Renata Podgórzńska¹

MIGRATION CRISIS IN THE EUROPEAN UNION AND ITS CONSEQUENCES FOR POLISH-GERMAN RELATIONS

Keywords: migration crisis, European Union, Polish-German relations

Abstract: Nowadays, migration of people on the territory of the European Union has become one of the factors determining Poland's foreign policy and determining its bilateral relations due to the scale and dynamics of this phenomenon. Notwithstanding the fact that Poland, unlike other EU Member States directly bearing the costs of mass influx of migrants, is not a target country for migrants, the migration crisis associated with mass influx of people also indirectly affects the Polish reality. Emphasizing the implications of the migration crisis from the point of view of state security consistently strengthens critical opinions in Poland and at the same time determines the reluctance of the Polish society to accept immigrants (mainly from the Middle East and North Africa). The article focuses on the repercussions of the migration crisis from the perspective of Polish-German relations. The basis for this research area is, on the one hand, the role of Germany in the context of the migration crisis and, on the other, the presentation of different positions by Poland and Germany regarding the methods of stopping the inflow of migrants into the EU.

1. INTRODUCTION

Migration of the population concerns every country, regardless of the level of its economic development, socio-demographic characteristics, political, cultural or religious conditions. At the same time, the dynamics

¹ Renata Podgórzńska, University of Szczecin, Faculty of Humanities, Institute of Political Science and European Studies, renata.podgorzanska@wp.pl.

of this phenomenon, its directions, character, mechanisms that stimulate it, and above all the implications of this phenomenon are determined by conditions specific for each state. Nowadays, migrations are one of the important phenomena affecting the development of Poland, determining the activity of state and non-state entities (Podgórzeńska, 2016, p. 141–142). At the same time, however, it should be emphasized that the scale and nature of migration in recent years have resulted in far-reaching consequences not only in relation to Polish reality, but above all in Western and Northern Europe (including Germany, Austria, Sweden) which are the destination for hundreds of thousands of migrants (both refugees and economic migrants).

Apart from the deeper considerations concerning the factors attracting immigrants to Europe and deciding on the choice of the target country, as well as the factors pushing out migrants from the countries of origin, attention should be paid to the implications of the inflow of immigrants from the point of view of the functioning of the European Union. Due to the threats associated with them, migrations are perceived as a phenomenon that is dangerous for the functioning of states and societies in the sphere of personal security, labor market, economy, social cohesion and cultural identity (Fehler, Cebul, Podgórzeńska, 2017, p. 65). Importantly, the movement of people on the territory of the EU due to the size of the phenomenon, its dynamics and the accompanying circumstances is called the migration crisis. The use of this term emphasizes not only the complex nature of the migration phenomenon itself, or the multifactorial nature of the causes that generate it, but also the far-reaching implications of the uncontrolled, mass influx of migrants into the EU.

Bearing in mind the varied level of inflow of migrants to individual Member States and the diverse consequences of this phenomenon, the article focuses on the repercussions of the migration crisis from the perspective of Polish-German relations. The basis for this research area is, on the one hand, the role of Germany in the context of the migration crisis and, on the other, the presentation of different positions by Poland and Germany regarding the methods of stopping the inflow of migrants into the EU. The clear polarization of attitudes regarding the migration crisis affects the

contemporary dimension of Polish-German relations as evidenced by the level and intensity of political cooperation between the two countries.

The starting point for further analysis is the assumption that the migration crisis has become one of the factors determining today's foreign policy of Poland. It revised Polish guidelines and influenced the effectiveness of Polish assumptions. The scale and dynamics of the inflow of immigrants to the territory of the EU, and more specifically the actions proposed and undertaken by European institutions caused a reaction of Poland authorities. At this point, it should be emphasized that in contrast to other EU Member States directly incurring the costs of mass influx of migrants, Poland is not a target country for migrants (most immigrants in Poland are economic immigrants coming from Ukraine). At the same time, due to the solutions proposed by EU institutions (including the problem of relocation of refugees), as well as the possibility of migrants' transit through Poland, this issue was and still is an important element of political discourse in Poland and determines political discussion. Emphasizing the implications of the migration crisis from the point of view of state security consistently strengthens critical opinions in Poland, at the same time deciding about the reluctance of the Polish society to accept immigrants (mainly from the Middle East and North Africa).

Apart from a deeper analysis of the migration crisis, its origins and conditions, it is worth noting the implications of the mass influx of immigrants to the territory of the EU from the perspective of the foreign policy of the state, including bilateral relations. The bilateral relations with the EU Member States, in particular with Germany, became a visible consequence of the migration crisis in the context of foreign policy. The above statement coincides with the view expressed in the literature that the massive international migrations constituting the driving force of the migration crisis have a strong potential impact on inter-state relations (Bali, 2012, p. 474; Balicki, Stalker, 2006, p. 339–349; Lesińska, 2011, p. 8) created as part of the foreign policy of the state. Moreover, it can be noted that the migration crisis in recent years has highlighted the complex nature of the consequences that imply mass migration of people (both uncontrolled and controlled).

Bearing in mind the above observation, and above all considering the complex nature of the implications of the phenomenon of migration on relations between states, the article assumes that the migration crisis is a challenge in the context of bilateral relations of Poland. The inflow of immigrants caused different reactions of EU Member States, generating the most serious conflicts since the founding of the Community (Duszczyk, 2016, p. 1). While bilateral relations, their size and character are, to a large extent, related to Poland's attitude to EU policy on the migration crisis, the migration crisis was not the only factor determining bilateral relations.

