

**Małgorzata Mizerska-Wrotkowska**

# **Poland and Sweden in the United Europe**

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## **Poland and Sweden in the United Europe**

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## **Introduction**

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# Introduction

On account of the geographical closeness, relations between Poland and Sweden have abounded over centuries with significant events not only in the area of politics but also in economy and culture. The near vicinity also contributed to the outbreak of a military conflict between the states in the 17th century. The wars from a long gone past have little impact on the present-day relations between Poland and its northern neighbour. In Sweden hardly anyone remembers about them.

As regards the 20th-century relations, it is worth recalling 1919, the year when Poland and Sweden established diplomatic relations not to be interrupted even by World War II. Moreover, in August 1939 Sweden consented to represent Poland's interests in Germany. Then, following the end of the war we can watch an evolution of Polish-Swedish relations: from quite correct relations, although limited during the Polish People's Republic, to their improvement along the democratisation process in Poland, to their full stabilisation and flowering as a consequence of the membership of the two states in the European Union. Thus we may conclude that the period of rivalry and conflicts has passed giving way to an era of friendship and good neighbourly relations.

This publication analyses the impact of the membership of Poland and Sweden in the same integrating grouping – the European Union – on their bilateral relations. To prove the thesis and research questions it was necessary to analyse the whole range of relations between the two states over a long time horizon. Thus, the post-war Polish-Swedish relations were divided into three stages. The first one covers the period when the two analysed states were out of the European integrating structures. The second stage covers the years of 1995-2004, when Sweden already was a member of the European Union and Poland aspired to be one. The last stage is the initial period of common membership in the EU.

**The issues under research** seems to be interesting for a number of reasons. Firstly, it is seldom for the study of interna-

tional relations to look into the evolution of states' bilateral relations through the prism of their membership in an integrating grouping. The objective of the research paper was precisely to capture the new elements in relations between Poland and Sweden which had ensued directly or indirectly from their membership in the EU. Secondly, there are relatively few up-to-date analyses on the northern part of Europe in the publishing market for the study of international relations. We may get the impression that hardly anyone notices the specific evolution which the foreign policies of some states in that region undergo. Thirdly, it seems important to address Poland's relations with its northern neighbour due to the lack of relevant analyses in either Polish or Swedish writing.

The research objective of this publication is to prove the following **thesis**: *the accession of Sweden and Poland to the EU has contributed to closer bilateral relations between them in an essential manner*. The following **research questions** emerged during the research work: (1) What has been the place of Sweden in the past and now in Poland's foreign policy and the place of Poland in Sweden's foreign policy? (2) What role did Sweden play in the process of integration of Poland with the European Union? Did it support Poland? (3) What have been the manifestations of positive changes in Polish-Swedish economic relations since the 1st of May 2004 and what may still contribute to their further evolution? (4) What shows the extended scope of political relations immediately after the accession? (5) What are the chances to establish an efficient axis of cooperation between Poland and Sweden within the European Union? (6) What is the role of the Baltic Sea region in the Polish-Swedish relations? (7) How does the migration of Poles to Sweden influence the relations between the two states? (8) What are the changes in the mutual perception of the two nations? (9) What has changed in cultural relations?

Drawing upon the general-methodology **methods** of cognition, the principle of issue solution sequence. This means that at first the general determinants for the evolution of Polish-Swedish relations were identified to then analyse particular phenomena. The methodological requirement to consider phenomena in a specific manner was also met by drawing the material for research from the international reality. In order to trigger the process of inter-

play between the examined states, political, economic, historical, geopolitical and cultural factors were taken into account. I have analysed the issues in question comprehensively, evaluating the individual phenomena from systematic, historical, structural, functional and predictive perspectives.

The basic empirical method employed was observation enabled through the reading of documents, official publications, the press, interviews and statistics. Hence, it was secondary observation most frequently, but we may also find some examples of primary observation. The effects of observation were captured with the method of description of phenomena and events as scientific facts. An auxiliary method of statistical measurement was often employed for the above.

In the catalogue of theoretical research methods, the historical method proved to be useful. A chronological analysis of Polish-Swedish relations allowed me to pick up some regularities. The inductive (bottom-up) method of scientific cognition enabled the classification of Polish-Swedish relations based on factual premises. Thus, the research was conducted within the scope of political-and-military, economic and cultural-scientific relations. On the other hand, the deductive (top-down) method made it possible to employ the systematisation procedure, especially for assessing the methods of Poland's and Sweden's foreign policies (Krauz-Mozer 2007: 87-104). The paper also uses the method of verification of hypotheses as well as basic general-methodology methods, that is analysis, synthesis, methods of abstraction and generalisation. With the analytical and synthesising research approach, the Author could draw crucial predictive conclusions as well.

