

poljska

presented by henri isufi



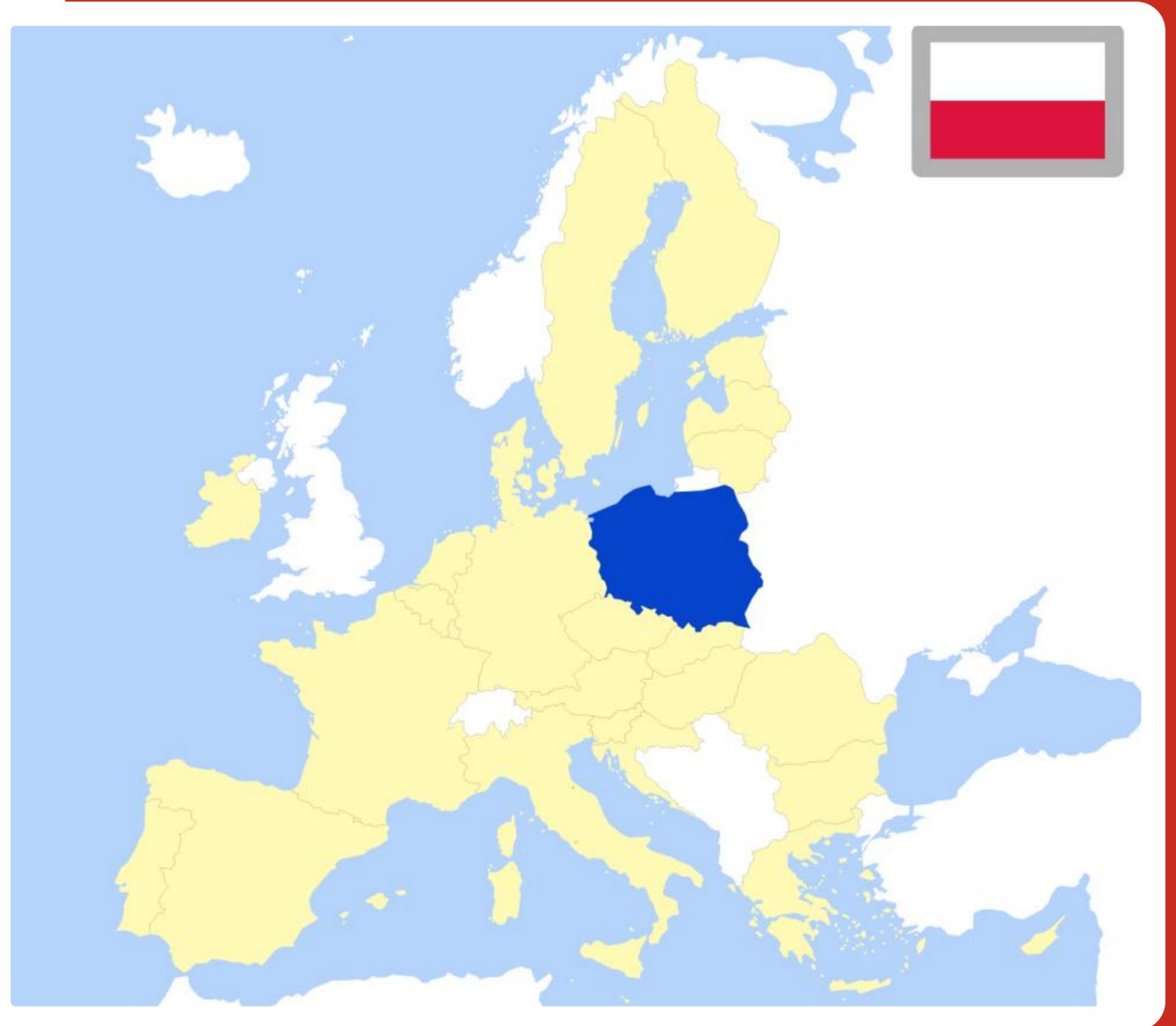
poljska

in a nutshell

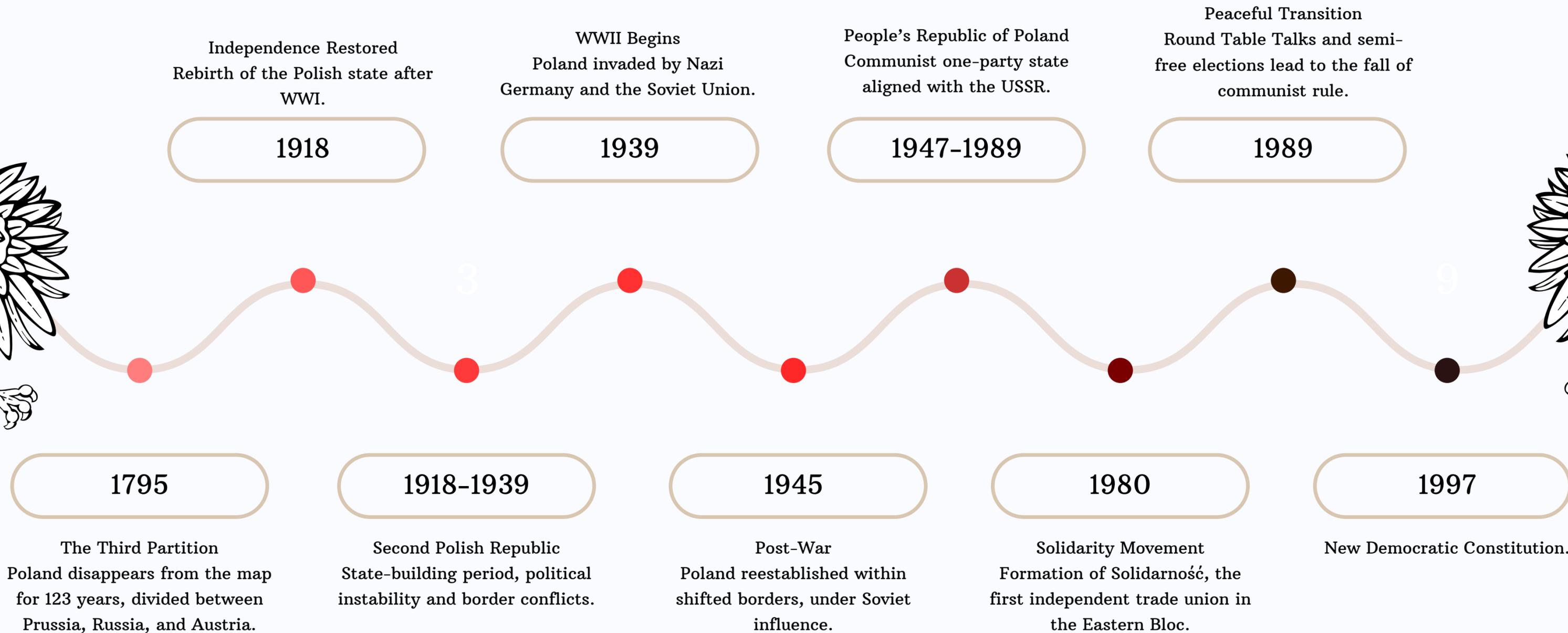


- Population: ~38 million (largest country in Central Europe after Germany)
- ~8% of EU population, 5th largest in the EU
- Area: 312,000 km²
- Borders 7 countries: Germany, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Ukraine, Belarus, Lithuania, Russia (Kaliningrad)
- Capital: Warsaw
- Geographic Role: Strategic crossroads between Western & Eastern Europe
- Euro-Atlantic Integration: NATO (1999), EU (2004), Schengen (2007)

