of the Minsk II agreement and the specter of an economic and financial collapse of Ukraine—result in a permanent threat and a lower level of security in Eastern and Central Europe, including in Poland.

The aggressive policies of Putin's Russia have forced Warsaw to initiate the process of strengthening its security and national defense system. In this context, the decisions of NATO's July summit in Warsaw will be of fundamental importance to rebuilding trust between countries when it comes to guaranteeing collective security to member states in the eastern part of the EU and NATO. Today Germany is increasingly seeking to accept greater responsibility and step up its international involvement regardless of the interests and expectations of countries in its immediate environment. The conflict between Russia and Ukraine and the ongoing conflict in Syria threaten the political and economic interests of the European Union. This is accompanied by the continued destabilization of the Arab world and African nations, a situation that has produced a refugee crisis and destabilized EU member states.

The current German government's misguided and politically naive immigration policy is being imposed on other EU member states including Poland, as a result of which these countries find themselves under economic pressure. Poland should work to increase its role in the EU's political and economic structures in order to advance its security interests. In addition to close ties with the United States, Poland needs deeper cooperation with Germany as part of the EU's eastern and neighborhood policies in line with the fundamental strategic goal of Polish and German foreign and security policies. For this reason, both countries should become one of the fundamental pillars of political and military integration in the EU, and they should also work to hammer out a common strategy regarding the common foreign and security policy, the common security and defense policy, and the European neighborhood policy.

Prof. Krzysztof Miszczak

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A Negotiator Remembers: Two Treaties That Redefined Polish-German Relations

Soon after Germany reunited in October 1990, Poland and its western neighbor signed two treaties that went down in their shared history as the “founding treaties.” One, signed Nov. 14, 1990, had Poland and Germany reaffirm their shared border, and the other one, dated June 17, 1991, established friendly relations and cooperation between the two neighbors.

The “founding” aspect was that the two treaties lay the political and legal foundations for new relations between Poland and Germany after World War II, a process that continues to this day. Under the Treaty of Good Neighborly Relations, a free and sovereign Poland and a reunited, democratic Germany undertook to pursue a policy of understanding, reconciliation and mutual cooperation.

Stage one: Joint statement by heads of government

This year marks 25 years since those historical events, a good opportunity to take a look back at how the treaties came about. The first attempts at negotiating such agreements were made in the late 1980s when the then-communist Poland tried old diplomatic and political methods to bargain for a new agreement with the Federal Republic of Germany. The goal was to overcome Poland’s international isolation following martial law imposed in the country Dec. 13, 1981. Seeking financial aid for its bankrupt economy, Poland also promised to improve the situation of Germans living in Poland.

In the late 1980s, these diplomatic efforts came to a halt when a democratic revolution swept across Central and Eastern Europe. It began in Poland with the first semi-free parliamentary elections on June 4, 1989. The elections produced the first noncommunist Cabinet with Tadeusz Mazowiecki as prime minister, and a new agreement with Germany became a top priority for the new authorities. This time, the German authorities, in particular Chancellor Helmut Kohl, were ready to meet Poland’s expectations. They saw Poland’s Solidarity trade union as a political ally and wanted to offer strong support to the postcommunist transformation in Poland.

While neither party had any new treaty in mind at the time, they did see it fitting to make some kind of bilateral political declaration. Polish officials quickly completed their negotiations with the Chancellor’s Office in Bonn, with Mirosław Pszon handling the talks on behalf of Prime Minister Mazowiecki and myself acting as Pszon’s deputy on behalf of Foreign Minister Krzysztof Skubiszewski. The resulting comprehensive policy document (78 articles across 17 pages) was signed in Warsaw Nov. 14, 1989, as a “Joint Declaration” by Prime Minister Mazowiecki and Chancellor Kohl.

Stage two: General Treaty with Germany

What had been done by that point soon turned out to be not enough. The reunification of Germany was beginning to happen. The Berlin Wall came tumbling down when Kohl was visiting Poland Nov. 9, 1989, forcing the chancellor to cut short his visit and head back to Germany. He then returned to Warsaw to finish his diplomatic talks and a few days later, he announced a 10-step plan for German reunification.

