

## PEOPLE'S ORIENTATION IN POLAND TOWARDS THE EUROPEAN UNION

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### ABSTRACT

*If the European Union is to achieve its ultimate aim of becoming a fully-fledged political community (the ideal of ever closer union) it must be supported, alongside legal-institutional advances, by the development of a common and sufficient orientation towards the Union among its constituent citizens. This article attempts to show if (and what sort of) an orientation had been developed during the pre-membership period of a new member state, Poland. The results are not encouraging towards the ideal of political community, and demonstrate the negative and retarding impact of the recent enlargement of the Union. Examination of people's orientation towards the EU in the pre-membership stage of Poland seems to have specifically interesting and useful information for the reader in Turkey that will start EU membership talks this year after a long period of wait.*

**Keywords:** Orientation, European Union, Poland, Political community.

### ÖZET

*Şayet Avrupa Birliği, bütün yönleri ile tam bir politik topluluk olma nihai hedefini gerçekleştirmek istiyorsa; bu hedef, hukuki-kurumsal ilerlemelerin yanında, kurucu unsur durumundaki vatandaşların arasında AB'ye doğru ortak ve yeterli bir oryantasyonun geliştirilmesiyle de desteklenmelidir. Bu makale, AB'ye yeni katılan bir ülke olan Polonya'nın üyelik öncesi döneminde böyle bir oryantasyonun geliştirilip geliştirilmediğini (ve varsa, ne çeşit bir oryantasyon olduğunu) ortaya koymayı amaçlamaktadır. Sonuçlar, politik topluluk olma ideali açısından pek cesaret verici sayılamaz ve Birliğin en son genişlemesinin bu konudaki negatif ve geciktirici etkisini göstermektedir. Polonya'nın tam üyelikten önceki döneminde insanların AB'ye oryantasyonlarının incelenmesinin, AB ile tam üyelik görüşmelerine bu yıl başlayacak olan bir ülkedeki okuyucu için ilginç ve yararlı bilgiler içerdiği görülmektedir.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Oryantasyon, Avrupa Birliği, Polonya, Politik topluluk.

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## INTRODUCTION

As with the nationalism that brought in new patterns of identification and a sense of belonging at state level, which set the scene for change in domestic and international relations, the European unification project launched after the Second World War in the context of the European Community - subsequently the European Union (EU) – has emerged as a different and sui generis form of organisation committed to establishing a new political community with, of course, its own norms and practices. In this circumstance, the constituent citizens are expected to be sufficiently oriented towards the Union to carry along this ideal of political community. In other words, the EU has to raise *an awareness of the EU* and to cultivate *a consciousness of the EU* (or *a sense of belonging to the EU*) among its fellow citizens to reach its ideal. Although the changing geo-political and economic conditions have day by day made it increasingly important to establish such an orientation, this issue is still a challenge yet to be resolved for the EU. In particular, the sudden geo-political changes that had taken place in the eastern part of the continent by the late 1980s, and then the accession of the Central and East European Countries (CEECs) to membership of the Union, have posed a real challenge to the EU in the difficult task of constructing such a normative-orientational sphere. Once they were accepted into membership in 2004, the peoples of Central and East European Countries became the citizens of the EU and, therefore, they are expected to have an orientation towards the EU that is strong enough to take forward the EU's ideal of one political community.

While gradually rising in importance, beginning from the 1970s but particularly after the mid-1980s, the Union has used many tools to promote EU awareness and to create a common consciousness and we-feeling among the peoples. These efforts have been disseminated to the candidate countries as well to prepare them to the EU membership. It is not the object of this study to assess all the ways and methods to generate orientation towards the EU but rather to look at the end results in the context of the Polish case. The aim of this article is, therefore, to examine people's orientation towards the EU in Poland during the pre-membership period.

The role of mass attitudes has been rediscovered and firmly established in integration theories, even in the neo-functional models since the early 1970s (Sinnott 1995).<sup>1</sup> By the same token, the existence of an increasingly 'Euro sceptic' public even in the member states has enhanced the importance of attitudes held by the citizens of the new members towards the EU in meeting the goals of enlargement successfully. Therefore, the transformation process should sometimes be re-evaluated and modified by considering feedback from the public. Constructing orientation towards the EU is still an ongoing process despite Poland's formal accession to membership of the EU. However, we limited our research to the pre-membership period of the EU integration process of Poland. This is because, in a sense, it is too early to assess the impact of such historical moment on people's orientation. Besides, the readers can make a comparison

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<sup>1</sup> R. Sinnott. "Bringing Public Opinion Back In," in Oscar Niedermayer and Richard Sinnott, (eds.), *Public Opinion and Internationalized Governance*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 11-33. 1995.

in mind between Poland and Turkey's EU integration processes before membership while reading this study.

The choice of Poland cannot claim to reflect the features of all the CEECs. This is because each country, and even each sub-region within the countries, has its own evolutionary path of political, economic and social development determined by exogenous and endogenous factors. The fact that any common parameter, e.g. the imposition of communist ideology from the same external centre, produced different stories in each country makes it difficult to select one as an archetype for all ten. As Delanty<sup>2</sup> exemplified, Romania had no more in common with Poland or the Czech Republic than with Ireland and Greece. Maybe because of this, Hankiss<sup>3</sup> described the region as 'Absurdistan'. These differences predictably reverberate into peoples' orientation towards the EU and into their countries' EU membership.

Yet, for several reasons, the choice of Poland can provide us with a comparatively reliable and useful case to test the impact of final enlargement on the issue of EU orientation. Poland, with her 312 thousand square km area and population of about 40 million, is the largest and most populated of the all candidate CEECs. Yet again, compared to most of the other CEECs, Poland's relatively advantageous geo-political situation, that has enabled her to interact with Western Europe throughout history, puts her to the forefront. Also, she was always among the fore-runners during the CEECs' EU accession process. All these factors enable us to say that if the conditions and qualities in such a country are not helpful in orienting people towards the EU, then, in relatively less advantaged countries, the score would be more discouraging. Therefore, even if Poland does not represent the orientation patterns of the other countries, the reader can follow the examination of the Polish case and the findings at the end to gain an insight into the impact of Eastern enlargement on the matter.