geographical position



quick history



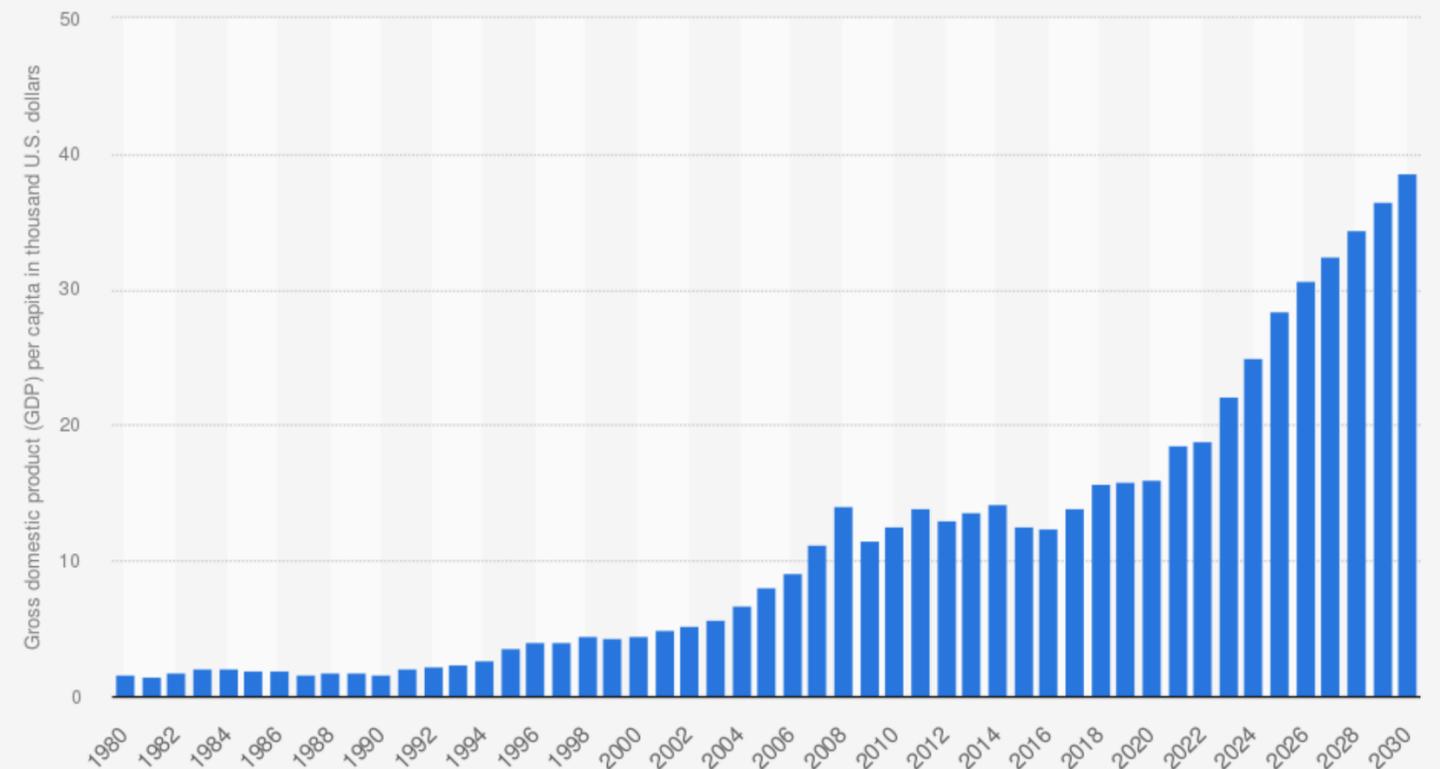
polish economy

- Export oriented economy, 50–60% of GDP.
- Main export partners: Germany, Czech Republic, France, the UK.
- €29,600 GDP per capital nominal in 2023. 79% of the EU average.
- Key export sectors: machinery and vehicles, electrical equipment, furniture, and agri-food products.
- One of the EU's strongest economic convergence success stories since 2004.
- Poland was the only EU country to avoid recession during the 2008–2009 financial crisis.

EU budget:

- Poland is the largest net beneficiary in recent EU budget cycles.
- Total EU allocations : €112 billion, supporting cohesion, transport infrastructure, agriculture, and modernisation.
- In 2023, Poland was a net recipient of about €7.1 billion.
- In 2020, net transfers reached roughly €330 per capita.

Gross domestic product (GDP) per capita in Poland from 1980 to 2030 (in 1,000 U.S. dollars)



domestic

politics

- Unitary semi-presidential republic.
- Bicameral Parliament: Sejm is the more powerful chamber, Senate has oversight and advisory functions.
- Open-list proportional representation, 5% threshold for parties, except national minorities.
- Divided into 16 voivodeships, administrative units without legislative autonomy.
- Governments are usually coalition-based, although single-party majorities have occasionally occurred.





PiS governance

2015-2023

- PiS stands for Law and Justice, a conservative political party.
- In the 2015 parliamentary election, PiS won around 38% of the vote and secured 235 seats in the 460-seat Sejm, achieving an absolute majority.
- Beata Szydło became Prime Minister, giving PiS control over both the executive and legislative branches.
- In December 2017, Mateusz Morawiecki succeeded Beata Szydło as Prime Minister.
- In 2019, the United Right coalition, headed by PiS won with approximately 43.6% of the votes.
- In 2023, PiS remained the largest single party with around 35.4% of the vote and 194 MPs, but it failed to secure a majority.





PiS governance

EU relations

1 PiS launched major judicial reforms in 2015, lowering the retirement age for Supreme Court judges and increasing executive control over the judiciary.

2 The Constitutional Tribunal's independence was weakened. EU criticism followed.

3 The European Court of Justice ruled against these reforms, suspended provisions, and imposed fines, affecting EU fund disbursements.

4 Several municipalities declared themselves "LGBT-free zones," drawing international condemnation.

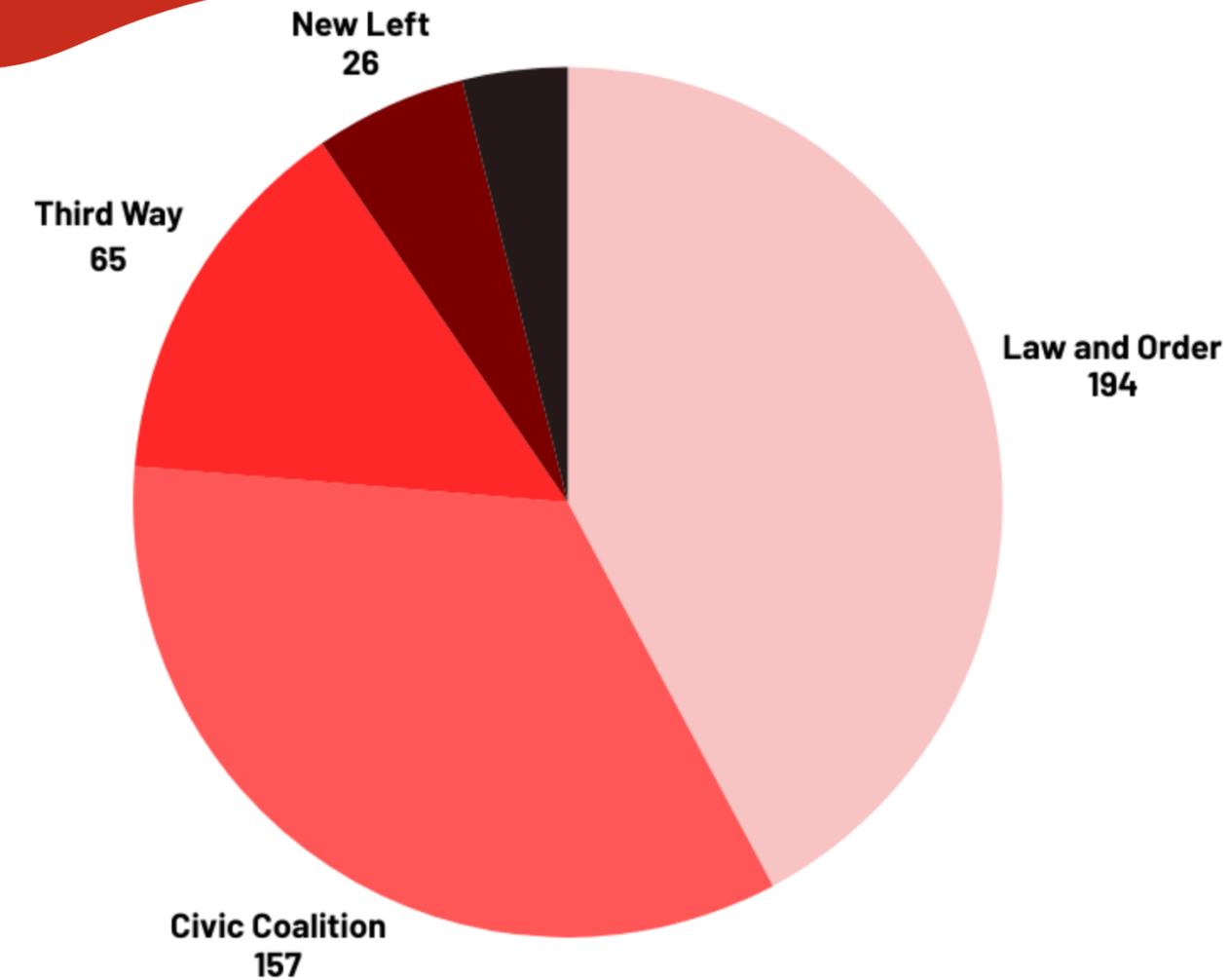
5 PiS allied with Hungary to block European Council decisions on rule-of-law enforcement and migration policy.