The Four Powers [the United States, France, Britain and the Soviet Union] that were at the time “responsible for Germany and Berlin as one” were not going to just stand and look, so on Feb. 13, 1990 in Ottawa, they decided to start “Two Plus Four” negotiations with West and East Germany on the “external aspects of restoring German unity.” It was Poland’s initiative to expand the concept to include the “the issue of security in neighboring countries.” Foreign Minister Skubiszewski had negotiated that with the Americans and Prime Minister Mazowiecki with Britain while visiting British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in London. The expanded Ottawa procedures were, of



Jerzy Sufek

course, meant to serve Poland's best interests. And while Poland never became a signatory of what became known as the Two Plus Four Agreement, the extra phrase earned the country an invitation to become a full partner in the Two Plus Four Conference wherever it directly concerned Poland. This was despite Kohl's firm objection.

As the German reunification was drawing near, at the end of February 1990 Mazowiecki's government decided that Polish diplomats should start work on a General Treaty to be signed with Germany once it reunited. Foreign Minister Skubiszewski took up the challenge and to this end, he appointed and helmed a small group of experts of which I was part. As a professor of international law, Skubiszewski personally edited different provisions in the document and went to great lengths to make sure that all the work was being done in secrecy. The group accomplished its mission in several weeks and on April 27, 1990, the Polish Foreign Ministry used its diplomatic channels to present a draft version of a Treaty Between the Republic of Poland and Germany on the Foundations of Mutual Relations to the United States, Britain, the Soviet Union, France and the two German states. Things were happening at a rapid pace, as shown by the fact that on May 3, 1990, the draft version was used as the basis for the first round of negotiations between Poland, East Germany and West Germany. The negotiations began in Warsaw and continued later that month in Bonn and Berlin. I was among the negotiators and regret to say that the talks did not end well, as Chancellor Kohl decided to discontinue his country's talks with Poland and East Germany in June 1990.

Conflicting interests

Before Germany formally became one country, Poland and West Germany still had contradictory interests. The top priority for Kohl was to reunify Germany as soon as possible. He persistently told the other Western superpowers that this should happen. His main supporter was U.S. President George Bush and, despite some initial reservations and doubts, Kohl also sold the idea to French President Francois Mitterand and British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. He also managed to overcome strong reservations in Moscow and eventually got the go-ahead from President Mikhail Gorbachev and Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze. They approved the reunification in return for financial benefits and West German economic aid to the Soviet Union. Concerned about Germany's future, Kohl sought to prevent Poland from taking part in the Two Plus Four Conference, treating the country as a potential troublemaker that could delay the reunification process.

Such a confrontational attitude to Poland was only made worse when Kohl failed to meet Solidarity's political expectations and refused to make any commitments as far as Poland's future border with Germany was concerned. He excused himself with "Germany's legal position," which was to say that only a reunited Germany would be entitled to make any binding statements on its boundaries. Until then, Kohl said, he was only ready to acknowledge the Oder and Neisse rivers as the western border of Poland, as per the 1970 Treaty of Warsaw between communist Poland and West Germany.

Kohl first took such a stance during his Polish visit in November 1989. I was there when he talked with the then Polish President Wojciech Jaruzelski, Prime Minister Mazowiecki and Foreign Minister Skubiszewski. As the note taker, I could clearly see how deeply disappointed the top Polish politicians were with Kohl, especially because the Solidarity people had considered him to be the best friend Poland and its people had among politicians. The sense of disappointment turned into an utter shock when shortly after his visit to Poland, Kohl announced his plan to reunify Germany. The plan made absolutely no mention of the future country's borders, not even its border with Poland. Officials in Poland were now worried that once Germany was reunified, the Polish-German border would remain an open case. I remember a number of meetings and consultations with Polish policymakers during which we did our best to avoid a situation in which a weak Poland, struggling with a bad recession and a political and social crisis, would be unable to start negotiating its borders until Germany was reunified into a powerful country. We went to great lengths to negotiate our way out of the "border dispute" before the reunification so that no disadvantageous revisions would be made to the Oder-Neisse line. We wanted to

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- ➡ make sure that the resulting agreement would be binding for the future German state. Such was the purpose of the Polish draft version of the General Treaty "on the confirmation of the Polish-German border."