The first section sets out some general explanatory remarks on the issue of people's orientations, using the classificatory concepts of the relevant literature. The following two sections scrutinise people's modes of orientations towards the EU in post-1989 Poland using those classification of the modes of orientations made in the first section. Accordingly, people's awareness and evaluation of the EU are explored in section two and three respectively.

On the methodology of the study, an important point should be explained before moving to the issue. Although some deficiencies result from an unnatural interview environment or from the difficulty of exploring deeper comprehensive opinions rather than instrumental shallow ones<sup>4</sup>, the use of proper and reliable survey data seems to be a basic method in the evaluation of public attitudes. For this reason, many empirical analyses have been conducted in the CEECs to give a voice to public opinion about the transformation period, accession to EU membership and relevant issues. In this study,

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<sup>2</sup> G. Delanty, *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality*. Macmillan, London, 1995 p. 138.

<sup>3</sup> E. Hankiss, "What the Hungarians Saw First," in Gwyn Prins, (ed), *Spring in Winter: The 1989 Revolutions*. Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1990.

<sup>4</sup> Sinnot, *op. cit.*,

predominantly public opinion surveys of two important and reliable institutes are referred. The first is the European Commission and its well-known Eurobarometer surveys. The second is Public Opinion Research Center (CBOS), one of the largest and most celebrated public opinion research institutes in Poland.<sup>5</sup>

### 1. Modes of People's Orientations towards the European Union

The two concepts used persistently in this article to imply the level of orientation, namely the awareness of the EU and the sense of belonging to the EU (sense of EU consciousness or shortly sense of EUness) should be explained more clearly. Niedermayer and Westle<sup>6</sup> classify the modes of orientation towards political systems (here the EU) into three parts<sup>7</sup>: The first one is psychological involvement, implying 'neutral' and 'non-evaluative' knowledge. It is naturally the first step because the development of any attitude towards a political institution should begin with people being aware of its existence and this overlaps with our concept of awareness of the EU.

The second mode is evaluation, representing 'any position a person has regarding a particular object in terms of a positive/negative continuum'. Depending on their knowledge and different variables, people develop positive, negative or indifferent attitudes towards institutions such as the EU. This evaluative orientation might be based on either a pragmatic, interest-driven and cost-benefit calculation (utilitarian/specific support) or more general, value-driven and idealist motives (affective/diffuse support). The utilitarian type of orientation is necessary in constructing attachments. However, the critical task in becoming a political community is to gain an affective/diffuse support beyond this cost-benefit evaluation. In this second mode, the EU means to people more than a matter of pragmatic evaluations, an internalised or 'being attached' object. Our concept of the sense of belonging to the EU mainly implies this affective and ideational orientation, and only in such a strong affiliation political community ideal can be achieved.

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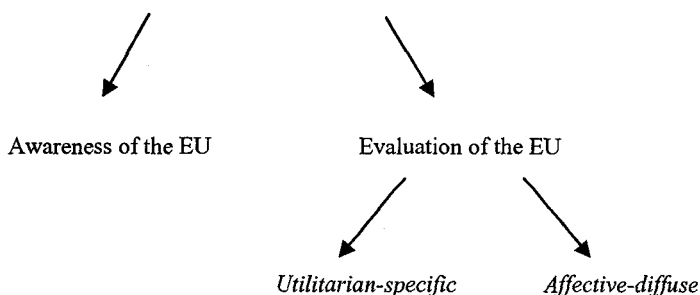
<sup>5</sup> Public opinion surveys are the main driving instrument of this study. In this respect, an annex is added to the study to give information about those two groups of surveys to disperse the possible questions in readers' mind about the reliability of them. Also their survey techniques are mentioned there.

<sup>6</sup> O, Niedermayer, and B. Westle. "A Typology of Orientations," in Oscar Niedermayer and Richard Sinnot, (eds), 1995 *Ibid.*, p.33-50.

<sup>7</sup> Departing from three previous studies on this issue, namely Almond and Verba's 1963, Easton's (1965; 1975) and Lindberg and Scheingold's (1970), Niedermayer and Westle develop their modes of orientation to internationalised governance that fits in with the purpose of this article. Therefore, instead of getting involved in long theoretical debates around the concepts, the classification of these authors has been referred to in this article and summarised with some reservations. G. Almond, and S. Verba. *The Civic Culture*. Boston, Little Brown, 1963. D. Easton, *A Systems Analysis of Political Life*. John Wiley, New York; D. Easton. "A Re-assessment of the Concept of Political Support," in *British Journal of Political Science*, 1975. 5, 435-457; Leon N. Lindberg and Stuart A. Scheingold. *Europe's Would-Be Polity*. London, Prentice-Hall. 1970.

As the third mode of orientation, distinct from a mere positive/negative evaluation, the authors suggest 'behavioural intentions' which include active participation, e.g. voting, signing a petition. However, in our opinion, this kind of active involvement is the outcome of already acquired positive or negative evaluation. Besides, in regard to Poland, most of the channels for the active involvement of people were absent until very recently, for example voting in elections to the EU parliament or the right to petition EU institutions. Therefore, to measure people's orientation towards the EU, the course of this article covers two types of orientation (Scheme 1). The question that guides the rest of the article should be repeated then: To what extent an awareness of the EU and a sense of common consciousness were built up among the Poles as a consequence of over ten years' efforts through various EU policies after 1989.

