

Poland in the European Union

Edited by
Alojzy Nowak
Konstanty Adam Wojtaszczyk
Łukasz Zamecki

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Introduction

Introduction

Poland joined the European Union in 2004. Over ten years after the accession, it is great time to evaluate this first period of Polish membership in the EU, a task that is all the more compelling given that Poland became a member of the Community as a less developed country and its political position on the continent was much weaker than it is now. In those ten years, the gross domestic product almost doubled, the GDP at purchasing power parity increased by almost 20 percentage points, and export levels almost tripled. Poland's role in Europe has grown stronger, as Polish political initiatives command greater attention and translate into European reality, Poles hold positions of power in the political structures of the Community, and the 'Poland' brand inspires increasingly positive associations among European citizens. Poland is one of the reasons why the traditional division between Eastern and Western Europe is slowly becoming a thing of the past, and the country is starting to be considered a reliable partner for Northern European states in the emerging North-South set up. Poland is also still one of the most pro-European countries in the EU, which also contributes to its growing importance on the continent.

This success could not have happened without Poland's accession to the European Union and the influx of financial support from the EU. Naturally, the past decade was by no means an unbroken string of success, but the final balance is definitely positive. Ensuring the effectiveness of political initiatives, overcoming weaknesses and becoming an assertive player on the international arena are all tasks that require self-awareness in terms of public policy programming. Membership in the EU also entails a number of political, legal, economic and social dilemmas, which is why it is crucial to watch the processes of integration and Europeanization on a detailed, fact-based level.

The aim of this work is to analyze the most essential issues arising from Poland's presence in the European Union. The idea of creating this publication, geared both towards academic circles and readers whose interest in the Polish experience is not connected with their professional

occupation, was born at the Institute of European Studies of the University of Warsaw. However, the selection of authors goes far beyond the structures of just one faculty. Our aim was to include the most renowned experts on Poland's EU membership.

The book opens with a chapter presenting the historical context of Poland's presence in Europe. In his article 'Poland in Europe: History and Contemporary Times', Łukasz Zamecki presents a comparative analysis of historical and contemporary potential, reasons and strategies that shape Poland's position in the European Union. Małgorzata Mizerska-Wrotkowska in the chapter 'Poland on Its Way Towards the European Union' articulates and constructs a hierarchy of the determinants of membership. Under the framework of the theory of intergovernmental liberalism and the systemic method, she presents the stages in the integration of a state with the European Union. Krzysztof Wielecki in 'Poles in the European Community' discusses the sociocultural issues of Poland's integration with the European Union, referring to the question of national identity vs. European identity and to the diverse attitudes within the European context. In the chapter 'Poland in the European Union: Economic Aspects', Artur Nowak-Far presents and analyzes the macro-economic factors that shape the position of Polish economy on the EU market. Tomasz G. Grosse in 'The Light and Shadow of Cohesion Policy in Poland: on the Example of the Europeanization of State Administration and Development Policy' applies the systemic and comparative methods to analyze the process of Europeanization of state administration. The analysis is conducted in terms of top-down and bottom-up processes. Alojzy Nowak, Kazimierz Ryc and Yohannan Shachmurove, in the chapter 'Economic Policy After Crisis', analyze the assumptions and goals of economic policy in the post-crisis era. The authors examine the on-going institutional and programmatic changes, as well as the opportunities and threats to their implementation. Krzysztof Szewior, in 'Social Policy in Poland at the Beginning of the 21st Century. Objectives for 2007–2013 and Their Accomplishment' discusses Poland's social policy, pinpointing its priorities and determinants in reference to the idea of balancing economic and social goals. In 'Poland and European Internal Security', Zbigniew Czachór and Adam Jaskulski analyze Poland's place in the European area of freedom, security and justice. The authors present the degree and forms of Poland's integration in this area of EU activity and cooperation. Paweł Borkowski in his article 'Poland and the CFSP – Expectations and Participation in the Implementation

Process' tackles the way in which Poland participates in the development of the EU Foreign and Security Policy. The author discusses and analyzes the goals and strategies of European policy in the context of Polish *raison d'état*, and also takes a closer look at Poland's participation in CFSP mechanisms. Jacek Czaputowicz in 'Poland and European Security Policy' compares the objectives and strategies adopted in the European policy with the Polish *raison d'état*. He also analyzes the potential and results of Poland's activities undertaken to shape the international security policy of the EU. Professor Konstanty Adam Wojtaszczyk in the chapter 'The Dilemmas of Polish EU Membership' presents a critical analysis of problems connected with Poland's EU membership in the context of our country's economic, social and political potential, and also examines our skills in constructing various coalitions to secure our interests in various segments.

Each chapter reflects the original outlook of its author. As a consequence, the monograph presents the plurality of Polish views on and attitudes towards the European integration. Our publication is addressed first of all to those readers that are interested in the topic of European integration, and in particular in Poland's role in this process. Each Author aimed to present the issues connected with Poland's membership in the European Union to international readers in a clear, accessible manner typical to popular science publications on one hand, while on the other preserving the precision of facts characteristic to academic overviews.

We hope that the present book will offer an interesting account of a successful modernization of a country in the context of membership in the European Union.