2. MIGRATION CRISIS – AN ATTEMPT AT DEFINITION

In 2015–2016, when the crisis related to the mass displacement of the population to Europe caused by the consequences of the Arab Spring, the emergence of the so-called Islamic State and armed conflicts in the EU's neighboring states has intensified, in the public debate the term “refugee crisis” appeared most often alternating with the notion of “migration crisis” or “asylum crisis”. Regardless of the fact that since 2011 the number of people trying to reach the EU has been steadily increasing, it is the intensification of migrants' inflow in the above-mentioned period that caused far-reaching effects from the EU perspective and intra-EU relations (Węc, 2017, p. 7–10). The terminology used in public and scientific discourse is an exemplification of disputes regarding the ways and mechanisms for influencing the increase in the number of people entering the EU. The above-mentioned terms “refugee crisis”, “migration crisis” as well as other emerging in the public debate, for example such as “asylum crisis” or “humanitarian crisis” pointed to the nature of the phenomenon, its significance and consequences from the EU perspective. Incidentally, it is worth noting that the migration situation in recent years indicates the crisis of the EU as a subject in which the political and technical instruments failed. According to Maciej Duszczyk, this dimension of the European crisis is more serious in consequences compared to

Greece's bankruptcy, or the UK's exit from EU structures, affecting all Member States and EU institutions, and what's worse its sources are mainly outside Europe (2015, p. 1).

The article assumes the use of the term "migration crisis", which, in the author's opinion, fully reflects the essence of the phenomenon. The adopted position is identical with the views expressed, for example, by Anna Potyrała or Maciej Cesarz. In Potyrała's opinion, it is legitimate to use the term "migration crisis" in relation to the phenomenon faced by the EU, because in her assessment mainly economic immigrants come to the Union – refugees and other persons requiring protection constitute a minority, which confirms the decisions of member states about refusal to grant them protection (2016, p. 299). The complicated nature of the phenomenon that Europe is currently facing is also addressed by Maciej Cesarz, recalling such terms as the migration, refugee and asylum crisis. In his opinion the conceptual correctness should be determined by the assignation of people coming to Europe to the right category (refugee, immigrant). The terms "migration" or "refugee" best reflect the nature of the current crisis, stressing its scale and demographic dimension related to the inflow of a large number of people within Europe in a short period of time. The concept of "migration crisis" additionally emphasizes socio-economic consequences related to the flow of people for whom Europe is not a territory of transit, but a destination of migration and permanent residence. However, according to the author cited, the analyzed phenomenon is referred to as the refugee crisis due to the mass influx of people who are seeking in Europe not so much improvement of living conditions but above all international protection (Cesarz, 2016, pp. 96–98).

The starting point for further analysis is the assumption that the crisis is a kind of deviation from the desired, postulated state, is a significant and ubiquitous threat to human needs and goals that can have impact on a micro or macro (global) scale (Lindley, 2014). The migration crisis is a serious dysfunctional cultural, social, economic and political phenomenon that carries an extensive catalog of risks and threats for the EU (Czachór, Jaskólski, 2015, p. 17–18). It should

be borne in mind that the phenomenon of mass and uncontrolled movement of population groups from one territory to another, which is accompanied by a temporary or permanent change of residence, is not a new phenomenon in the European reality. Regularly, due to the development of the situation in the near and distant surroundings, the EU has become the destination for people seeking support and protection against wars and conflicts, as well as those seeking opportunities to improve their own financial situation. Nowadays, the scale and dynamics of the phenomenon causes the perception of the inflow of immigrants in terms of crisis. However, the crisis not only affects the scale of migrants' inflow, but also concerns the repercussions it creates for the Union as an organization and its member states. The crisis of solidarity, the crisis of community, the crisis of values constituting the foundations of the EU, the crisis of cooperation, the crisis of responsibility, the crisis of institutions or the crisis of management are just examples of the impasse caused by migratory pressure. In this sense, migration is perceived as the cause of the crisis that affects the EU as an organization and its member states. At the same time, migration can also be seen as a symptom of a crisis. However, in this approach, the crisis should be considered more broadly, as a kind of crisis in international relations and social relations (Lindley, 2014).

3. POLAND IN THE FACE OF THE EU MIGRATION CRISIS. IMPLICATIONS FOR POLISH-GERMAN RELATIONS

Further analysis should be begun with emphasizing that the escalation of migrant flows into the EU coincided with the remodeling of the Polish political scene as a result of the presidential and parliamentary elections in 2015. Changes on the Polish political scene have seriously affected the shape and nature of foreign policy, including the vision of Polish-German relations. The winning group Law and Justice (PiS) not only announced the redefinition of the framework programme of Polish foreign policy, but also contested EU decisions in the context of the migration crisis. The position of the current Prime Minister of the Polish government, Ewa Kopacz, was also unfriendly in this matter and the modification of the

Polish policy towards the migration crisis was announced (already during the electoral campaign). More and more consistently during the election campaign opinions were formulated that the migration crisis was a “German problem”, and the potential reception of immigrants was associated with threats to state security, its sovereignty, identity and professed values (Informacja prezesa Rady Ministrów na temat kryzysu migracyjnego w Europie i jego reperkusji dla Polski...). Importantly, the criticism concerned not only the EU policy regarding the migration crisis and the Polish response to the crisis, but reflected – as mentioned above – the PiS’s efforts to reconstruct the conceptual assumptions of Polish foreign policy and propose a new foreign policy vision taking into account the complex nature of internal and external conditions. It is also a postulate to change the philosophy of Poland’s presence and activity on the international arena, as well as ways to strengthen Poland’s position in international relations, including European ones (Informacja ministra spraw zagranicznych o zadaniach polskiej polityki zagranicznej w 2016 roku...). The issue of the inflow of immigrants to the territory of the EU and the possible increase in immigration to Poland was only one of the aspects of the redefined foreign policy. It was only a pretext to initiate a debate about the need for a new look at the needs and expectations of Poland in the international environment, its role and importance in the EU and the possibility of influencing political processes on the European forum.