The trilateral negotiations between Poland, West Germany and East Germany never led to a joint agreement, even though Poland received strong support from the East German delegation. Nobody in Poland knows this part of the story, but by the spring of 1990, East Germany had largely become a new country with Lothar de Maiziere as prime minister and Markus Meckela as foreign minister. With the West German delegation standing in the way, it was really East Germany that made any talks about border-related clauses possible. The clauses were close to the General Treaty drawn up by Poland and they later served as the basis for the Border Treaty of 1991.

Stage three: One treaty leads to another

Seeing how the Poland-West Germany and Poland-West Germany-East Germany negotiations were doomed to fail in 1989/1990, the future of the Treaty of Good Neighborly Relations would really be sealed at the Two Plus Four Conference, which began in April 1990 and produced the Treaty on the Final Settlement with Respect to Germany dated Sept. 12, 1990. Poland only took part in the conference talks that concerned its borders and security issues. It was first at the working level on July 5, 1990 in Berlin, where I headed the Polish delegation, and then at the governmental level on July 17 in Paris, with Minister Skubiszewski at the helm. The Paris session produced a decision that paved Poland and

West Germany's way to the Treaty of Good Neighborly Relations. We proposed that the whole of the Polish-German Treaty talks be divided into two parts. One led to the Polish-German Border Treaty of Nov. 14, 1990, and the other produced the Treaty of Good Neighborly Relations. I have some special memories of those talks as we used a negotiation technique that we referred to as "the cuckoo's egg." First, during the official part of the Berlin session I used my negotiating mandate to enable Poland's foreign minister to attend the Paris session. Then, over dinner with the British conference chairman John Weston and the heads of the two German delegations, I unofficially planted a "private idea" for Poland and the united German state to sign two separate treaties instead of just one. I added that this would benefit all the parties concerned. To begin with, Poland would soon get what it wanted, a border treaty with the reunited Germany, while the resolved "border dispute" would open Germany's way to reunification. Finally, the Four Powers would be glad to see the negotiations speed up, promising a successful conclusion of the Two Plus Four Conference.

My initiative for Poland and the reunited Germany to sign two separate treaties was instantly followed up on by the conference chairman during the official part of the meeting. It was then backed by the United States, Britain and the other conference participants. Minister Skubiszewski was now able to officially present the idea at the Two Plus Four government meeting in Paris on July 17, 1990. The end result was a classic win-win situation that we knew from textbooks on international negotiations. The "cuckoo's egg" approach opened the way to the two Polish-German treaties: the Border Treaty of Nov. 14, 1990 and the Treaty of Good Neighborly Relations of June 17, 1991.



Polish Prime Minister J.K. Bielecki, German Chancellor H. Kohl and Foreign Ministers K. Skubiszewski and H.-D. Genscher sign the Treaty of Good Neighborly Relations at a ceremony in Bonn June 17, 1991.

Grzegorz Rogalski/PAP

Germany's Eastern Policy: Focus on Ukraine

When a united Germany and a postcommunist Poland signed their Treaty of Good Neighborly Relations and Friendly Cooperation 25 years ago, the geopolitical situation in Europe was still dominated by the East-West conflict.

In August 1991, a coup staged by Soviet Vice-President Gennady Yanayev initiated the breakup of the Soviet Union, which was formally dissolved on Dec. 31, 1991. The most important challenge for Germany as it approached reunification was to regulate its relations with Poland, its eastern neighbor.

The demise of the Soviet Union was watched with great concern. This is why the announcement of the independence of Ukraine on Aug. 24, 1991, after the collapse of Yanayev's coup and the communist hardliners, was received with considerable apprehension in Germany. Poland recognized Ukraine's independence days after the country declared it. Germany established diplomatic relations with Ukraine at the beginning of 1992, after the official breakup of the Soviet Union. Germany was dominated by a fear of the political and economic implications of the collapse of the USSR, and Poland was dominated by a fear of a strong Russia seeking to revive Soviet imperialism.

After Germany reunited in 1991, politics in the country was dominated by Chancellor Helmut Kohl. His personal relationships with President Gorbachev dominated political and economic relations between the newly reunited Germany and the declining Soviet Union. The year 1991 was marked by the unification of Germany, but after the coup against Gorbachev and his reforms, a wave of independence declarations swept through Soviet republics. These processes were watched with growing skepticism by the German public, but also by experts and diplomats. Gorbachev was still perceived as a leader who guaranteed a civilized dialogue with the nuclear superpower.