Scheme 1: People's Modes of Orientation towards the European Union



## 2. Awareness of the EU in Poland

Equipping Polish citizens with adequate knowledge about the EU is important for successful and legitimate integration. But it is vital as the first step in building a common consciousness and sense of belonging. In this latter case, an average Polish citizen is expected to acquire not skin-deep and very limited information but more profound and true knowledge. Realising the importance of this point, the Commission adopted the Communication Strategy for Enlargement in May 2000 as the third main track in the preparations for enlargement (the pre-accession strategy and the accession negotiations were the other two). While the main objective of the Strategy for the member states is to inform people about the process and consequences of the enlargement, this objective for the candidate countries extends to the wider context of increasing people's knowledge and understanding of the EU to raise awareness.<sup>8</sup> People have to possess a certain level of knowledge about the EU to be able to make an evaluation and decide where they stand with respect to the EU. In this section, various channels carrying information and aiming or helping to increase awareness of the EU are presented first. As already mentioned, this is not a direct concern of this article, but

<sup>8</sup>European Commission. Explaining Enlargement: A Progress Report On the Communication Strategy for Enlargement. <[http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/communication/pdf/explaining\\_enlargement.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/communication/pdf/explaining_enlargement.pdf)> 2002a.

to shed light on the later parts of this section and to underline the rising importance of the awareness-raising issue in the EU, we give illustrations from the range of these channels. Subsequently, people's thoughts about the sufficiency of this information and the level of EU awareness are explained in turn.

### **2. 1. The Channels to Raise Awareness of the EU**

Leaving aside the earlier period, since the beginning of the debate over the reunification of Europe and the accession process after 1989, any information whether minor or major, formal or informal, domestic or international that has reached Polish citizens through various channels has implied by definition a contribution to people's awareness of the EU. However, there are some activities and policies that directly aim to increase the knowledge of people in Poland as well as in the other candidate countries.

The Communication Strategy has accelerated, systematised and brought to the forefront the ongoing awareness-raising activities run by EU institutions and especially by national delegations to the EU. Examples of these specific activities are reported to include<sup>9</sup>: EU information centres (EUIC); regional information networks; activities on Europe days or weeks; publications, media programmes and cultural events organised by the delegations and EUICs. All these official activities are also carried out in Poland. To have an idea of these, again from the same document, a series of activities was set:

The information network in Poland consists of 35 regional info-centres (co-organised jointly with the government), 17 European Documentation Centres, 12 EuroInfo Centres and 50 local centres. The delegation in Warsaw, in collaboration with about 500 Europe-related organisations, pursued a wide-ranging programme to inform Polish society about the EU. In addition, the Warsaw Delegation chose some groups to target: it co-operates with the National Teacher Training Centre to produce educational materials pertaining to the EU, such as exhibitions, CDs, and board games. An annual EU film festival was launched in 2001. As a part of the cultural programme, Cracow was chosen as one of the joint hosts of the European Capital of Culture in 2000.

Compared to other sources of information (Table 1), these official efforts still occupy a small place in the whole picture and usually address certain groups. For example, the EU Information Point of the Delegation of the EU Commission in Poland has been operating since June 1999 at the heart of Warsaw. The number of people benefiting from the services of this Information Point is no more than a few thousands a year and they come from particular parts of society. In the year 2000, for example, only about 800 people per month applied to the Point for information and 35.2 per cent of them were university, primary and secondary school students, 24.1 per cent were teachers, 13.8 per cent were from NGOs, 12.2 per cent were from local authorities, and so on.<sup>10</sup> However, it should be noted that these official attempts are likely to have a snowball effect and increase the frequency of EU-related news coming from other sources.

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<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>10</sup> R. Polkowski, Annual Report on Activities of the EU Information Point. EU Information Point, Warsaw, 2001.

**Table 1: Sources of Information about the European Union**

Q: If you were to look for information about the EU, its policies, and its institutions, which of the following sources would you use? Which else? (Respondents could mention more than one source). (N: 1000)

| <i>Sources of information</i>  | <i>%</i>  |
|--------------------------------|-----------|
| <i>TV</i>                      | <i>80</i> |
| <i>Radio</i>                   | <i>65</i> |
| <i>Daily newspapers</i>        | <i>52</i> |
| <i>Other press</i>             | <i>34</i> |
| <i>Printed materials</i>       | <i>30</i> |
| <i>Internet</i>                | <i>28</i> |
| <i>Discussions</i>             | <i>28</i> |
| <i>Government</i>              | <i>14</i> |
| <i>Parliamentarians</i>        | <i>10</i> |
| <i>Political rallies</i>       | <i>10</i> |
| <i>Other associations</i>      | <i>6</i>  |
| <i>Unions and associations</i> | <i>5</i>  |
| <i>Other (spontaneous)</i>     | <i>1</i>  |
| <i>Not interested</i>          | <i>16</i> |

Source: European Commission. 2002. *Candidate Countries Eurobarometer 2001*. p. b-48.

The instruments of the EU are definitely not limited to these specifically knowledge-raising ones. The policies usually pursued as Community programmes in various areas aim at both increasing awareness of the EU and constructing a sense of EUness. The programmes that make possible direct contact between Poles and other European people seem to be particularly significant in realising the aim of increasing cohesiveness and togetherness. The benefits to Polish students from the education programmes are steadily increasing from year to year. The number of students going out to different EU countries as part of the Erasmus programme rose to 1,426 in the academic year 1998/1999; 2,813 in 1999/2000; 3,691 in 2000/2001 and 3,800 (approx.) in 2001/2002. Within the framework of the other education programme, namely TEMPUS, from 1990 to 2001, about 12,700 Polish students and academic staff had the opportunity to gain an Individual Mobility Grant or to take part in joint EU projects.<sup>11</sup>

Apart from these EU-centred services, there are many domestic and international channels working on an official or non-official basis to at least increase people's awareness of the EU. Again, to convey an idea about the spectrum of these non-EU channels, some illustrations are given below:

Several educational reforms have been introduced in Poland since the beginning of transition to implement an EU-oriented curriculum. The government and the Association of Polish Communes organised jointly 100 seminars for local authorities in rural areas, each of them with 100 to 300 participants.<sup>12</sup> The Polish Schuman

<sup>11</sup> Data provided by Malgorzata Czlonkowska from the National agency of education programmes in Poland.