6 Clashes with Brussels over courts, media freedom, and EU law strained Polish–EU relations and raised concerns about democratic backsliding.

parliamentary

elections 2023

- PiS remained the largest party with around 35% of the vote but lost its parliamentary majority.
- The opposition coalition, composed of Civic Coalition, Third Way, and New Left, got 54% of the vote and formed a coalition government.
- The election marked a major shift in Polish politics, giving the opposition the power to challenge PiS's previous judicial reforms, social policies, and EU relations.



presidential

elections 2025

- Karol Nawrocki, backed by PiS, won the presidency with 50.9%. He is conservative, socially traditional, pro-sovereignty, and EU-sceptic.
- Rafał Trzaskowski from the Civic Coalition received 49.1%. He is liberal, centrist, socially progressive, and pro-EU.
- Turnout was very high at around 71.6%, thus strong voter engagement.
- The opposition controls parliament, but the presidency remains conservative, creating policy tensions.
- This due to the semi-presidential system giving the president the possibility to delay or veto legislation passed by the Parliament.
- Election reflected deep political polarisation, linked to Poland A and B.



polish parties

by EP group

Party Family	Radical Left	Social Democrats	Greens	Liberals & centrists	Christian Democrats & Conservatives	Euroseptic Conservatives	Radical Right Nationalists	Far right nationalists
EP Group	The Left in the EP	Socialists & Democrats	The Greens - EFA	Renew Europe	European People's Party	European Conservatives & Reformists	Patriots for Europe	Europe of Sovereign Nations
Acronym	GUE-NGL	S&D	Greens	Renew	EPP	ECR	PfE (Patriots)	ESN
National Party Name		New Left	The Greens	Poland 2050	Civic Coalition Polish People Party	Law and Justice	National Movement	New Hope
Party Acronym		NL	N/A	PL2050	KO PSL	PiS	RN	NN



poland

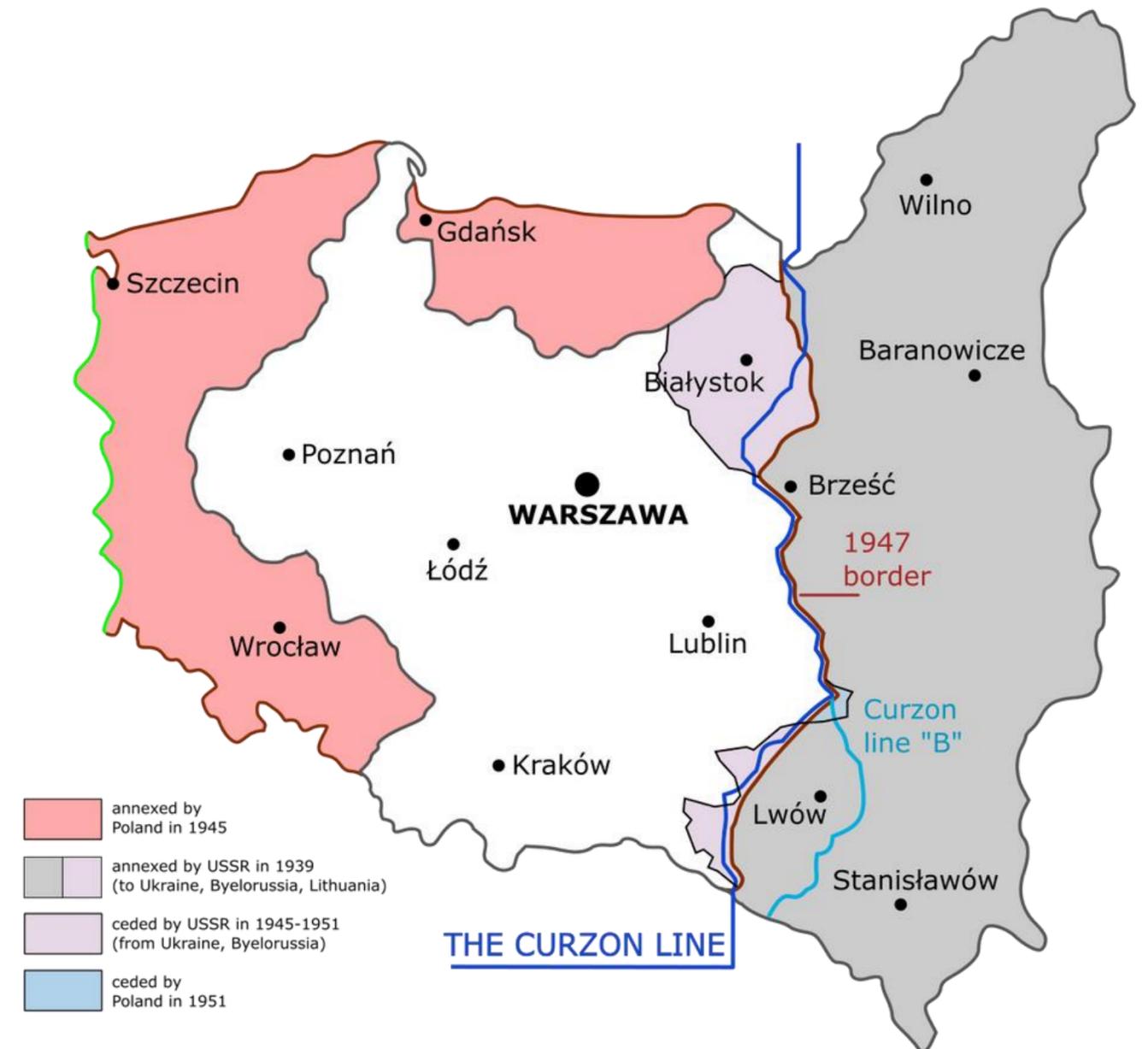
A and B!?