The starting point for further analysis is the statement that the Polish stance on the migration crisis was dependent on the one hand on EU policy in this respect, on the other it was subject to evolution along with changes on the Polish political scene. The position of the Polish government reflected both the desire to join the activities of the international community in order to solve the migration crisis, and was modeled under the pressure of internal debate on the subject. Attempting to reconcile the national interest, with values such as humanity, solidarity and co-responsibility, was a difficult or even impossible task without exposing to criticism and accusations of national particularism and egoism.

A permanent feature of the Polish position on the migration crisis in the EU was the emphasis on the right of individual Member States to independent and voluntary deciding on the degree of involvement in EU

actions to solve the crisis. Poland, contesting, EU decisions in the field of control and regulation of the flow of people on the territory of the Union, and, above all, the relocation mechanism of refugees together with other countries of Central and Eastern Europe, opposed the proposed solutions. Both the imposition of a mechanism for separating refugees between Member States were criticized, as well as the lack of migratory experiences of Central European states or concerns about internal security. Declaring solidarity with Europe in the activities for the crisis, Poland was expected to be involved, but in a way that would suit its capabilities. Mitigating their critical attitude, it was envisaged to accept only refugees (but not economic immigrants) and not many of them. While solidarizing with Europe, wishing to support the actions of other countries, it was emphasized that “security matters and the peace of Polish families are its overriding value” (Ewa Kopacz: Polska przyjmie tylko uchodźców, nie emigrantów ekonomicznych).

However, it was emphasized that the automatic, top-down distribution of immigrants between Member States that did not take into account Poland’s capabilities was unacceptable. Only under the pressure of European critics – and, as Anna Potyrała notes – considering the ongoing campaign in Poland and attempts to portray the opposition as unwilling for those in need and requiring international protection, then Prime Minister Ewa Kopacz decided during the EU summit in September 2015 to change the Polish position and agree to accept refugees as part of the relocation system, thus breaking out of the current joint position with the Visegrad countries (Potyrała, 2015, pp. 8–9). At the same time, this decision met with a lack of acceptance at the Visegrad Group forum, while in Poland it triggered an avalanche of criticism from the Law and Justice party, which in the election campaign undermined the approval of Poland for 7,000 refugees at the EU summit. Consistently pointing to possible reduction of Poland’s security level, and above all threats resulting from the admission of immigrants, including terrorist and epidemiological threats (Adamczyk, 2017, pp. 29–30) PiS after the parliamentary elections won in 2015 modified the Polish position in the context of ways to get involved Poland to solve the migration crisis.

It should be noted that opinions presented after the parliamentary elections in Poland in the autumn of 2015 was a kind of expression of the reconstruction of the philosophy of Polish European policy. The pursuit of Poland's empowerment by Beata Szydło as part of international relations, emphasizing the importance of sovereignty and national interest was also reflected in the Polish position on the migration crisis. While explaining the consequences of the mass influx of migrants to Europe, the attempt was made to impose solutions pushed through by some Member States (especially Germany) and, what is important, their ineffectiveness. It should be noted that the contestation by the Visegrad countries of the ways of solving the crisis caused opinions about the lack of solidarity and egoism of these countries. Allegations of the lack of solidarity were resisted when we spoke about an attempt "of some kind of export of problems created by certain states without any involvement of others that should be burdened with them" (*Exposé premier Beaty Szydło – stenogram...*). Rejecting accusations of lack of solidarity, and above all the proposed mechanism of automatic and compulsory relocation of migrants between Member States was treated as exceeding the capabilities of Poland. What is more, in the opinion of Poland (but also other countries, including Belgium, France and the Visegrad states), such a proposal could lead to the disintegration of the EU, and its implementation would result in the suspension and subsequent resignation from the Schengen zone (Duszczyk, 2015, p. 3).

Moreover, allegations of egoism, lack of solidarity, particularisms (also formulated by German politicians) against Poland and other Visegrad Group countries have not only complicated intra-EU relations, but have deepened the political crisis in the EU further strengthened by the decision of the United Kingdom to leave the EU structures. Countries that separate themselves from the EU policy, proposing their own ideas for solving the migration crisis, emphasized the right to decide independently on the ways and scope of participation in EU policy for solving the crisis. The automatic distribution of immigrants between Member States that does not take into account their specificity and capabilities was the main point of contention between the "coalition of the reluctant" and the states