<sup>12</sup> European Commission, *op. cit.*, p. 15., 2002a.

Foundation organises the Schuman Parade annually on the weekend of 9<sup>th</sup> May in Warsaw. Within two years (1999 and 2000), 27 per cent of Poles visited and 5 per cent worked in an EU member state.<sup>13</sup>

## 2. 2. People's Opinion on the Sufficiency of Information about the EU

Now, it should be asked, given the wide range of tools carrying information about the EU, what people think about the sufficiency of this information. Referring again to the survey results, two questions seek people's opinion about the sufficiency of the information on EU enlargement and Poland's accession process. As displayed in Table 2, 63 per cent of Poles are not satisfied with the amount of information given to them about enlargement and 53 per cent are not satisfied with the information on the accession process. People's level of self-perceived knowledge about the EU remained at about 41 per cent.<sup>14</sup> However, there is a paradox. Despite their criticism of the insufficiency of information about EU-related issues, they admit that, though most of the Poles pay at least a little attention, they are least interested in EU-related news compared to other topics.<sup>15</sup>

**Table 2: Feeling Informed about Enlargement-Accession**

*Q: How well informed do you feel about enlargement (that is, new countries joining the EU) and about Poland's accession process? (N: 1000)*

| Level of feeling       | About enlargement % | About accession % |
|------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Very well informed     | 2                   | 2                 |
| Well informed          | 32                  | 34                |
| Not very well informed | 53                  | 53                |
| Not at all informed    | 10                  | 8                 |
| DK/No answer           | 3                   | 3                 |

Source: European Commission. (2002). **Candidate Countries Eurobarometer 2001**

## 2. 3. The Level of Awareness of the EU

Under all these circumstances, to what extent an awareness of the EU was established in Poland during the pre-membership period? Almost all Poles were aware of the EU's existence as an international institution (98 per cent). This datum on its own does not give a worthwhile answer to our question. Instead, we should consider the data

<sup>13</sup> European Commission. Standard Eurobarometer 55. 2001. <[www.europa.eu.int/comm/public\\_opinion/archives/eb/eb55/eb55\\_ann.pdf](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb55/eb55_ann.pdf)> p. 38.>

<sup>14</sup> European Commission. Candidate Countries Eurobarometer 2001. <[www.europa.eu.int/comm/public\\_opinion/archives/cceb/2001/cceb20011\\_en.pdf](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion/archives/cceb/2001/cceb20011_en.pdf)> p. 73>, 2002b.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 78.



that investigate more specific knowledge about the EU. This is because people's awareness of the EU must be strong enough for them to develop an attitude towards it.<sup>16</sup> In the CCE survey,<sup>17</sup> apart from the EU, awareness of 9 institutions and bodies of the EU was investigated.<sup>18</sup> Among these, two chief institutions, namely the European Parliament and the European Commission, were acknowledged by 68 per cent and 66 per cent respectively.<sup>19</sup> The level of awareness for the other institutions was less and the average awareness for all 9 institutions and bodies was 47 per cent.

In the 1998 Central and East European Barometer (CEEB), there is another question we can usefully refer to. When the interviewees were asked to identify a shown object (a sticker of the European flag), slightly more than half (55 per cent) responded correctly in Poland.<sup>20</sup> Still this rate includes the replies of not only the EU but also the EC, the Common Market, the Council of Europe and Europe in general. In this case, almost half of the respondents do not recognise the flag of a political establishment of which they are expected to be citizens in the near future.

One more question indicating people's awareness of the EU in Poland was asked in surveys by the country's prominent Institute of Public Affairs (IPA) and also the CCE. When the interviewees were asked whether Poland were receiving financial support from the EU, only 55 per cent in the IPA's survey<sup>21</sup> and less than half (48 per cent) in the CCE<sup>22</sup> declared a positive answer. The low level of positive answers about the financial support issue is worrying because, as explained in the next section, utilitarian expectations play a prominent part in people's positive orientations towards the EU and yet, again, nearly half of them were not aware of a general fact about the financial relationship between the EU and their country.

Considering all these points, it would be rather difficult to allege that people's knowledge and awareness of the EU was high enough to identify them as the citizens of a political community. As a matter of fact, in certain issues pertaining to their personal lives, people might have more information about the EU and the consequences of accession. For example, farmers might be sensitive to the EU news related to agriculture and their awareness might be at a very high level specific to this issue. But the awareness of the EU questioned here is a general and average one.

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<sup>16</sup> B. Wessels, B. "Development of Support: Diffusion or Demographic Replacement?," in O. Niedermayer and R. Sinnott, (eds), **Public Opinion and Internationalized Governance**. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1995.

<sup>17</sup> European Commission, *op. cit.*, 2002b, p. 76. N: 1000.

<sup>18</sup> The question is "Have you heard of....(name of institution)."

<sup>19</sup> These percentages for the current member states are 89% and 77% respectively (European Commission, *op. cit.*, 2001, p. 66).

<sup>20</sup> European Commission. Central and Eastern Eurobarometer 8. <www.za.uni-koeln.de. N: 1000>, 1998.

<sup>21</sup> M. Strzeszewski, "Adaptation to the European Union: Hopes, Fears and Costs," in Lena Kolarska-Bobinska, (ed), **Before the Great Change - Polish Public Opinion and EU Enlargement**. IPA, Warsaw, 2001, p. 120. IPA's survey was conducted in June 2000 on a national representative sample of 1200 people using face-to-face technique.