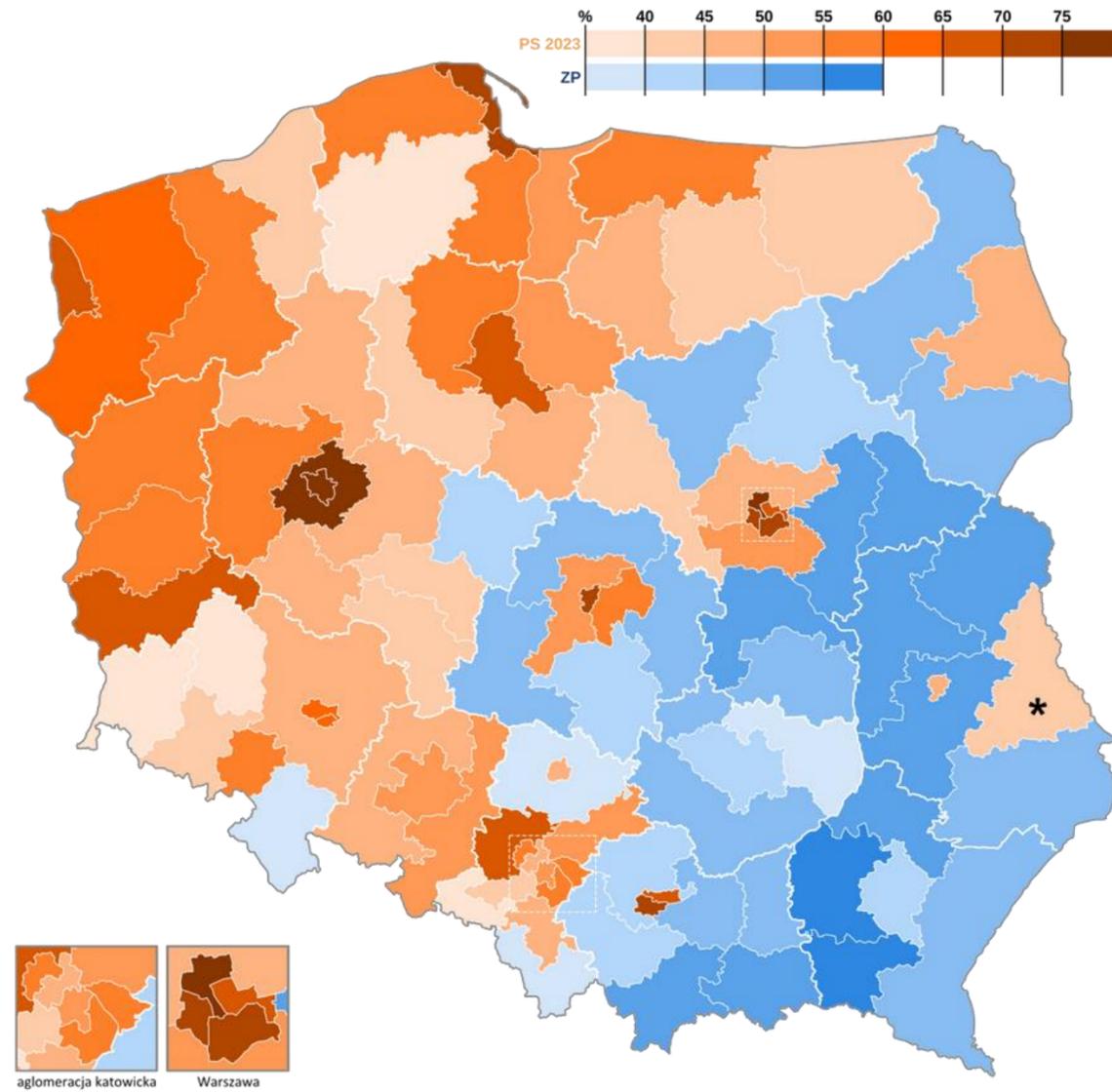
poland A and B

historical background

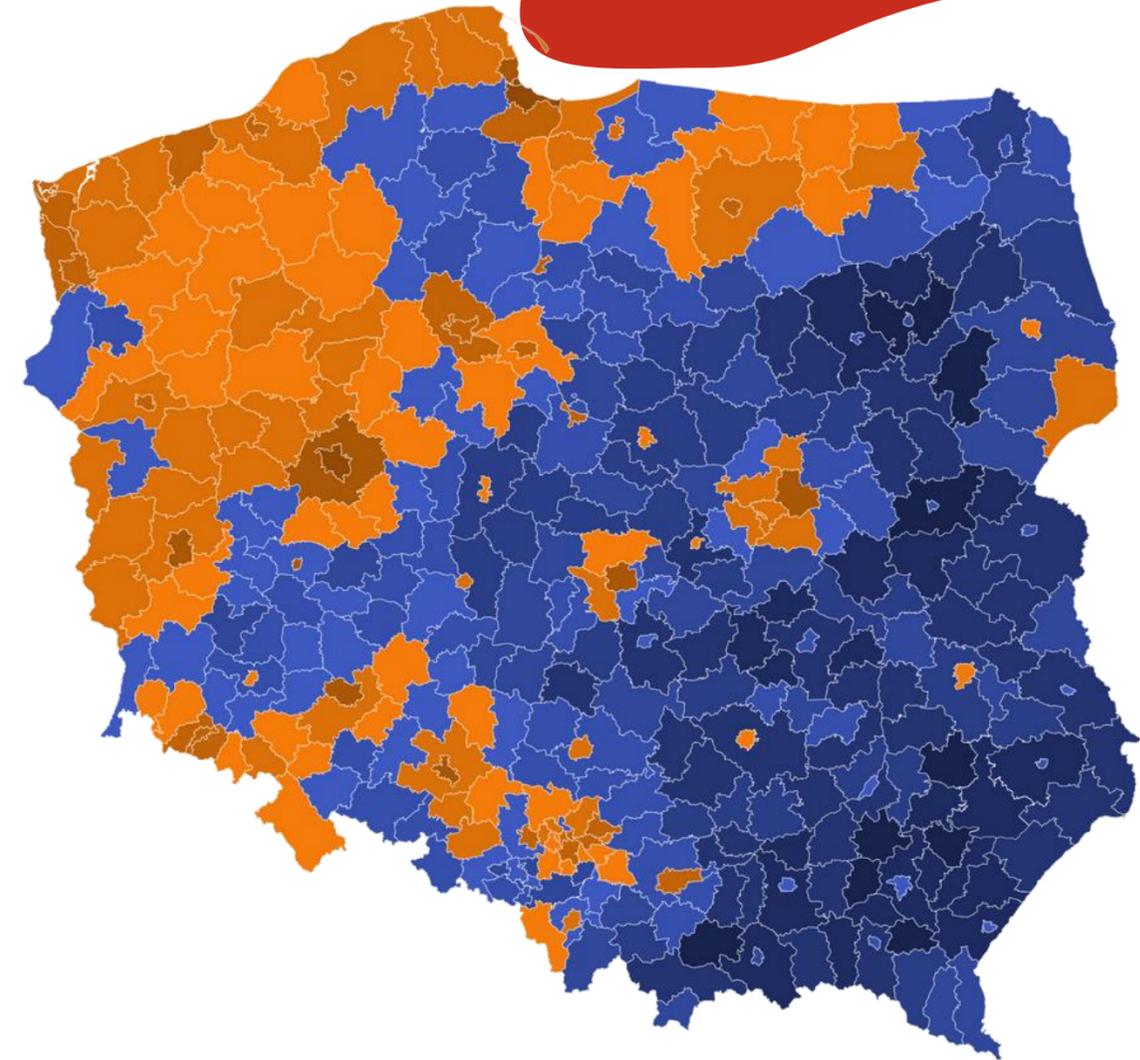
- After WWII, Stalin kept eastern Poland, while Poland got former German lands in the west.
- Millions of both Germans and Poles were forced out of their homes.
- Many Poles from the east resettled in western areas formerly owned by Germans.
- Migrants lost homes, traditions, communities, and social structures.
- Less social control in new areas gave more freedom. This usually comes with progressive attitudes.
- Migrants invested in portable assets, especially education. Higher education levels led to more progressive views.
- Western Poland's proximity to Germany also exposed it to Western influence.
- Eastern Poland is more peripheral and rural, which favours conservative values.