supporting the decisions adopted in the EU. Not giving up on complicity in solving the migration crisis and respecting international commitments – and what is important – considering the need to distinguish between immigrants and refugees, Poland declared support. This position, however, was not welcomed either by EU decision-makers, as well as those Member States that have borne the greatest costs of the crisis. In the future, the consistent negation of the refugee relocation system and failure to meet the requirements that Poland has committed to have caused severe criticism from EU institutions and, moreover, the possibility of taking legal steps. This should be considered an application addressed by the European Commission to the Court of Justice of the EU regarding the failure by Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic to decide on the relocation of refugees. It should be remembered that the December decision of the Commission is a consequence of actions taken by it already in June 2017, when procedures against the deficiencies committed by three V4 states were initiated. In the future, the consistent negation of the refugee relocation system and failure to meet the requirements that Poland has committed to have caused severe criticism from EU institutions and, moreover, the possibility of taking legal steps. Such a legal step is for example an application addressed by the European Commission to the Court of Justice of the EU regarding the failure by Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic to decide on the relocation of refugees. It should be remembered that the December decision of the Commission is a consequence of actions taken by it already in June 2017, when procedures against the deficiencies committed by three V4 states were initiated. Regardless of the position of the Commission, as well as the Court of Justice, which in September 2017 confirmed that the relocation program still applies, these countries still did not fulfill the obligation to relocate (*Relokacje: Polska przed Trybunałem...*). The system of compulsory relocation of refugees that the member states agreed to in the autumn of 2015 (except for the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania and Hungary), and which aimed to accept 120 000 refugees in September 2017 has come to an end (*Bruksela kończy z obowiązkową relokacją uchodźców (na razie)....*). The proposed mechanism for relocating refugees within the Member States has proved to be ineffective, as evidenced by the fact that

EU countries have fulfilled their obligations (although its termination does not mean abandoning the enforcement of commitments) in less than 30%. Slovakia, for example, accepted 16 out of 902 refugees, which accounted for 1.8% of commitments, Czech Republic accepted 12 out of 2691 people (0.4% of commitments), Spain 13.7% of the declared number of refugees, Belgium 25.6%, the Netherlands 39.6 %, Portugal 29.1%, Finland 1951 people (94%), and Ireland 459 people (76.5%) (*Relokacja uchodźców. Tylko jedno państwo wywiązało się ze zobowiązań...*). At the same time, the withdrawal of the EU from this plan – as mentioned above – did not change the situation of Poland. Due to the failure to comply with earlier decisions, it was severely criticized, but the fiasco of the EU concept of relocation did not protect Poland from its consequences. It is worth noting that in Poland the decision not to accept refugees has been consistently perceived as consistent with the Polish national interest. Furthermore, its rightness for many politicians was confirmed by the President of the European Council, Donald Tusk, who in the first version of the letter addressed to EU leaders before the December EU summit mentioned that the implementation of the refugee relocation system proved ineffective and divided the member states (*Tusk chce miliardów na walkę z nielegalną migracją...*).

In the opinion of Polish decision-makers the ineffectiveness of the system of compulsory relocation was a confirmation of the deficiency of the proposed solutions, perceived by some Member States as affecting their sovereignty. The lack of acceptance of the above mechanism did not mean the lack of solidarity, but the postulation of other forms of activity to solve the migration crisis. Poland was ready to financially, personally, technically, politically engage in those activities of the European Union, which enjoy widespread support from all Member States (*Informacja dla Sejmu i Senatu RP o udziale Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej w pracach Unii Europejskiej w okresie styczeń–czerwiec 2017 r.*, p. 279). Responding to allegations of lack of responsibility and solidarity and denying potential sanctions that threaten non-compliant countries under the relocation system, Poland mentioned other forms of its involvement in helping refugees, including financial support under development assistance, participation in financing the EU Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian

Crisis – the MADAD fund, multilateral contributions to specialized United Nations Agencies operating in the territory of Syria, i.e. the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Aid in Damascus and all other humanitarian aid activities directed to countries in need of support (Odpowiedź na interpelację nr 2219 w sprawie polskiej pomocy dla uchodźców przebywających w obozach w krajach graniczących z Syrią...). It was pointed out that the assistance provided to refugees in places of their residence was more effective, hence the financial assistance under the Polish development aid and Polish commitments to international organizations were successively increased.

At the end of this part of the article it is worth noting that the consequence of such decisive criticism of the EU policy in the context of the migration crisis is the consolidation of the image of Poland not only as a country unwilling to accept immigrants, but also as a eurosceptic state. This negative image strengthens the political conflict in Poland against the background the reforms of the justice system criticized by the European Commission, considering it to be a violation of the rule of law. The image of Poland is also not perceived better because of incidents of nationalistic or racist origin that become an element of Polish reality, still marginal, but extremely dangerous.

4. EXPECTATIONS AND REALITY. POLISH-GERMAN RELATIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE MIGRATION CRISIS

As a preliminary point, it should be emphasized that the migration crisis has become one of the important internal problems polarizing the political scene both in Poland and in Germany. In both countries, the interest in the problem of the inflow of immigrants was determined by different reasons. First of all, attention should be paid to the scale of the inflow of immigrants to Poland and Germany, and also the related consequences (in the social, political, economic, cultural and religious dimensions). The migration experiences of both countries, the current practice in the migration flows, the objectives and nature of migration policy are

equally important. The highlighted problems clearly place both countries in opposite positions in the context of the migration crisis. At the same time, however, the phenomenon common to both countries that accompanies the migration crisis is the polarization of the internal political scene. In both countries, irrespective of the differences between them, the migration crisis was the subject of lively public debate. As Bogdan Koszel notes, “optimistic government forecasts about the absorption capacity of the German state divided German society” (Koszel, 2016, p. 147). The politics of the “open door” or referring to the “culture of hospitality” divided the German political scene on which anti-immigrant voices were increasingly heard. At this point, one should point out, for example, to the movement created in Dresden in 2014 under the name Patriotic Europeans against Islamization of the West (*Patriotische Europäer gegen die Islamisierung des Abendlandes* – Pegida), as well as the activity and electoral success of the populist, radical right-wing party Alternative for Germany (*Alternative für Deutschland* – AfD). The electoral result achieved by AfD in the Bundestag elections (third force) clearly indicates an increase in eurosceptic and anti-immigrant attitudes in German society (*Bundestagswahl 2017: Endgültiges Ergebnis*). Demands related to the closure of borders for migrants, removal of political Islam from public space and tightening of criminal law ensured AfD electoral success (Ciechanowicz, 2016).