<sup>22</sup> European Commission, *op. cit.*, 2002b, p. 99. N: 1000.

### 3. People's Evaluation of the EU

As spelt out above, the Poles' knowledge of EU-related issues seems inadequate or at least obscure. All evaluations concerning the EU are made under this constraint. In our orientation scheme, people's evaluation of the EU has been classified into two modes, utilitarian and affective. In fact, it is not always easy to distinguish and define these two modes in generally agreed terms. The theme of security is a salient case in point. If it is considered as people's demand for co-operation and peace, then it is a marker of ideal interest and affective support.<sup>23</sup> If an individual's demand for international co-operation for security is driven by self or especially national interests, as Shepherd<sup>24</sup> concluded from people's response to the survey questions, then it is utilitarian.

In the literature, however, a person's economic calculations about the EU, either on an individual or national basis, are widely accepted (almost synonymously) as the main indicator of utilitarian support.<sup>25</sup> Therefore, to measure the utilitarian mode of orientation, questions on people's material-economic opinions about the EU are generally chosen. For the articulation of affective support, there are also some widely accepted survey questions. These questions mainly seek out people's general and abstract sentiments about integration efforts or the EU.

In the case of Poland, to analyse people's evaluation of the EU and discover the mode of their orientation, it would be more systematic to present first their opinions about EU membership and then the reasons (their expectations from this membership) for the formation of such opinions.

#### 3. 1. People's Opinion about EU Membership

In the first CEEB conducted as early as 1990, 72 per cent of Poles supported EU membership for their country within five years at the latest (the great majority - 55 per cent - answered 'now' while the rest - 17 per cent - answered 'within five years'). Only 2 per cent of respondents answered 'never' to the same question.<sup>26</sup> The CCE survey conducted in 2001, this time revealed that in Poland slightly more than half (51 per

<sup>23</sup> R. J. , Shepherd. **Public Opinion and European Integration**. Saxon House, Hants, 1975, p. 94; A. Bosch, and K. Newton. "Economic Calculus or Familiarity Breeds Content?," in O. Niedermayer and R. Sinnot, (eds), **Public Opinion and Internationalized Governance**. Oxford University Press, Oxford, p. 75.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 95.

<sup>25</sup> Shepherd, *Ibid.*, 1995 Lindberg, L. N. and S. A. Scheingold, *op. cit.*, M. Hewstone, M. 1986. **Understanding Attitudes to the European Community**. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge; O. Niedermayer, 1995. "Trends and Contrasts," in O. Niedermayer and Richard Sinnot, (eds), *op. cit.*, 1995.

<sup>26</sup> J. Hofrichter, J. and I. Weller. A report prepared upon Central and Eastern Eurobarometer-1990. Commission of the European Community, Brussels, 1991. p. 39. (N: 1000).

cent)<sup>27</sup> supported EU membership. From the series of CBOS surveys, a similar change in people's support for their country's membership of the EU from 1994 onwards can be followed. As can be seen, a steady decline has set in, especially after 1997 (Table 3).

**Table 3: People's Opinion on the EU Membership of Poland**

Q: If a referendum on Poland's access to the European Union were held now, would you vote (%): (N is around 1050 for each survey).

|                  | VI<br>'94 | V<br>'95 | V<br>'96 | III<br>'97 | IV<br>'97 | VII<br>I<br>'97 | V<br>'98 | VII<br>I<br>'98 | XII<br>'98 | V<br>'99 | XI<br>'99 | II<br>00 | V<br>00 | IX<br>00 | III<br>01 |
|------------------|-----------|----------|----------|------------|-----------|-----------------|----------|-----------------|------------|----------|-----------|----------|---------|----------|-----------|
| For access       | 77        | 72       | 80       | 72         | 72        | 72              | 66       | 63              | 64         | 55       | 59        | 55       | 59      | 55       | 55        |
| Against access   | 6         | 9        | 7        | 12         | 11        | 12              | 19       | 19              | 19         | 26       | 26        | 26       | 25      | 26       | 30        |
| Difficult to say | 17        | 19       | 13       | 16         | 18        | 15              | 15       | 18              | 17         | 19       | 15        | 19       | 16      | 19       | 15        |

Source: CBOS Report 36/2001. Opinions about integration with the European Union.

In the initial years of transformation, membership of the EU was equated with the broader and long-standing mythical ideal of the 'return to Europe' rhetoric and Western development.<sup>28</sup> The attractiveness of Western values for peace and prosperity and of the wish to be a European has been the main motivating factor in the massive support for EU membership.<sup>29</sup> So much so that, in the initial years, Western Europe, the EU, the USA and NATO were being perceived as synonyms and as components of 'the West'.<sup>30</sup> Again, if we refer to the first CEEB of 1990,<sup>31</sup> more than two thirds of the Poles 'very much' (28 per cent) or 'to some extent' (41 per cent) supported the idea of a 'United States of Europe'.<sup>32</sup> Even if the EU was not mentioned specifically in this question, together with the aforementioned membership question, it proves the presence of high-level diffuse support among the Polish people at the outset of the 1990s.

Therefore, there was a strong and positive correlation between the sense of Europeaness and support for EU membership. However, after that, while the West or Europe remained as a civilisational choice (the myth of return to Europe), opinions

<sup>27</sup> European Commission, *op. cit.*, p. b-53. 2002b. The rest of the responses are not basically negative (only 11%) but indifferent or undecided (35% for neither good nor bad and 13% for no answer). (N: 1000)

<sup>28</sup> F. Millard, 1999. *Polish Politics and Society*. Routledge, London.

<sup>29</sup> E. Stadtmüller. "Polish Perceptions of the European Union in the 1990s," in: Karl Cordell, (ed), *Poland and the European Union*. Routledge, London, 2000. p. 41.