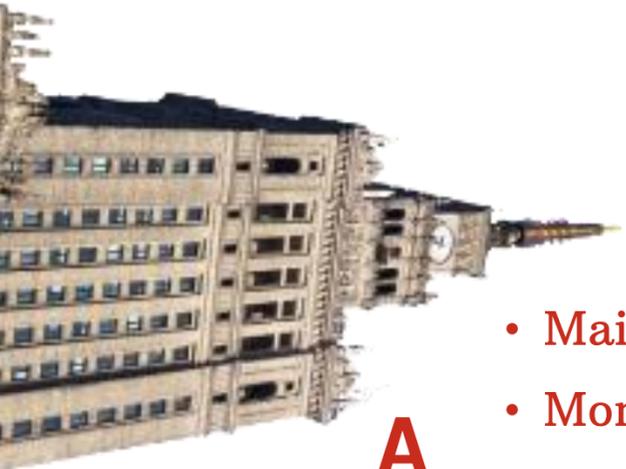
polish parliamentary elections 2023



polish presidential elections 2023

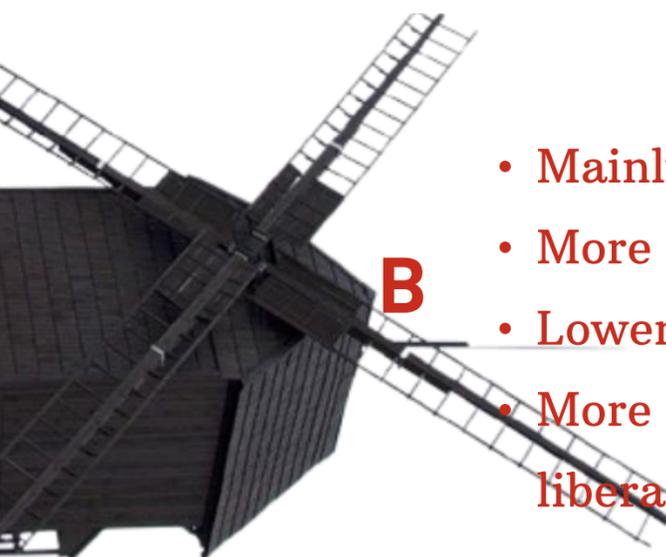


- Post-1989 economic transformation and EU integration reinforced existing disparities rather than eliminating them.
- The divide is strongly reflected in electoral behaviour, party platforms and policy priorities.



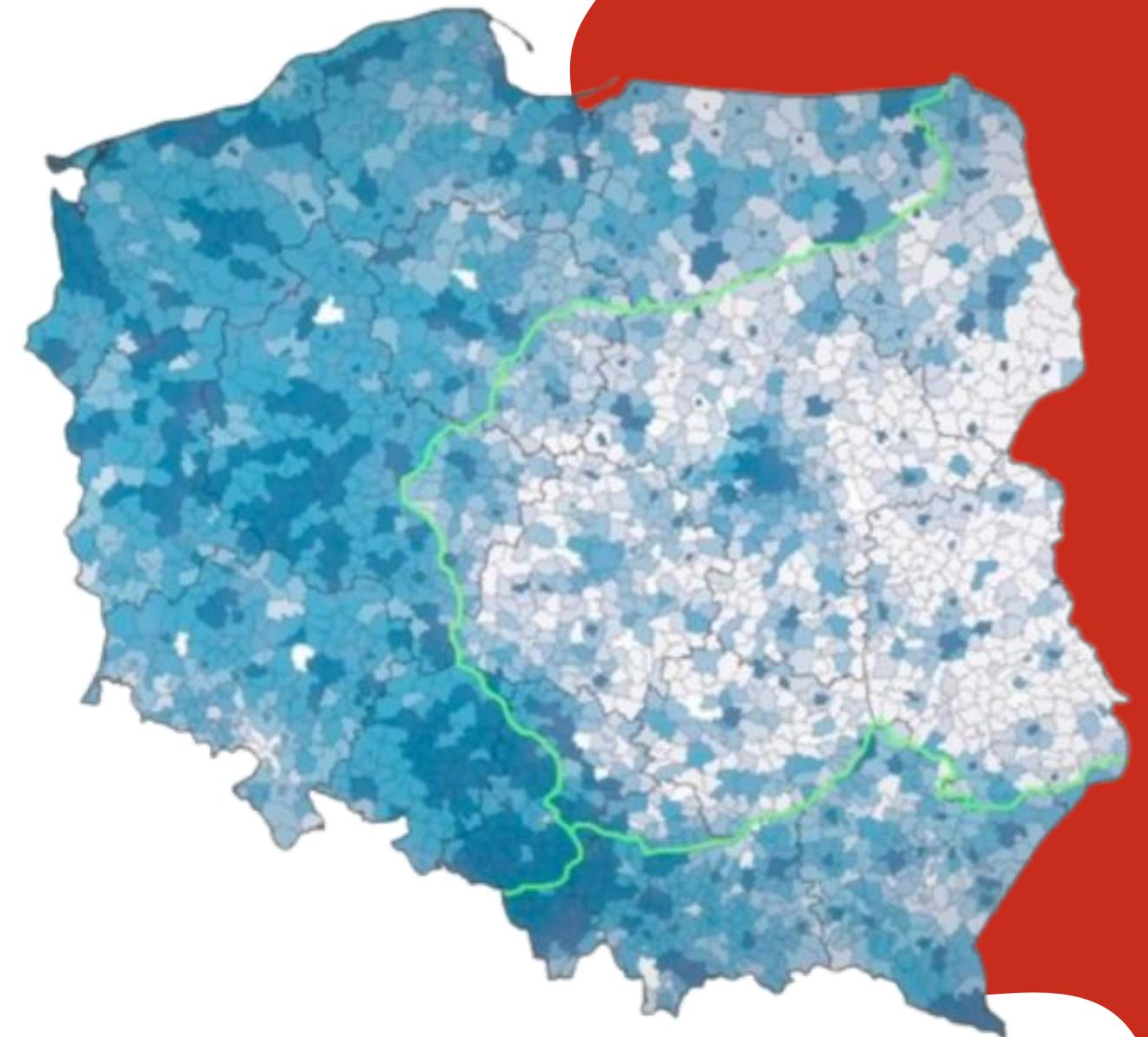
A

- Mainly western and central regions
- More urbanised and industrialised
- Higher income levels and stronger infrastructure
- More outward-looking, pro-EU and politically liberal



B

- Mainly eastern and south-eastern regions
- More rural and agriculturally based
- Lower levels of economic development
- More socially conservative and sceptical of rapid liberalisation



**bathrooms inside the house density
in poland**

why

the EU?



- Association Agreement with the European Communities signed in 1991.
 - Poland Applies for EU Membership 1994.
 - Officially recognized as an EU candidate at the European Council in Luxembourg in 1997, joining the “fast track” group to start negotiations in 1998.
 - Between 1998-2002, accession negotiations. Poland reforms its economy, justice system, and administration to meet EU criteria.
 - Poland joins the European Union in 2004.
-
- To secure its place in the West after decades of Soviet domination.
 - To enhance security and geopolitical stability, alongside NATO.
 - To modernise the economy through access to the Single Market and EU funds.
 - To consolidate democracy!



poland's highway network 2004



poland's highway network 2024



poland's role

within the EU



Regional Leader

Being one of the largest members, Poland advocates for the interests of Central and Eastern European countries in EU policymaking, especially in areas like cohesion policy, energy, and enlargement.

Economic Actor

Poland promotes open-market, export-oriented policies, emphasising EU funds and single-market integration. It also plays a role in EU debates on energy security, digitalisation, and regional infrastructure projects.

Security and Defense

Works closely with NATO and EU structures to strengthen EU's eastern flank. It seeks stronger EU solidarity against Russian aggression, especially post-2022.

paris-berlin-warsaw

weimar triangle

- The Weimar Triangle was established in 1991 as a platform for cooperation between Poland, Germany, and France.
- Idea proposed after Poland's growing EU influence, it aims for a triangle of Western and Eastern EU powers.
- In practice, Poland supports cooperation with France and Germany, but domestic politics make full alignment inconsistent.
- Not always the case. The PiS government of 2005-2007 had confrontational relationship with Germany. The Civic Platform government of 2007-2015 and post-2023 government aimed at strengthening the Polish role in the axis.
- More a strategic aspiration than a fully institutionalised axis.



poland's role



regionally

- **Visegrad Group**

- A regional alliance of Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary, focused on coordinating EU policy, security, and economic development in Central Europe.