The breakup of the USSR was received with surprise and even disbelief in Germany. Before Russian President Boris Yeltsin took over from Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev on Dec. 25, 1991, Germany recognized the independence of the Baltic states, Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia. This took place immediately after the coup, in August 1991. At the beginning of 1992, Germany recognized the independence of Ukraine and established diplomatic relations with that country and with all other former Soviet republics.

After the collapse of the USSR, the attention of politicians focused on Russia. However, German diplomacy at the same time focused on opening diplomatic posts in post-Soviet states. From the summer of 1991, Ukraine became an important partner. Diplomatic relations were established on Jan. 17, 1992. In Germany, however, there was still no concept for a policy with regard to the Commonwealth of Independent States, and Ukraine was perceived exclusively in terms of a potential risk of nuclear proliferation. It was not until 1993 that the situation changed—due to a symbolic gesture in the form of the introduction of the Ukrainian currency, the hryvna, on the day of Chancellor Kohl's visit in June. The visit marked the final phase of establishing a new strategy toward Kiev. Ukraine's position changed from that of being a "risk to the region" to a "key factor of stability and security in Europe." During Kohl's visit, a declaration was signed on the foundations of bilateral relations, along with a number of agreements on political, social and economic relations that shaped bilateral relations in the 1990s. In 1998, a decision was made to hold intergovernmental consultations that to this day are conducted every year. Cooperation at the nongovernmental level also continued to develop, and in 1999 a German-Ukrainian Forum—which brought together nongovernmental organizations, partner cities and business representatives interested in German-Ukrainian cooperation—was established. In the eyes of German leaders, but also the general public, Ukraine was perceived at that time as an important country in Eastern Europe. The "Orange Revolution" played an important role in this process, strengthened by major international events, such as the 2005 Eurovision Contest and the Euro 2012 soccer championships successfully hosted by Ukraine together with Poland. However, both the Maidan events in Kiev and the annexation of Crimea by Russia as well as the Russian aggression in eastern Ukraine in 2014, came as a surprise to the German public. This changed the attitude of Germans to Ukraine and the image of Russia in Germany. Twenty-five years after the breakup of the USSR, Ukraine is treated in Germany as an important EU ➡

➔ neighborhood country whose membership aspirations depend on reforms and modernization.

In the current situation, a key issue is the so-called Minsk process in which Germany and France play a key role. The implementation of this agreement will determine not only further support for Ukraine but also the development of German-Russian relations. The German media has been presenting various concepts of the country's Eastern policy, but the official position of the government is that the implementation of the Minsk agreements is a condition for withdrawing Europe's sanctions against Russia.

An important issue in the EU's cooperation with Ukraine is environmental protection, in particular the need to secure the ruins of the nuclear power plant in Chernobyl. Thirty years after the disaster this is one of the most significant challenges faced by the EU in its cooperation with Ukraine. Moreover, cooperation in agriculture and technical assistance for internal reforms in that country play an important role. A German advisory group has been working in Kiev since 1994, providing advice and experience to the Ukrainian government in implementing economic reforms. At the center of the consultations and advisory support is the macroeconomic stabilization of the state and the budget, along with restructuring and deregulation in the economy, reforms in the banking system, support for private businesses, and the creation of independent structures in agriculture.

The interests of German businesses in Kiev have been represented by the German Economic Bureau since 1993. Ukraine is an important partner for German companies, particularly for those that rely on exports to Eastern Europe. Demand for German goods in Ukraine runs high, but the crisis is clearly felt, particularly in German goods exports. Germany is still the most important trading partner for Ukraine in the EU. For Germany, Ukraine is also the second-largest trading partner in Eastern Europe, after Russia.

Cooperation with NATO and relations with the EU are the most important aspects of cooperation with Ukraine. Each Ukrainian government has so far sought to deepen its relations with the EU. Despite the complicated internal situation in the country, this process continues. A partnership agreement with the EU has been in place since 1998, and in 2015 this partnership was enhanced by the Deep Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA).