<sup>30</sup> X., Dolinska. "Poland's Membership of The European Union From Support to Rejection," in Lena Kolarska-Bobinska, (ed), *Before the Great Change - Polish Public Opinion and EU Enlargement*. Institute of Public Affairs, Warsaw, 2001 p. 14.

<sup>31</sup> Hofrichter and Weller, 1991, *op. cit.*,

<sup>32</sup> The question was "In general, to what extent are you for or against the unification of Europe leading to a formation of a 'United States of Europe', including Poland?"

about the EU rested on more pragmatic evaluations. Individual or group cost-benefit evaluations and accession negotiations, terms and conditions came to influence opinions about EU membership. In the case of accession negotiations, the incremental replacement of the 'return to Europe' motto by 'adjustment to the EU'<sup>33</sup> reflects this situation. The disparity between people's orientation to Europe and to EU membership, which denotes, at the same time, the difference between the sense of Europeanness and of EUness, seems to demonstrate this partition in people's mind. Parenthetically, the aim of the EU is to ally these two concepts with each other and, then, to establish a European order within the context of the EU. The EU, according to this official discourse, would be the house of Europeans. In other words, from the EU perspective at least, there is no difference between the concepts of Europeanness and EUness and the target of the Union is to endow EU citizens with the understanding of we-Europeans.

Table 4 displays the results of the question about people's pride in being European. As seen, after more than ten years of the revolution, 82 per cent of the respondents in Poland stated that they were very or fairly proud to be European. If this is compared with their opinions about membership, then it reveals the change of mode between people's orientation to Europeanness and to EUness, contrary to the aim of the EU project.

**Table 4: European Pride of Polish People**

*Q: Would you say you are very proud, fairly proud, not very proud or not at all proud to be European? (N: 1000)*

| <i>Degree of pride</i>              | <i>Percentage</i> |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
| <i>Very proud</i>                   | 34                |
| <i>Fairly proud</i>                 | 48                |
| <i>Not very proud</i>               | 8                 |
| <i>Not at all proud</i>             | 3                 |
| <i>Does not feel to be European</i> | 2                 |
| <i>DK/No answer</i>                 | 4                 |

**Source:** European Commission. 2002. **Candidate Countries Eurobarometer 2001.** p. b-31.

From another perspective, almost all the supporters of EU integration presumably accept the implementation of the economic and political values of the EU. However, any decline in support of EU membership does not mean that they are all against the implementation of those values which are seen as the connotations of Europeanness. Analysing some data from a survey conducted in October 1999 by the Institute for Research on Public Opinion, Szczerbiak<sup>34</sup> confirms this view. According to the survey data, 74 per cent of Poles stated the view that reforms should be implemented before

<sup>33</sup> I. Prizel. **National Identity and Foreign Policy.** Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1998, p. 105.

<sup>34</sup> A. Szczerbiak. "Polish Public Opinion: Explaining Declining Support for EU Membership," **Journal of Common Market Studies**, 39, 2001, p. 117.

joining the EU. With regard to economic modernisation, the number of Poles who see EU membership at the earliest possible moment as a means of precipitating the modernisation of the Polish economy fell from 39 per cent in August 1997 to 27 per cent in November 1999, while those who believe that modernisation should precede accession increased from 43 per cent to 62 per cent.

### 3. 2. The Reasons for the Diffuse Support for EU Membership in the First Years

After all these explanations, it is not difficult to label the widespread eagerness for EU membership at the outset as diffuse support, due to its overlap with the return to Europe ideal. As a matter of fact, the first years also, from the viewpoint of western states and societies, created an atmosphere that was advantageous to the acceptance of the CEECs because of the widespread appreciation of these countries' self-liberation from communist regimes and because of a wave of euphoria around peace and democracy. That is why some authors argue that the best opportunity to achieve a unified Europe (not interest but value driven) had been missed.<sup>35</sup> It is time to elucidate the Poles' strong feeling of Europeanness, as well as other reasons behind the Poles' diffuse support for the EU in the early years of transformation.

The early years' diffuse support resulted from; firstly, the strong impact of the geo-political and cultural legacy of the past. One aspect of this was the communist experience of the near past. The popular slogan of return to Europe was, in this sense, the summary of more practical expectations about escaping from the shortages of communist practice and achieving the living standards of Western societies. Though it had some utilitarian features, the impact of anti-communism should be acknowledged as 'civilisational choice' and, therefore, as conducive to high and affective orientation. It should be emphasised that, in fact, this was not a situation particular to Poland. In West Germany after World War II<sup>36</sup> and in the Southern European countries of Spain, Portugal and Greece after the overthrow of authoritarian regimes in the 1970s,<sup>37</sup> the public showed strong support for European integration, hoping to escape from the past and to consolidate the new regimes.

Another feature of the geo-political legacy that provided a positive base for affective support for EU integration was Poland's centuries-old 'lands in between' character. Poland's borders in the 1990s were almost surrounded with new neighbours: a unified Germany separated Czech and Slovak states, newly independent Ukraine, Belarus and Lithuania. An important outcome of this new geo-political structure is, as Prizel<sup>38</sup> pointed out, that for the first time in centuries Poland no longer has an overpowering country on the eastern border. This alters its position from a buffer state to a mid-sized Central European state with its own sovereignty and its own historical

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<sup>35</sup> Z. Krasnodebski. "Europe-Vision and Mission," in *The Polish Foreign Affairs Digest*, 1, 1, p. 18-27, 2001.

<sup>36</sup> Bulmer, S. and W. Paterson. *The Federal Republic of Germany and the European Community*. Allen&Unwin, London, 1987.