- **Three Seas**

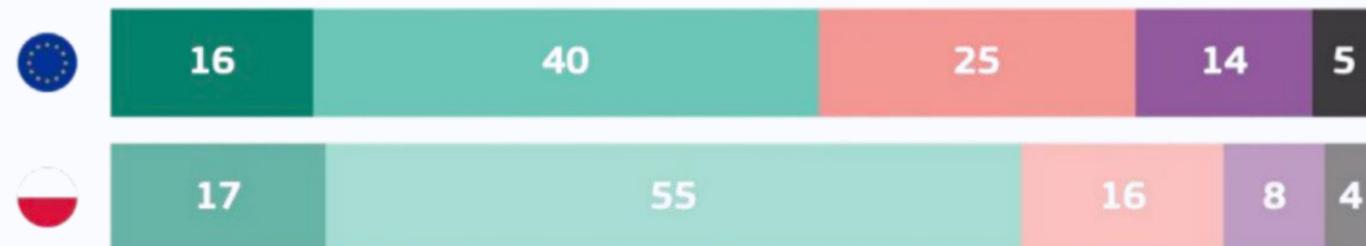
- A forum of 12 Central and Eastern European countries promoting regional infrastructure, energy diversification, and digital connectivity to strengthen economic and strategic ties.



- A forum of 12 Central and Eastern European countries cooperating in regional infrastructure, energy diversification, and digital connectivity to strengthen economic and strategic ties.

what does poland think of enlargement?

How much would you say that ... will benefit from further EU enlargement? (%)



TOP 3 :



- As many Member States, supportive but cautious. Generally, backs EU enlargement, especially toward the Western Balkans.
- Sees enlargement as a way to promote regional stability, democracy, and economic growth
- Strongly emphasises that candidate countries must meet the Copenhagen criteria
- Supports enlargement as part of the EU's strategic mission, reflecting Poland's interest in a stable, secure Eastern and Southeastern Europe

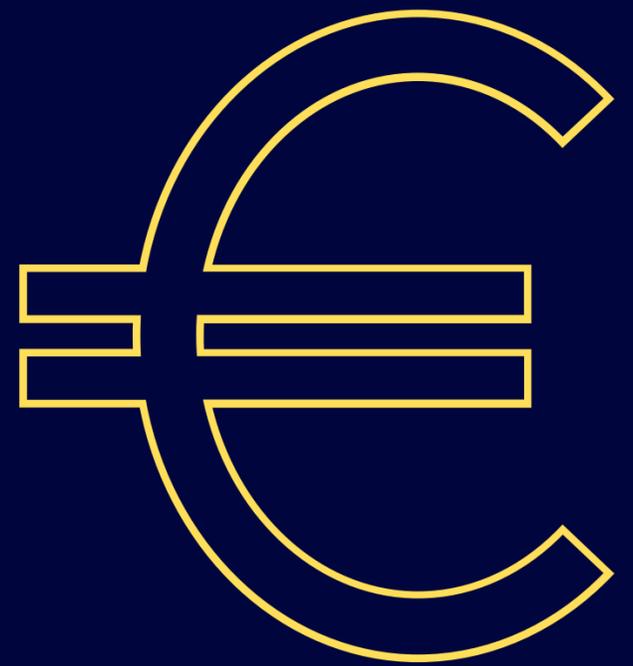
data from the special eurobarometer 564 on attitudes towards enlargement - poland - march 2025