In the case of Poland, the problem of the politicization of the phenomenon of migration is a kind of novelty. The issue of migration has never before been a key element of political and public discourse (Adamczyk, p 29; Podgórzńska, 2015, pp. 243–244). It also became an element of the parliamentary election campaign in the autumn of 2015, polarizing public opinion and, consequently, the entire party and political system. Equally worrying in Poland is the radicalization of the social moods concerning immigrants, cases of attacks on foreigners and, moreover, the display of anti-immigrant attitudes by far-right groups. Up to now incidental events of xenophobic, anti-immigrant background are gaining momentum. Particularly worrying is the fact that their legitimacy follows through entering into patriotic anniversary celebrations, an example of which is the March of Independence organized by the national movement.

While the mere commemoration of regaining independence in the proposed formula does not arouse controversy, exposing nationalist, xenophobic and anti-immigrant slogans seems very disturbing.

The migration crisis and intra-EU disputes over how to resolve it were a factor determining bilateral relations between Member States. An example is the cooling of bilateral relations between Poland and Germany and the negative assessment of Polish reality in the media and among European public opinion (Grodzki, 2015, p. 2). It should be emphasized that the catalog of existing disputable points, including issues related to energy, European integration or the sphere of security has been increased by the problem of refugees. In Germany, Polish fears related to the influx of migrants on the one hand were perceived through egoism and the lack of European solidarity, and on the other, the lack of acceptance of strangers, people of different culture, religion and value systems (Niemieckie media ostro krytykują Polskę: „Mało przyjazna wobec obcych”...). In Poland, however, the inflow of immigrants was perceived in terms of threats for both European security and national security of Poland. The state that contributed to the increase of threats in Polish perception was Germany deciding to open the borders (Niemcy wobec fali uchodźców...). The escalation of terrorist threats in Europe, and most of all terrorist attacks in European cities, strengthened the criticism of the German “open door” policy (Premier Beata Szydło: „Niemcy są dla nas ważnym i bliskim partnerem w Europie”...). Notwithstanding the fact that the importance of our western neighbor was emphasized from the point of view of our political and economic interests, the difference of attitudes towards the migration crisis antagonized both states. What is more, it should be remembered that in 2016 it was the United Kingdom, and not Germany that was described as the main partner of Poland, which, as emphasized by Minister Witold Waszczykowski, was united with Poland “not only by understanding many important elements of the European agenda, but also a similar approach to the problems of European security” (Informacja ministra spraw zagranicznych o zadaniach polskiej polityki zagranicznej w 2016 roku...). Relations with Germany, despite the fact that this state was still perceived as the most important neighbor and economic partner of Poland, required a revision (Informacja ministra spraw zagranicznych

o zadaniach polskiej polityki zagranicznej w 2016 roku). A number of factors have contributed to the state of Polish-German relations. The migration crisis was only one of them. It should be remembered that since the end of 2015 the political situation in Poland has been a constant subject of interest of German politicians and journalists who comment critically dispute about the Constitutional Tribunal or the nature of judicial reform. In both cases, PiS policy is perceived as a threat to Polish democracy, and the actions taken as affecting fundamental European values. In addition, one should emphasize the different political goals of Poland and Germany in Europe, and above all the reluctance of Poland to join the solution proposed by Germany to solve the migration crisis, which did not serve mutual relations (*Der Riss zwischen Berlin und Warschau wächst...*).

The Polish-German relations were not better by the narrative that accompanied the migration crisis. Apart from the divergence regarding the legitimacy of German policy towards migrants, comments from some political circles in Poland came down to phasing out threats related to the influx of immigrants, in particular to the terrorist threat (Sydov, 2016). Theses about the German dictate or the voices that the migration crisis is solely a problem of Germany fit in with the criticism of the EU's actions in the context of the crisis and constituted an incentive to undermine the achievements of the existing Polish-German cooperation. Mutual relations were not improved by undermining the achievements of Polish-German cooperation, contesting the Polish policy conducted in recent years and proposing a hard course in Poland's policy towards Germany (Jarosław Kaczyński o stosunkach polsko-niemieckich: musimy zajmować twarde stanowisko). The divergence of positions in the context of the migration crisis strengthened Polish-German disputes regarding both European affairs and the perception of bilateral relations. What is more, Polish-German relations after 1989 were shaped either in terms of reconciliation and partnership, or pragmatism, mutual claims (e.g. the possibility of Poland recovering from Germany for losses incurred during the Second World War) and prejudices. The amplitude of emotions and expectations that accompanied the creation of Poland's policy towards Germany (but also German towards Poland) remained in close connection with the

internal political context. It should be noted that the voices about the need for a tough course in foreign policy are also a signal to PiS own electorate, an attempt to consolidate it and maintain unity.