This publication has five chapters. **The first chapter**, entitled "Bilateral relations between states and relevant factors in the light of the international relations theory", is devoted to the place of bilateral relations within the whole range of relations among states. A typology of bilateral relations, their nature and legal basis are presented, which is followed by an analysis of the laws of development and variability of international relations as regards their impact on bilateral relations. Further, the chances of positive development of relations between the two states were assessed taking into consideration the factor of geographical

location. In addition, the possibilities and any motives for them to establish an alliance were discussed.

Another topic for the considerations was an analysis of great and partitive theoretical concepts in the field of international relations addressing directly or indirectly bilateral relations between states. Potential benefits resulting from undertaking cooperation with the other state were also analysed. The game theory was used to describe relations between actors deciding to cooperate acting upon the principle of maximising their own interests and the “theory of contexts” – to enumerate deviations from this principle. Determinants of the state's actions in the international arena and the mechanisms of its adaptation to its internal and external environments were presented in the conclusion of the theoretical considerations.

**The second chapter**, entitled “Poland-Sweden relations in the context of European integration and regional cooperation”, is devoted to the implications of integration with the European Union for Polish and Swedish foreign policies and to the local and regional cooperation of Poland and Sweden. The introductory part analyses the challenges which the Polish foreign policy faced on the 1st of May 2004 and presents the new possibilities for this states to act in the international arena. The chapter also pictures the process of Europeanisation of Sweden and the premises which determined its integration with the European Union. The second part of the chapter highlights the role played by the Baltic Sea region in Polish and Swedish foreign policies. Later on, Poland's and Sweden's contributions to cooperation within the Council of the Baltic Sea States is analyses with particular emphasis on the Council's relations with the European Union and the Nordic Council of Ministers. In addition, the positions of the two states are compared concerning the future of the Baltic Sea region. Finally, an analysis is presented concerning the cooperation of Poland and Sweden within the Union of the Baltic Cities and other structures existing in the region.

**The third chapter**, entitled “Evolution of Polish-Swedish relations before Sweden's accession to the EU”, analyses the relations between Poland and Sweden from 1945 to the latter's accession to the European Union. The chapter covers not only the period of the Polish People's Republic but also the years of 1989-1995, when

the most significant democratic changes took place in Poland. The first part presents an outline of the Polish-Swedish relations in the areas of politics, economy and culture, starting from the post-war years to the system breakthrough in Poland. What emerges from these considerations is the background for the current relations between the two states enabling us to comprehend them better. Similarly, an analysis of the migration of Poles to Sweden turned out to be essential for the approximation of the specific Polish-Swedish relations in the political and social aspects. The next part of the chapter depicts a new phase in the Polish-Swedish relations after 1989. As regards politics, it focuses on Sweden's integration with the EU and its relations with Poland as well as the institutionalised cooperation around the Baltic Sea. The fragment on economy devotes the most attention to the Swedish developmental assistance for Poland. Further, the chapter presents the evolution of changes in the mutual perception of the Polish and Swedish nations. It pays particular attention to the image of Sweden as emerging from the Polish press on the eve of its accession to the European Union. Finally, it describes Poland's expectations towards its northern neighbour on account of the neighbour's membership in the EU.

**The fourth chapter**, entitled "Intensification of Polish-Swedish cooperation following Sweden's accession to the EU", starts with an analysis of that state's position concerning the issue of Poland's accession to the European Union. Sweden had particularly a lot to say about this matter in the first half of 2001, when it assumed the presidency of the Council of the European Union for the first time in Sweden's history. This thesis presents the reasons for which Sweden put the "enlargement" in the first place among the priorities of its Presidency plus the tools it used to implement the priority. Subsequently, it shows positive changes in the Polish-Swedish economic relations. It raises the topic of reduction of the Polish debt, Swedish investment commitment in Poland and joint projects within the military cooperation. Another fragment of the book is devoted to Poland's presence in the Swedish media on the eve of its integration with the European Union and to the presentation of manifestations of the "Swedish Year" in the Polish foreign policy. The last part analyses the Polish-Swedish regional cooperation as well as the cultural exchange between the two countries and

the operations of Polish-community organisation under the new political conditions.