German and Polish strategy towards the Ukraine

The Orange Revolution was a turning point in EU-Ukraine relations. Until May 2004 there were practically no differences between the positions of Germany and Poland toward Ukraine. The objective of the policy vis-à-vis Ukraine was to support reforms in that



country and help Ukraine move closer to European and Transatlantic structures. The peaceful change of power in Kiev, despite electoral manipulations, met with a positive response from political leaders in Europe. Poland was also praised in this context. Just a few months after joining the European Union, Poland had become one of the main players in the east of Europe. Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko was hailed in EU capitals as a hero of the bloodless revolution. Yushchenko gave a fiery speech in the Bundestag, Germany's parliament in Berlin, calling for Ukraine to be admitted to the European Union. However, support for Ukraine's aspirations was much lower in Germany than in Poland and other Central European countries. Poland was in favor of a prompt Ukrainian EU entry, and clear differences could be seen between the German and the Polish positions with regard to Ukraine after the Orange Revolution.

The expectations of the political leaders in Kiev were very high, and the hopes for quick integration with the EU were supported by Polish politicians. In Germany, however, a wait-and-see attitude prevailed, with calls for making the integration process dependent on the new Ukrainian government going ahead with reforms in the country. An internal blockade of the main actors of the Orange Revolution led to more skepticism about Ukraine in Germany. A scandal surrounding the issuance of visas by the consulate in Kiev added to the negative picture of Ukraine in the German media. German politicians were increasingly divided in their assessment of the processes taking place in Ukraine. There was somewhat more interest and involvement among politicians in eastern Germany, who had a better understanding of the processes taking place in

Eastern Europe than their counterparts in western Germany. Moreover, corruption scandals rocking Viktor Yanukovych's government and the instrumental use of Ukraine's European policy from 2010 to 2013 led to the loss of trust in Ukraine's elites in Germany.

The Orange Revolution and the five-year hold on power by the "Orange" government did not lead to Ukraine entering a direct path to the EU. In 2004 Ukrainian leaders reached a compromise based on amending the constitution and transferring powers from the presidential administration to the government and parliament. The prime minister and the government relied on the parliamentary majority. The five-year-long conflict between the president and the prime minister blocked reforms in the country. Despite this, Polish governments supported Ukraine's European aspirations throughout this period. There were differences of opinion between German and Polish politicians because the German strategy depended on reforms in Ukraine, which, however, were abandoned. During his presidency, Yanukovych defined EU membership as a key objective of Ukraine's foreign policy, but at the same time he conducted negotiations with Russia. An agreement with Russia on the Black Sea Fleet and on gas deliveries from Russia to Ukraine triggered negative reactions in EU countries, and Yanukovych's refusal to sign the DCFTA agreement at an Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius in November 2013 became the direct reason for the Maidan demonstrations and Yanukovych's collapse.

Germany's policy toward the CIS developed on two planes until Russia's annexation of Crimea and the war in eastern Ukraine. Germany tried to maintain good relations with Russia, its most important partner in the East, and supported the development of the EU's partnership with Russia, while not neglecting contacts with other CIS countries. One example was support for the EU's Eastern Partnership program. On the political level, Germany tried to reinforce the EU's position in contacts with CIS countries. As a result of the Russian aggression in Ukraine, German policy toward Vladimir Putin's Russia changed dramatically. Germany was and remains a driving force in shaping the EU's policy toward Russia. German Chancellor Angela Merkel became personally involved in this area and Germany was a guarantor of the EU's sanctions against Russia. Together with French President Francois Hollande and supported by Brussels, Merkel secured the negotiation of the Minsk-2 treaty in an attempt to guarantee Ukraine's independence.

Improved EU relations with Russia depend mainly on Russia's further policy toward Ukraine. The position of Germany and Poland toward Ukraine is slowly becoming similar. Germany is pragmatic about the process of Ukraine edging closer to the EU, and Poland believes that support for Ukraine should depend on internal reforms in that country. Moreover, both countries have been working together to develop

the EU's policy toward Ukraine. In this context, it is understandable that Poland was disillusioned when it turned out that it would not be able to send its representatives to negotiations with Russia and Ukraine, but Germany did not motion for Poland to be excluded from the "Normandy format." The course and pace of events in the summer of 2014 and the spring of 2015 were why Poland was left out of the negotiations.

In recent years, the political and economic situation in Europe has changed significantly. Russia has created new security policy challenges for the EU and the Western world as a whole, and the NATO summit in Warsaw is a response to these challenges. At the same time, Russia remains a trade and energy partner. The situation in Ukraine and Belarus indicates that Russia's influence on post-Soviet states will continue to grow. In this situation, the question is how Germany and Poland can shape the EU's policy toward Ukraine and Russia.