The migration crisis has highlighted the lack of consensus among Polish politicians and Polish public opinion about the role of Germany from the perspective of Polish foreign policy. Poland contested the German policy in the context of the migration crisis, reform drafts in the EU (the idea of a Europe of different speeds), or even Germany's participation in the Nord Stream 2 project managed by Gazprom. It should be noted that Polish-German disputes were eased in important situations in the context of international relations. Events inside the EU (e.g. Brexit) as well as outside its area (conflict in Ukraine, presidential elections in the US and Donald Trump's victory, conflict in Syria, Russia's policy, international terrorism) verified the attitudes of both countries (*Wizyta Merkel w Polsce okazją do poprawy relacji...*; Sakson, Kubiak, Tujdowski, Wagińska-Marzec, 2017, pp. 1–4).

The perception of Germany and Polish-German relations was reevaluated along with the decision of the United Kingdom to leave the EU. Awareness of remodeling intra-European relations influenced the view of Polish decision-makers about the need to intensify Polish-German cooperation. This was expressed by Minister Waszczykowski in the Sejm speech of spring 2017, when he stated that Poland's reaction to the United Kingdom's intention to leave the European Union were actions aimed at maintaining enhanced cooperation with Germany (*Informacja Ministra Spraw Zagranicznych o zadaniach polskiej polityki zagranicznej w 2017 roku*). The need to dynamize mutual relations was perceived by both sides, identifying common interests. Despite the existing differences, including those concerning the EU, both Polish and German politicians saw the ally's partner both inside and outside the Union. Chancellor Angela Merkel, like the Polish decision-makers, took the position that the Polish-German relations after Brexit gained significance for the future of the EU more than ever in the past (*Wizyta Merkel w Polsce okazją do poprawy relacji...*). At the same time, it cannot be forgotten that despite the discrepancies caused by the migration crisis and the dissimilarity of positions in the above mentioned issues, the economic relations of both countries

developed dynamically. The share of Germany in Polish total exports in 2016 amounted to 27.4% and 23.3% in imports, respectively. Trade turnover steadily increased. In 2016, Polish exports reached the historical value of 205047.7 million dollars, while the import of 200672,4 million dollars (*Rocznik statystyczny handlu zagranicznego* 2017).

In conclusion, it can be assumed – based on Krzysztof Malinowski – that Polish-German relations are relations of two states, which are closely related to each other by historical experience, but at the same time are constantly confronted with new challenges (Malinowski, 2015, p. 48). The factor motivating both countries to look for cooperation platforms are defined by common interests. Consequently, despite cyclically emerging points of contention, which determine the temporary deterioration of political relations, both sides are interested in strengthening good-neighborly cooperation towards a strategic partnership. In the face of various challenges, it is in the interest of both countries to seek compromises and solve problems regardless of periodically arising differences and points of contention (Veser, 2016). It is worth emphasizing that despite the emerging problems in bilateral relations, public opinion in Poland perceives Polish-German relations as stable. According to a study commissioned by the Institute of Public Affairs by GfK Polonia (from 3 to 8 March 2017), nearly two-thirds (64%) of respondents rated Polish-German relations as good or very good, although compared to 2016 the percentage of positive ratings decreased by three percentage points. In the above-mentioned study, the different attitudes of both countries regarding the ways of solving the migration crisis are perceived as a serious problem in Polish-German relations, but they do not affect the positive assessment of mutual relations. It should be mentioned that in the hierarchy of problems determining mutual relations there is also the issue of the Nord Stream gas pipeline, criticism of the current Polish government by the German media and some politicians, issues related to the commemoration of expulsions or compensation expected by some displaced Germans or their descendants. Interestingly, the research also shows that Poles believe that in relations with Germany, Poland should focus on cooperation and compromise (58.5%) much more than on defending its own interests (31.5%) (Lada, 2017, p. 16).

6. CONCLUSION

Analysis of the consequences of the migration crisis from the perspective of Polish foreign policy requires consideration of a wider context. It covers both an international set of factors determining mass inflow of population on the territory of the EU, European (intra-Union) dimension of the crisis and national conditions. Bearing in mind the national context, one should first take into account the fact of diverse attitudes towards immigrants depending on their country of origin. Allegations of lack of solidarity, egoism, and particularism of action were rejected, reminding that in the past Poland became a home for refugees from Chechnya. Nowadays – which has been emphasized – Poland joins the stream of European activity in support of refugees by accepting and providing support to refugees from eastern Ukraine. Secondly, as never before, the problem of immigration has become an element of political discourse, constituting one of the fundamental aspects of the parliamentary campaign conducted in autumn 2015. Moreover, the dispute concerned only immigrants coming from the Middle East and Africa. Immigration (also economic) from other countries, especially the close neighborhood (including primarily from Ukraine) was not negatively perceived. Thirdly, the growing dispute between the ruling party and the opposition about all changes made in Poland prevented a substantive debate on migration. A simplified, superficial and emotional tone of discourse strengthened the anti-immigrant attitudes of Polish public opinion.