sceptic

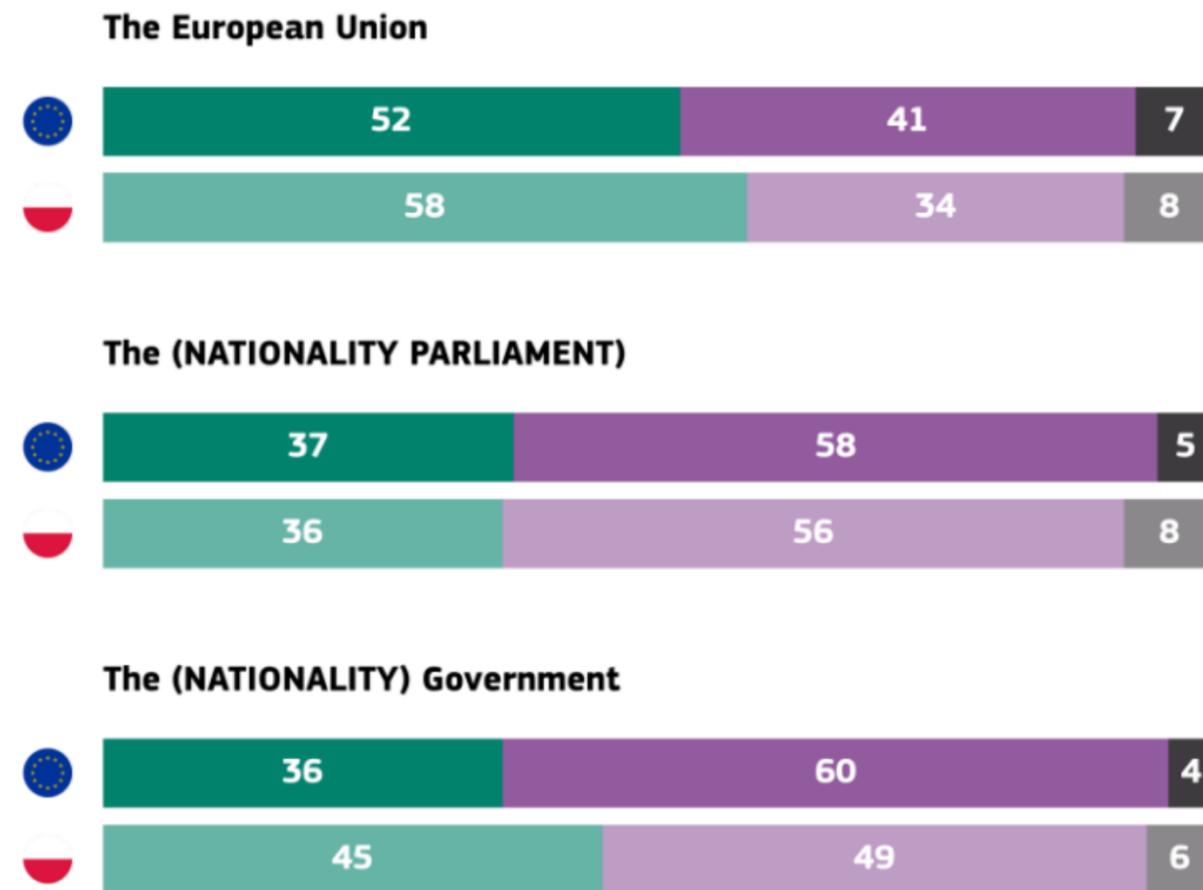


or

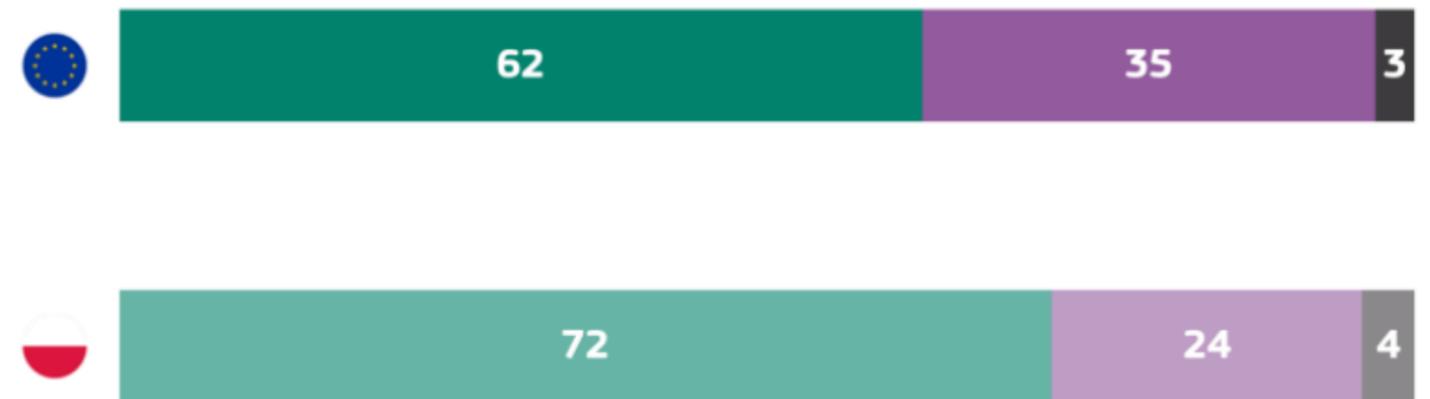


sceptic

QA6. How much trust do you have in certain institutions? For each of the following institutions, do you tend to trust it or tend not to trust it? (%)

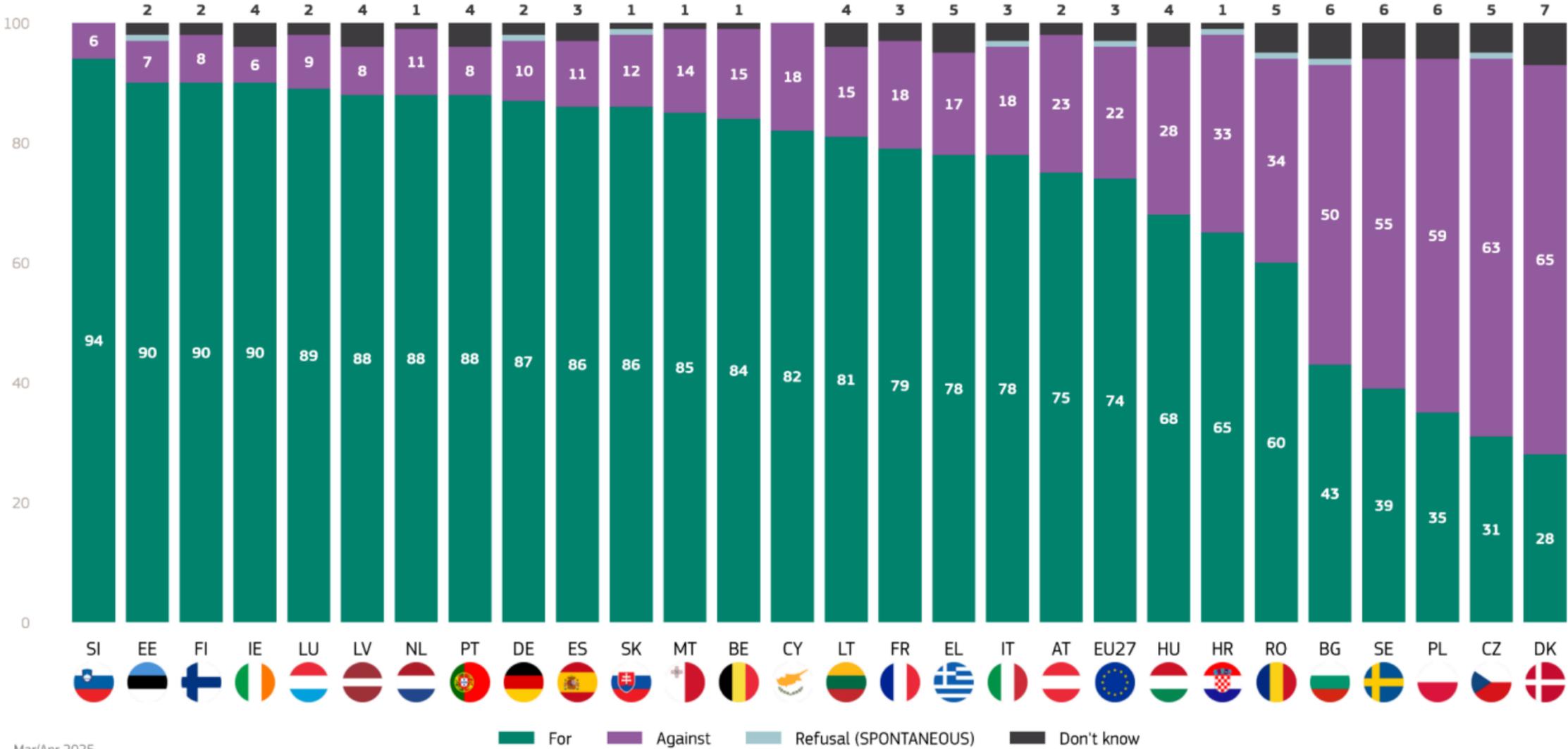


QA12. Would you say that you are very optimistic, fairly optimistic, fairly pessimistic or very pessimistic about the future of the EU? (%)





QB3.1: What is your opinion on each of the following statements? Please tell for each statement, whether you are for it or against it. - A European economic and monetary union with one single currency, the euro (%)