Although the war in eastern Ukraine exacerbated the situation with regard to Russia in 2015 and 2016, the financial and economic crisis in Russia had a far more significant impact on Russia's further strategy. Russia cannot afford to continue its aggressive policy toward Ukraine because this policy has its economic consequences. The sanctions against Russia may become milder, but they will not be lifted. Unfortunately, work to implement the Minsk agreements has ground to a halt. Instead corruption continues to thrive in Kiev, and there is a continued lack of political and economic reforms. The European Union is facing challenges connected with the lack of an agreement on migration policy. Poland and Germany have different positions in this area. The role of Britain in Europe depends on the outcome of a referendum on staying in the EU. The specter of a Brexit is blocking all other decisions in the European Union. The financial crisis in southern EU countries remains unresolved, as a result of which Brussels and the EU member states are devoting less and less time and energy to Ukraine. This does not augur well for Ukraine as the country does not have energy for further reforms two years after the Maidan revolution. For Europe, this means a growing number of internal and external challenges. The role of Germany continues to decrease in this situation, while expectations are growing. Recent years show that a single state has less and less influence on how the situation develops in Europe and beyond.

All this adds up to a complicated picture of the world in 2016, especially considering the stagnation in the United States ahead of presidential elections. Ukraine may drop out of the list of the top 10 global challenges, though this is not up to either Germany or Poland to decide.

Cornelius Ochmann

The writer is the Director of the Foundation for Polish-German Cooperation and Member of its Management Board since 2013, a political scientist, an expert on Eastern Europe

Young Poles, Germans Together in a New Europe

Poland and Germany have mended fences and put aside many of their differences since Germany reunited in 1990. The two countries are continuing to edge closer as a new generation of Poles and Germans sharing the same European values has matured.

Poland and Germany have a millennium-plus-long history of mutual attraction and repulsion as neighbors. The young Poles and Germans of recent decades, whose defining experience was a peaceful revolution, the reunification of Germany and democratization in Poland, are now adults. Today, young people in Poland and Germany are being socialized in a united Europe, but witnessing new geopolitical tensions and a migration crisis on a scale unheard of since World War II, in this trying time for Europe and its solidarity.

Closer but still worlds apart

Shared lifestyles and pop-culture idols may form ties even stronger than those resulting from cultural heritage. Nonetheless, a mental wall between young Germans and Poles still remains. A demographic survey conducted by the Institute of Public Affairs (IPA), a Warsaw-based center for policy research, shows that young Poles have a rather positive image of their German peers, while young Germans have only a vague idea of what young Poles are really like. Around 2 million Polish students learn German in school, while in Germany, the Polish language is mainly chosen by immigrants with a Polish background. Students from Poland are the third-largest group of foreigners at German colleges, whereas Germans rarely decide to study in Poland, with exceptions being the Polish-German Viadrina University in Frankfurt an der Oder or the English-language medical college in Szczecin, northwestern Poland.

The remedy for the asymmetry of knowledge is to facilitate personal contacts, for example by exchange programs. Over 2.5 million Polish and German children and young people have met so far through the programs provided by the Polish-German Youth Exchange. This organization was established under the Polish-German Treaty of Good-Neighborliness, based on the German-French model of reconciliation. Interestingly, the Institute of Public Affairs survey shows that young Germans wrongly believe their Polish counterparts insist on discussing history with them. Meanwhile, young Poles and Germans

are the first generation to be free from historical monstrosity and mental burdens such as inferiority complex and fatalistic attitudes derived from the Romanticist tradition on the Polish side and the post-World War II sense of shame and guilt on the German side.

Duality

At the civic level, younger Polish immigrants to Germany play a key part in Polish-German relations today. They naturally navigate cultural codes and meanings in search of a common denominator for Poland and Germany. They have hybrid identity and as a group are often being referred to as “the Podolski and Klose generation” after Lukas Podolski and Miroslav Klose, the two successful German soccer players of Polish extraction. It comprises well-integrated children of Poles who moved to Germany in the 1980s. Their dual national identity makes them natural ambassadors of Poland to Germany and of Germany to Poland.