In summary, the migration crisis, and more specifically the reaction mechanisms to the mass influx of migrants proposed by the EU have changed the nature of Polish foreign policy and redefined its guidelines. Importantly, the Polish-German relations were shaped on the one hand by challenges and threats resulting from the development of the international situation, and on the other hand by intra-EU problems that affected the condition and functioning of the EU (e.g. such as a debt crisis in the euro area in the past, and currently, the conflict in Ukraine, Brexit or the migration crisis). At the same time, however, the mutual relations were affected by problems specific only to Polish-German cooperation, its level and intensity.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

- Adamczyk, A. (2017). Państwa Grupy Wyszehradzkiej wobec kryzysu migracyjnego w Unii Europejskiej. *Przegląd Europejski*, 1, pp. 11–40.
- Bali, S. (2012). Ruchy ludności. In: P. Williams (ed.). *Studia bezpieczeństwa* (pp. 471–485). Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego.
- Balicki, J., Stalker, P. (2006). *Polityka migracyjna i azylowa*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego.
- Bruksela kończy z obowiązkową relokacją uchodźców (na razie)*. Downloaded from: <http://wiadomosci.onet.pl/swiat/bruksela-konczy-z-obowiazkowa-relokacja-uchodzcow-na-razie/z5l01lh>
- Bundestagswahl 2017: Endgültiges Ergebnis, Pressemitteilung*. Downloaded from: https://www.bundeswahlleiter.de/info/presse/mitteilungen/bundestagswahl-2017/34_17_endgueltiges_ergebnis.html
- Cesarz, M. (2016). Kryzys uchodźczy w Europie – zarys problemu. In: K.A. Wojtaszczyk, J. Szymańska (eds.). *Uchodźcy w Europie. Uwarunkowania, istota, następstwa* (pp. 95–109). Warszawa: Oficyna Wydawnicza ASPRA-JR.
- Ciechanowicz, A. (2016). *Program Alternatywy dla Niemiec – suma wszystkich strachów*. Downloaded from: <https://www.osw.waw.pl/pl/publikacje/analizy/2016-05-11/program-alternatywy-dla-niemiec-suma-wszystkich-strachow>
- Czachór, Z., Jaskólski, A. (2015). *Polska wobec kryzysu migracyjnego w Europie*. Downloaded from: http://www.institutobywatelski.pl/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Analiza_Polska-wobec-kryzysu.pdf.
- Der Riss zwischen Berlin und Warschau wächst. Downloaded from: <http://www.tagesspiegel.de/politik/deutsch-polnische-partnerschaft-der-riss-zwischen-berlin-und-warschau-waechst/20148638.html>
- Duszczyk, M. (2015). *Kryzys migracyjny czy kryzys Unii Europejskiej?*. Downloaded from: <http://www.iz.poznan.pl/plik,pobierz,91,c1d90926dcef3f4fd9bc492b52bd8268/1291-Problem-uchodzcy.pdf.10.07.2017>
- Duszczyk, M. (2016). *Kryzys migracyjny 2015/2016*. Downloaded from: <http://iminteg.uw.edu.pl/pdf/Maciej-Duszczyk-Kryzys-migracyjny-2015-2016.pdf>
- Ewa Kopacz: *Polska przyjmie tylko uchodźców, nie emigrantów ekonomicznych*. Downloaded from: <https://www.tvn24.pl/wiadomosci-z-kraju,3/premier-ewa-kopacz-o-uchodzcach-niedzielne-wystapienie-kopacz,578870.html>
- Exposé premier Beaty Szydło – stenogram. Downloaded from: <https://www.premier.gov.pl/expose-premier-beaty-szydlo-stenogram.html>
- Fehler, W., Cebul, K., Podgórska, R. (2017). *Migracje jako wyzwanie dla Unii Europejskiej i wybranych państw członkowskich*, Warszawa: Difin.

- Grodzki, R. (2015). *Grupa Wyszehradzka i kryzys uchodźczy: solidarnie przeciw solidarności europejskiej?*. Downloaded from: http://www.iz.poznan.pl/plik,pobierz_93,16b1dedc4c06f692c1c2f5a9f493258f/1271-Wyszegrad-uchodzcy.pdf.
- Informacja dla Sejmu i Senatu RP o udziale Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej w pracach Unii Europejskiej w okresie styczeń–czerwiec 2017 r. Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne z 49. posiedzenia Sejmu Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej w dniu 12 października 2017 r. (trzeci dzień obrad), Warszawa 2017. Downloaded from: http://orka2.sejm.gov.pl/StenoInter8.nsf/0/290F0B0341A2D875C12581B7007CD43E/%24File/49_c_ksiazka_bis.pdf
- Informacja ministra spraw zagranicznych o zadaniach polskiej polityki zagranicznej w 2016 roku, 29 stycznia 2016 roku. Downloaded from: http://www.msz.gov.pl/pl/polityka_zagraniczna/priorytety_polityki_zagr_2017_2021/expose2/expose2016/
- Informacja Ministra Spraw Zagranicznych o zadaniach polskiej polityki zagranicznej w 2017 roku. Downloaded from: http://www.msz.gov.pl/pl/polityka_zagraniczna/priorytety_polityki_zagr_2017_2021/expose2/expose2017/.
- Informacja prezesa Rady Ministrów na temat kryzysu migracyjnego w Europie i jego reperkusji dla Polski. Downloaded from: http://orka2.sejm.gov.pl/StenoInter7.nsf/0/A8CA0F4060DE3B1CC1257EC200722812/%24File/100_a_ksiazka.pdf
- Jarosław Kaczyński o stosunkach polsko-niemieckich: musimy zajmować twarde stanowisko. Downloaded from: <https://wiadomosci.wp.pl/jaroslaw-kaczynski-o-stosunkach-polsko-niemieckich-musimy-zajmowac-twarde-stanowisko-6101651446510209a>
- Koszel, B. (2016). Unia Europejska, Niemcy i problem uchodźców (2014–2016). *Rocznik Integracji Europejskiej*, 10, pp. 143–156.
- Lesińska, M. (2011). *Migracje we współczesnej analizie politologicznej – niewykorzystany potencjał*. CMR Working Papers, 47/105. Downloaded from: http://www.migracje.uw.edu.pl/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/WP_47_105__ML_1.pdf
- Lindley, A. (2014). *Krytyczne perspektywy kryzysu i migracji*. Downloaded from: <https://www.opendemocracy.net/anna-lindley/critical-perspectives-on-crisis-and-migration>.
- Łada, A. (2017). *Barometr Polska-Niemcy 2017. Polskie społeczeństwo o niemieckiej polityce i wzajemnych relacjach*. Downloaded from: http://www.kas.de/wf/doc/kas_48898-1522-8-30.pdf?170516224041
- Malinowski, K. (2015). Stosunki polsko-niemieckie i europejskie kryzysy. *Studia Polityczne*, 2, pp. 35–52.
- Niemcy wobec fali uchodźców – polski obraz wydarzeń i stosunki polsko-niemieckie*. Downloaded from: http://akademia.krzyzowa.org.pl/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=168:niemcy-wobec-fali-uchodzcow-polski-obraz-wydarzen-i-stosunki-polsko-niemieckie&catid=10&lang=pl&Itemid=207.