<sup>37</sup> Niedermayer, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

<sup>38</sup> Prizel, *op. cit.*, p. 137.

and cultural entity. Therefore, the country and its people did not want to diminish Poland's new and relatively strong position, and aimed to strengthen it by adopting western principles as a requisite of being a contemporary state, and by taking their place in modern European institutions. On joining the EU structure, the centuries-old peripheral position of the country would vanish and as Zbigniew Brzezinski presupposed 'Polish strategic weakness, its susceptibility and sensitivity' would come to an end.<sup>39</sup>

Undoubtedly, linked to the last cause, the biggest influence of history on people's affective orientations towards the EU is predominantly due to considering this membership as the realisation of the centuries-old ideal of placing Poland within the sphere of Western Europe not only in geographical but also in political and cultural terms. While doing this, the common cultural and historical heritage has frequently been enlisted to show the European character of Poland.

There is no doubt that this pro-European view has, for centuries, been preserved and promoted primarily by the elites. Since as early as the 15<sup>th</sup> century, Polish intellectuals had configured Poland's place in the cultural sphere of Western Europe (Latin Christendom) as well as in the geographical one. This belief has continued through the following centuries. The supporters of this view are inclined to accept EU membership as Poland's natural and inevitable right because of historical and cultural proximity. On this issue, not only during the communist era but also for centuries, Poland had suffered too much in making way for the advancement of Western Europe. Almost all the images used to describe Poland's location in Europe, e.g. *the Rampart, the Eastern Bastion, antemurale christianitatis*, accentuate the Western character of Polish culture and civilisation. This Polish centric view, according to a Polish author, has frequently taken an exaggerated - if not arrogant - form, overrated the significance of Poland, approached all the changes outside the country from a local perspective and, thus, created at least a 'psychological distance' between Poland and the rest of Europe that at the same time impeded the understanding of global problems.<sup>40</sup> As a case in point, again for centuries, overconfidence in this mission and in the vital importance of Poland for Europe led to a fatal belief that the independence of the Polish state would never be put into danger by the European powers.<sup>41</sup> In spite of Poland's much closer contact with the East and the West's inadequate or dull response, and, sometimes, even betrayal, nothing could prevent the Poles from considering themselves within the cultural-behavioural sphere of Europe. On the contrary, separation nourished Polish admiration of Europe, according to Davies,<sup>42</sup> and Polish enthusiasm for the West has

<sup>39</sup> quoted in Bielen, S. "Poland's Place in International Relations," in Konstanty Adam Wojtaszczyk, (ed), **Poland in Transition**. Elipsa, Warsaw, 1999, p. 130.

<sup>40</sup> Jalowiecki, B. "Poland - Europe. Opening up," in: Antoni Kuklinski, (ed), **Poland - The Quest for New Identity and Competitive Advantage**. Polish Association for the Club of Rome, Warsaw, 1991, p. 56.

<sup>41</sup> J. Tazbir, "Poland and the Concept of Europe in the Sixteenth-Eighteenth Centuries," **European Studies Review** 7, 1, 1977, p. 41.

<sup>42</sup> N. Davies, **Hearth of Europe: A Short History of Poland**. Oxford University Press, Oxford. 1984, p. 344.

always been a foremost and indispensable component of Polish political orientation. Another convincing argument is that as compensation to overcome the inferiority complex that stemmed from the backwardness of the country in economical and political terms, cultural similarities with the West and praise of the national role, for instance as the heart of Europe, have been overemphasised.<sup>43</sup>

Believing in the peculiarity of Poland's case was not enough for the adherents of this pro-European view. Moreover, since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, they had been expecting and striving for the recognition of Poland's critical role by Western countries.<sup>44</sup> Then membership of the EU would be a natural right, a reward for the Poles. Historically, the final concern to utilise this track of thought was communism. Jan Kulakowski unambiguously demands such a reward: 'It is through our own means that we managed to ward off the totalitarian threat hanging over the world as a whole and Europe in particular. By freeing the world of this fear, have we not earned a certain right to solidarity?'<sup>45</sup>

Affiliation to the European club was justified not only by historical references but also by current and future-oriented arguments, which created a diffuse support. According to one of these justifications, as the largest and most populated country among the CEECs, Poland had to have priority for EU membership. A Polish bureaucrat from the Committee of European Integration underscored this point and added: 'Our membership is beyond any discussion. Poland is competing with itself on the way to EU membership'.<sup>46</sup> This view implies that for the security and prosperity of the continent, Poland, because of her current peculiar conditions, had to be embodied into the EU structure.

On the same lines, the membership of Poland was to be a vanguard example for the Eastern countries of Ukraine, Belarus and Lithuania. Besides, the establishment of a positive relationship with the Ukrainians, Belarusians and Lithuanians within the borders of Poland was reminiscent of the long-lasting Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth experience and could bring precious aspects of Polish political culture, namely multiculturalism and tolerance, into the EU.<sup>47</sup>

All in all, the initial period of the EU integration process, which extended until the mid-1990s, attracted a basically diffuse support. Such a strong affective attachment to the EU emanated from centuries-old ideals and already-existent motives, rather than any

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<sup>43</sup> P.S. Wandycz, *The Price of Freedom*. Routledge, London. 1992, p. 5.

<sup>44</sup> J. Purchla, "Europa Minor: The European Heritage of Bohemia, Poland, and Hungary," in Z. Mach and D. Nedzwiedzki (eds), *European Enlargement and Identity*. Universitas, Krakow, 1997, p. 38.

<sup>45</sup> quoted in F. Draus, *Enlargement of Another Kind.. Notre Europe Association Research and Policy paper no. 11*. <<http://www.notre-europe.asso.fr/fichiers/Etud11-en.pdf>. p. 2.>, 2000.

<sup>46</sup> Interview with Marian Stasiak. Director of the European Education Department at the Committee for European Integration. 16. 10. 2001.