“My life has been split between Poland and Germany ever since I turned 15,” says Adam Gusowski, a journalist and co-founder of the Berlin-based Club der Polnischen Versager (Polish Losers’ Club), a hit with local Polish expats as well as young German intellectuals. “I have always been somewhere in between, always keeping my distance from either side. And then you can’t help but make never-ending comparisons. I love this sense of duality! It’s like I’m cooking two dishes at the same time and the mixed flavors never cease to surprise me. My double identity, further multiplied by Berlin’s multiculturalism, is my capital that allows me to feel at home in different systems.”

A special connection between Poland and Germany was established by Polish people who came to live in Germany after Poland joined the EU in 2004. The resulting, rapidly growing Polish-German community is the most prominent in border regions. Many young Poles live in German regions near the Polish border such as Uckermark or in Poland’s Silesia, while commuting to work in bigger cities such as Germany’s Frankfurt on the

Oder and Poland's Szczecin. Polish children bring life to desolate preschools and schools in Mecklenburg or Brandenburg in Germany, while German patients often obtain medical treatment from Polish physicians. Their biographies are symbolic for the new Polish-German social contract.

Many of young "betweeners" are successful in Germany, especially in culture and arts. Politics is not a popular career choice and given the estimate of 40,000 Poles (and Germans with Polish roots) living in Berlin, surprisingly few Polish immigrants have made their mark on politics.

One exception is Katarina Niewiedzial, commissioner for integration in Berlin's Pankow district, who says that young Polish immigrants are trying to reinvent themselves. "They are intelligent and committed people who feel at ease within the European community," says Niewiedzial. "Together, we debate issues of relevance to Germany as a modern immigration state, to modern Poland and the future Polish-German partnership."

Young Polish-German betweeners usually act in informal social groups and are chronically underfinanced, but many of them are getting more and more professional. For instance, social media group Berlin-Warszawa @rtpress will launch this summer a website www.warszawa.berlin for young Varsovians and Berliners to exchange cultural and social news.

tion experience teaches people a lesson in empathy, thereby building a system of values where refugees are seen as people in need. "This realization in Poland is eclipsed by the resentment of unknown cultures even though Poland used to be a multi-cultural country itself," says Gusowski.

Through their grassroots initiatives, cosmopolitan Poles and new Germans are triggering a social change that could have an impact on the Polish collective memory. A new generation of Poles and Germans have been given a European upbringing within a multinational society and if these people can have their way, the public in the two countries might gradually start to think along progressive lines.

Young immigrants with a Polish background in Germany hardly identify themselves with traditional Polish expat organizations, and see them as outdated. Paradoxically, if this fragmented Polish community wants to develop a strong political lobby like those of Turkish or Russian Germans, it will need to reach out to the young generation. Older Polish-German organizations tend to lack young blood in them and policymakers in both Berlin and Warsaw would do well to tap into this dormant potential.

Magdalena Szaniawska

The author is a freelance journalist based in Berlin

Berlin-Warszawa @rtpress

The Berlin-Warszawa @rtpress web platform, housed at the www.warszawa.berlin domain, is a virtual review dedicated to cultural and social issues. An outcome of partnership and cooperation between creative communities in Warsaw and Berlin, it will be launched in July.

The platform will bring together the most interesting cultural initiatives from both cities. It will feature texts, reviews, photos and films developed by an expert team of editors and authors: journalists, writers, artists and photographers. In addition to creative milieus, it will cater to anyone interested in taking an active part in the cultural life of Berlin and Warsaw. The texts will be published in three language versions: Polish, German and English.

The platform is a joint undertaking by its originator Maria Kossak—an artist with ties to both cities and the founder of the Berlin-Warszawa @rtpress facebook group, which serves as a base for developing the project—and writer and journalist Beata Chomątowska, aided by the Stacja Muranów and agitPolska socio-cultural associations. The project is co-financed by the city of Warsaw.

Toward a shared future

New challenges take new ideas. Whenever sparks begin to fly between Warsaw and Berlin, the young European, bi-national demographic seizes the initiative. A group of Polish immigrants in Germany called "Poles Without Hate" and activists like blogger Anna Alboth ("Family without Borders") all work online to organize real-life relief for refugees. According to Gusowski, the immigra-



Maria Kossak is a Berlin-based painter and originator of the Berlin-Warszawa @rtpress web project.