- Niemieckie media ostro krytykują Polskę: „Mało przyjazna wobec obcych”. Downloaded from: <http://fakty.interia.pl/raporty/raport-imigranci-z-afryki/informacje/news-niemieckie-media-ostro-krytykuja-polske-malo-przyjazna-wobec-obcych,nId,1880189>.
- Odpowiedź na interpelację nr 2219 w sprawie polskiej pomocy dla uchodźców przebywających w obozach w krajach graniczących z Syrią). Downloaded from: <http://www.sejm.gov.pl/Sejm8.nsf/InterpelacjaTresc.xsp?key=66382F7B>
- Podgórzńska, R. (2016). The migration issue in Polish foreign policy under the migration crisis in Europe. *Reality of Politics*, 7, pp. 140–155.
- Podgórzńska, R. (2015). Problem polityzacji zjawiska migracji w powojennej Polsce. In: B. Kromolicka, H. Walczak (eds.). *Bezdomna Europa. Migracje po II wojnie światowej we współczesnych badaniach humanistów* (pp. 233–253). Szczecin: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Wydziału Humanistycznego US MINERWA.
- Potyrała, A. (2015). W poszukiwaniu solidarności. Unia Europejska wobec kryzysu migracyjnego 2015. *Przegląd Politologiczny*, 4, pp. 33–52.
- Potyrała, A. (2016). Pozamilitarne aspekty bezpieczeństwa międzynarodowego – kryzys migracyjny 2015–2016. *Przegląd Strategiczny*, 9, pp. 295–313.
- Premier Beata Szydło: „Niemcy są dla nas ważnym i bliskim partnerem w Europie”. Downloaded from: <http://www.dw.com/pl/premier-beata-szydl%C5%82o-niemcy-s%C4%85-dla-nas-wa%C5%BCnym-i-bliskim-partnerem-w-europie/a-19043874>
- Relokacja uchodźców. Tylko jedno państwo wywiązało się ze zobowiązań. Downloaded from: <https://www.wprost.pl/swiat/10077572/Relokacja-uchodzcow-Tylko-jedno-panstwo-wywiadalo-sie-ze-zobowiazan.html>
- Relokacje: Polska przed Trybunałem. Downloaded from: https://ec.europa.eu/poland/news/171207_relocations_pl
- Rocznik statystyczny handlu zagranicznego 2017. Downloaded from: <https://stat.gov.pl/obszary-tematyczne/roczniki-statystyczne/roczniki-statystyczne/rocznik-statystyczny-handlu-zagranicznego-2017,9,11.html>
- Sakson, A., Kubiak, P., Tujdowski, M., Wagińska-Marzec, M. (2017). Wizyta kanclerz Angeli Merkel w Warszawie w opinii niemieckich mediów. *Biuletyn Instytut Zachodniego*, 290, pp. 1–4.
- Sydow, K. (2016). *Troska, strach, wrogość. Dyskurs o uchodźcach i migrantach w Polsce i Niemczech*. Downloaded from: <https://pl.boell.org/pl/2016/07/25/troska-strach-wrogosc-dyskurs-o-uchodzcach-i-migrantach-w-polsce-i-niemczech>
- Tusk chce miliardów na walkę z nielegalną migracją. Downloaded from: <https://www.tvn24.pl/wiadomosci-ze-swiata,2/tusk-wyslal-list-do-przywodcow-ue-ws-uchodzcow,796803.html>
- Veser, R., *Ein Satz, den keiner mehr sagt*. Downloaded from: <http://www.faz.net/aktuell/politik/ausland/europa/deutsch-polnisches-verhaeltnis-ein-satz-den-keiner-mehr-sagt-14289490.html>

Węc, J.J. (2017). Reforma polityki imigracyjnej, kontroli granic zewnętrznych oraz polityki azylowej Unii Europejskiej w dobie kryzysu migracyjnego (2015–2016). *Przegląd Zachodni*, 2, pp. 7–39.

Wizyta Merkel w Polsce okazją do poprawy relacji. Downloaded from: <http://www.polsatnews.pl/wiadomosc/2017-02-06/wizyta-merkel-w-polsce-okazja-do-poprawy-relacji/>