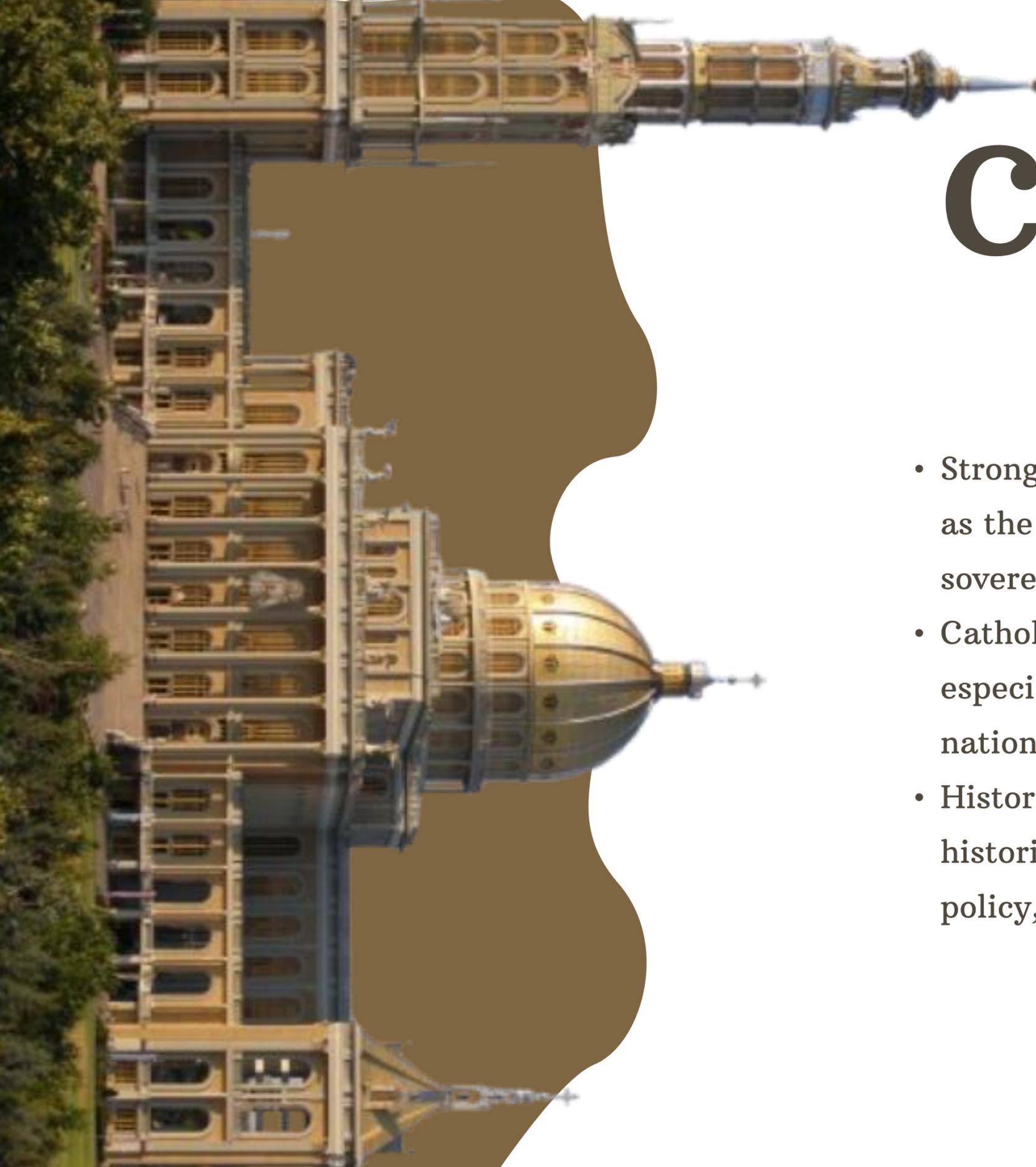
Mar/Apr 2025

For Against Refusal (SPONTANEOUS) Don't know

euroscepticism or €scepticism?



- Mostly “soft” Euroscepticism.
- Poland supports EU membership but is cautious about ceding sovereignty.
- This is manifested in the rule of law disputes, judicial reforms, euro adoption.
- The current Tusk government favours EU membership but delays euro adoption.
- No major party currently supports leaving the EU.
- Hard Euroscepticism is marginal, limited to parties like Confederation, extreme right.
- Majority of Poles back EU membership, but prefer retaining the złoty and fiscal control.
- Poles believe that retaining złoty and a flexible exchange rate were the key factor in avoiding a recession during the 2008 global financial crisis.
- Poland was the only European Union economy to record positive GDP growth in 2009.



culture

in policy-making

- Strong national identity due to historical experiences such as the partitions, WWII, communist era, influencing sovereignty-focused policies.
- Catholic Church has a strong impact on decision-making, especially in areas such as education, abortion law, national identity.
- Historical memory and nationalism like commemorations, historical narratives, and memory politics impact foreign policy, EU stance, and security policy.

migration crisis

- Mainly Ukrainian refugees, around 1 million as of October 2025.
- Rapid legislative adjustments to provide temporary protection, work permits, and education access.
- Migration becomes a polarising issue. Ongoing debates between conservative (PiS) vs liberal parties.
- Poland balances national sovereignty in migration control with EU expectations for solidarity and burden-sharing.
- Negotiated to be exempt from the new EU Migration Pact for one year. Meaning, exemption from mandatory migrant relocation and financial contributions by proving significant migratory pressure from Belarus and Russia, and hosting Ukrainians.



belarus-poland

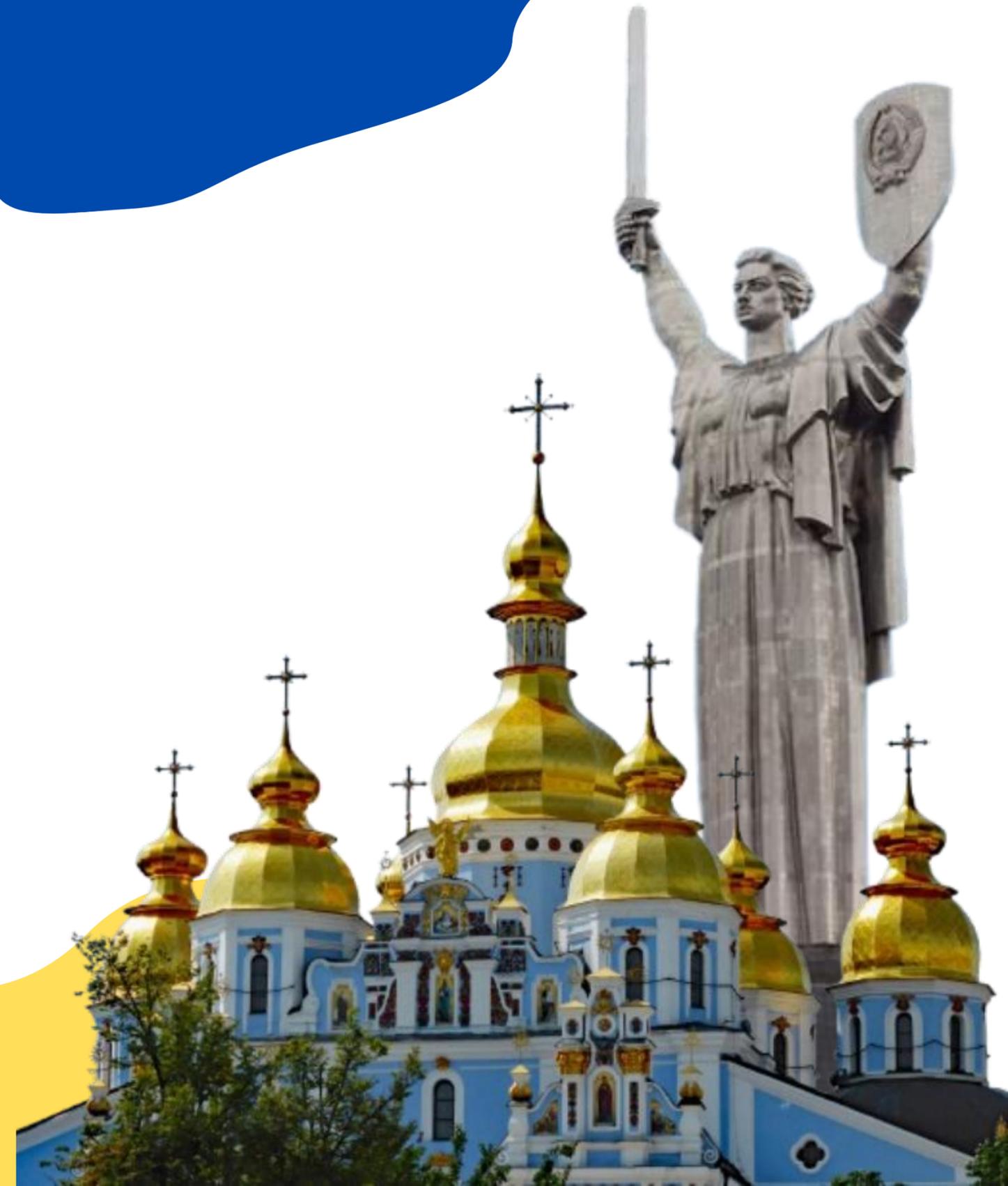
2021 border crisis



- Belarus facilitated the movement of migrants from the Middle East (Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan) to Poland's border as a response to EU sanctions after the disputed 2020 elections.
- Migrants were flown to Minsk, then directed toward the Polish border, facing harsh conditions, including freezing temperatures and limited resources.
- Poland closed its border, declared a state of emergency, and reinforced security with military units and border patrols. This prevented the migrants from entering.
- At least 20 died due to exposure and lack of food/water. Migrants were trapped in the land between Belarus and Poland, with reports of illegal pushbacks.
- The EU condemned Belarus's actions, imposed sanctions, and called for humanitarian access, but tensions rose over Poland's refusal to allow aid groups into the border area.

the war in ukraine

- Poland shares a long border with Ukraine, leading to heightened NATO reliance and increased defence spending.
- A million Ukrainians have entered Poland, creating pressures on housing, social services, and education, while boosting the labor market.
- Poland strongly advocates for EU sanctions on Russia and provides military, financial, and logistical support to Ukraine.
- The war accelerated Poland's push for energy diversification and reducing dependence on Russian gas.
- The government uses security and sovereignty narratives to consolidate political support.
- Poland has emerged as a key coordinator for EU and NATO support for Ukraine, increasing its regional influence.



dziękuję!

thank you!