Seeing Things as They Are

I have lived in Berlin ever since I came to this city as a 12-year-old girl over 30 years ago. I am a writer and my books have a mixed Polish-German background, though I think they are more German than Polish.

To cut a long story short, I know both Germans and Poles inside out. I easily switch between the two languages and I know what Poles think of Germans and vice versa. I will shed a tear when Polish soccer player Robert Lewandowski kicks the ball into the German goal and I'll get equally emotional when Germany's Polish-born Lukas Podolski returns the service playing against the Polish team. In other words, I live and breathe our global, cross-cultural times to the fullest.

What do ordinary Germans know about their Polish neighbors? Not much. Polish culture? Nothing. "Chopin was Polish? Really?" they will ask and then forget all about it. Let's face it: the awareness of Polish culture in Germany is next to none. But I feel relieved to know that, when they think of Poles, Germans no longer only think of wares sold off the sidewalk (early 1980s) or stolen cars (always, basically). Poles are known and appreciated as hard-working people these days and Germans also know that a Polish housekeeper has written a best-selling book on what it is like to clean German homes. But to be honest, Poles also have a reputation as heavy vodka drinkers and emigrants.

When asked about Poland, some Germans might mention Steffen Möller, a German-born actor and comedian who lives and performs in Poland. But admittedly, he is more famous in Poland than Germany. Others will say they sometimes visit Wrocław, where one of their grandmothers used to live, and still others go to Gdańsk because of the Günter Grass connection. Some Germans have been to Cracow or spent a vacation in the seaside resort of Kolobrzeg. But Germany stretches far beyond Berlin and the areas near the Polish border. The farther you go west, the fewer people are likely to travel to Poland and the less they know about the country's culture. Germans from Bavaria live closer to Lake Garda in Italy than any health resort in Poland. Even though you can now take a train from Berlin to Wrocław, which is this year's European Capital of Culture, and even though Poland and Germany are celebrating 25 years of good neighborly relations, few people in Hamburg or Frankfurt know about any of this unless they are Polish.

Besides, the changes in Poland in recent months have in fact turned the 25 fat years in Polish-German relations into lean years. One of my German friends asked me recently, in all seriousness, if I was afraid to travel to Poland. He had been told that Poland was now a dangerous country where living was hard, possibly harder than in Russia.

Magdalena Parys



Magdalena Parys

Foundation's Projects for Journalists

Scholarships

Scholarships of up to 3,000 euros are awarded to journalists whose work fosters better relations between Poland and Germany. The funds are available for preliminary research done for press, radio and television features, photo reportages and books.

Study visits

Journalists from Poland and Germany are offered joint study visits, such as "Inside Russia."

Polish-German Media Days

An annual conference for professional journalists from Poland and Germany. Every year, the event is hosted by a different region on the Polish-German border.

Tadeusz Mazowiecki Polish-German Press Award

A prize of 5,000 euros is given to the authors of press publications and radio and television programs that provide audiences with information about Poland and Germany. Projects competing for the prize can concern any aspect of Polish-German relations.

For further information go to www.fwpn.org.pl



Tadeusz Mazowiecki



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More at www.fwpn.pl



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JUBILEE YEAR

www.25de.pl: Polish-German events calendar in 2016

The 17th of June 2016 will mark 25 years since the **Treaty on Good Neighbourhood and Friendly Cooperation** was signed by Poland and Germany. A broad variety of Polish-German events will be hosted to celebrate this special jubilee year in both states.

As part of the jubilee, the Foundation for Polish-German Cooperation, in cooperation with the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Republic of Poland, has launched a special website. The core of this website is an interactive **events calendar** open to all institutions and initiatives. Its goal is to inform about the numerous Polish-German events throughout 2016, reach new target groups for bilateral cooperation, as well as create optimum conditions for cooperation among the network of Polish and German partners.

We would like to invite all institutions involved in Polish-German relations to use the interactive events calendar. **The use of the calendar will help you promote your events and gather information about a host of projects and other events.** Moreover, on the www.25de.pl website you will gain access to information on central official events and the opportunity to present publications related to the jubilee year.

More information at: www.25de.pl / www.25pl.de

The website is funded by the German Federal Foreign Office.



25 years good
neighbourliness



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