**The fifth chapter**, entitled "Stabilisation of relations between Poland and Sweden as full members of the EU", serves to prove the thesis posed at the beginning of the research to the greatest extent. It analyses the change of Poland's geopolitical location resulting from its integration with the European Union and the role this state may play in the EU's Eastern and Northern Dimensions. A fragment devoted to the new phase in the Polish-Swedish political relations starts with divagations on the potential axis of cooperation between the two states within the European Union. A further part cites arguments to confirm the thesis that the common membership of Poland and Sweden in the EU altered the nature of their relations in the area of politics and substantially extended their spectrum. It also raises the topic of how the change of the ruling party in Sweden contributed to that state's greater interest in European issues. A part devoted to economy analyses the influence of Poland's membership in the EU on its commercial exchange with Sweden and the level of mutual investments. It has turned out that the relations are indeed very dynamic and the prospects of Poland obtaining further EU subsidies foretell their intensification. Particular attention is given to Poland's and Sweden's positions on the issue of the Northern Gas Pipeline and the impact of its construction on the bilateral relations at the time. In the end, it presents the manifestations and consequences of the employment of Poles in Sweden and characterises major trends in the recent Polish-Swedish cultural relations.

**Literature on the subject** was used to prepare the book. *Documents on Swedish Foreign Policy*, published periodically by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Sweden, turned out to be extremely useful. The book also draws upon the studies by Anna Przyborowska-Klimczak and Stanisław Bieleń as well as *Zbiór Dokumentów* published by PISM (Polski Instytut Spraw Międzynarodowych – The Polish Institute of International Affairs). As regards books, we should mention a work by Jan Dorniak entitled *Stosunki polsko-szwedzkie w latach 1944-1974* and the interesting publications on Sweden by Jarosław Gryz and Jacek Więsławski. A book by Ryszard Michał Czarny *Szwecja w Unii Europejskiej. Studium polityczno-prawne* and a publication edited by Jan Szymański *Polska –*

*Szwecja 1919-1999. Materiały Konferencyjne* proved very useful for the discussion on the Polish-Swedish relations over the last years of the 20th century and at the turn of the century. Much information was taken from a series of bilingual books edited by Joanna Nicklasson-Młynarska: *Szwecja – Polska: lata rywalizacji i przyjaźni*, *Szwecja – Polska we wspólnej Europie* and *Szwecja – Polska, dziś i jutro*. Publications devoted to theoretical issues were helpful for writing the first chapter. The most important ones include books by Józef Kukułka and Ziemowit Pietraś.

In non-serial publications in foreign literature Polish-Swedish relations appear almost solely in the context of the Cold-War confrontation, and after 1989 – against the democratic changes in Central and Eastern Europe and Poland's and Sweden's application to the European Union. Nonetheless, the books which we should count among the most useful for this monograph include Jacob Gustavsson's *The politics of foreign policy change: explaining the Swedish reorientation on EC membership*, Stig Hadenius' *Swedish politics during the 20th century and a report Sweden and Poland from European Perspective. Some aspects on the Integration Process* edited by Yonhyok Choe, Björn Hassler and Stanisław Zyborowicz.

A separate group of sources is formed by articles from scientific magazines. We should mention the following Polish titles: *Rocznik Polskiej Polityki Zagranicznej*, *Integracja Europejska - Wspólny Rynek*, *Studia Europejskie*, *Sprawy Międzynarodowe*, *Przegląd Stosunków Międzynarodowych*, *Komunikaty Instytutu Bałtyckiego*, *Relacje Polska-Szwecja*, *Monitor Integracji Europejskiej*, *Acta Sueco – Polonica* and *Acta Politica - Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Szczecińskiego*, and the following foreign titles: *Internationella Studier*, *Foreign and Security Policy*, *Cooperation and conflict*, *Baltinfo. Newsletter*, *European Journal of Political Research* and *NATO Review*.

Press documentation was of fundamental importance for the analysis of Polish-Swedish relations following Poland's accession to the EU. As regards Polish dailies and magazines we should mention such titles as: *Rzeczpospolita*, *Życie Warszawy*, *Gazeta Wyborcza* and *Polityka*, while for Swedish titles: *Dagens Industri*, *Dagens Nyheter*, *Svenska Dagbladet*, *Aftonbladet* and *Sydsvenskan*. Newsletters of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: *Unia Europejska – Europa w mediach światowych* and *Media zagraniczne o Polsce* proved very useful too.

This work also uses Internet sources, especially publications on the websites of Polish and Swedish governmental institutions and international relations. A detailed list of all the books, articles in scientific magazines, press titles and Internet sources is given in the bibliography at the end of this publication.