<sup>47</sup> A. Szpocinski, "Polish National Identity and Prospect of Accession to the European Union," in Barbara Wizimirska, (ed), *Yearbook of Polish Foreign Policy*. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Warsaw, 1998, p. 203.

quality and achievement of the Union. It is useful to remember that NATO and the Council of Europe were also welcomed with similar enthusiasm, just because of their Western (European) character.

### 3. 3. Decline of Diffuse Support and Increasing Utilitarian Support

Once the realities, especially of economic changes, turned out quite opposite to people's overrated expectations in the early 1990s, the shifts or erosion occurred in the value orientation of society, from a romantic, idealistic, enthusiastic mode to a more pragmatic, realistic and alienated one. This break-up of orientation in people's political and economic life also influenced their evaluation of the issue of EU integration.

In the case of EU, however, the alteration was a relatively slow process. The optimistic and still romantic climate of thought continued longer in the matter of the return to Europe rhetoric. The persistent and firm continuation of the political elites and intellectuals in this rhetoric, and concrete advances in the integration process (association agreement, Copenhagen summit, etc.) left the question of EU membership out of pragmatic calculations. Although each party placed different emphases on the conditions and priorities for the accession process and each had opponents within its ranks, a wide range of parties from liberal to social democrats endorsed Poland's commitment to EU membership.<sup>48</sup> There was almost full consensus between the main political parties on the objective of European integration. The first organised and important anti-European gathering had been established only in 1997 through the Polish Agreement.<sup>49</sup>

In sum, people still tended to see the EU from an idealistic perspective until the mid-1990s. They were still expecting EU membership to strengthen their democratic and economic situation. Even while people's negative feelings against Western capitalism were increasing, their 'Western dreams' through EU integration were continuing to persist.<sup>50</sup>

When certain groups in society, i.e. peasants and workers, began to perceive that they were losing out because of the country's unequal trade and financial relations with EU countries, these optimistic-romantic assessments of the EU gave way to pessimism, pragmatism and more utilitarian evaluations within society. However, these changes in attitude differed among the public and among the political elites and intellectuals. While the public, especially some groups losing out in the transformation, began to evaluate EU membership through cost-benefit calculations, the extensive consensus among the parties and elites continued. Of course, the rising scepticism and discontentment within society against EU membership, the reasons for which will be explained later, were echoed in the representative arena of politics, and certain problematic issues began to be invoked more frequently by different parties. The League of Polish Families, the radical nationalist-Christian party that gathered 7, 87 per cent of the votes in the 2001 elections

<sup>48</sup> Stadtmuller, *op. cit.*,

<sup>49</sup> Szczerbiak, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

<sup>50</sup> R. A., Cichowski, "Western Dreams, Eastern Realities: Support for the European Union in Central and Eastern Europe," in *Comparative Political Studies*, 33, 10, 2000, p. 1261.



and guaranteed thirty-eight seats in parliament, was important because of its explicit opposition to integration with Europe. Yet, despite this partial shift to realist and utilitarian overtones, the political elites and intellectuals continued to see EU values and membership as the only means of Polish participation in the modern, globalised and civilised world. In a booklet published as the common voice of some of Poland's prominent non-governmental analytical centres<sup>51</sup>, enlargement of the Union is described

...as the beginning of the construction of a continent made up of countries which all accept such fundamental values as democracy, freedom, respect for civic rights and liberties... We, the Europeans of today, are the last generation of a passing phase, a Europe that was divided and burdened with the heritage of communism. We are at the same time the first generation creating a new reality.

If we continue to explain the change in public orientation, rather than that of the elites, towards European integration, the general decline observed in the public support of EU membership in Poland after the mid-1990s can be ascribed, among other reasons, to the fact that the debate about integration shifted from general to specific issues. According to one specialist<sup>52</sup>, this shift enabled Polish society to gain a better insight about the concrete cost and benefits of EU integration. Then the mode of people's orientation towards the EU began to change to a more sceptical and utilitarian type. In fact, going through the details and concrete issues did not clarify these issues in people's mind nor increase their knowledge. Instead, it only brought controversial views and complexity to their sight while the level of their knowledge, as explained before, remained low. In particular, anti-European groups put more (but speculative) emphasis on the issues of the danger of losing religious and national identity; the secondary role that would be given to Poland in Europe; the imposed character of norms and conditions from the EU side; and the likelihood that Germany would take over Poland through the EU.<sup>53</sup> Regarding the last point, for example, among the thirty odd items of negotiation between Poland and the EU, it was argued that foreigners' right to buy real estate in Poland was the most controversial, just because of the anxiety about German buyers.<sup>54</sup>

The shift from general to specific issues also combined with the uncertainty and prolongation of the accession process and bred some anxieties among people about the aims and sincerity of the EU towards Poland. To confirm this, while in May 1996, 20 per cent of Poles believed that the EU was benefiting more than Poland in mutual relations, this rate increased to about 60 per cent in February 2002.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>51</sup> IPA- Institute of Public Affairs. *A Common Europe*. IPA, Warsaw, 2001, p. 15. Including Centre for International Relations, Centre for Social and Economic Research, Gdansk Institute for Market Economics, Institute of Public Affairs, Institute for Strategic Studies, Stefan Batory Foundation, etc.

<sup>52</sup> Stadtmuller, *op. cit.*,

<sup>53</sup> Ryszard, Herbut. 2000. "Parties and the Polish Party System," in Karl Cordell, (ed), *Poland and the European Union*. Routledge, London; Stadtmuller, *op. cit.*; Szczerbiak, *op. cit.*,

<sup>54</sup> T, Lebioda. "Poland, die Vertriebenen, and the Road to Integration with the European Union," in Karl Cordell, (ed), *Poland and the European Union*. Routledge, London, (2000). p. 176.

<sup>55</sup> CBOS. Bulletin 2002/04. <[www.cbos.pl/ENGLISH/Bulletin/2002/04\\_2002.pdf](http://www.cbos.pl/ENGLISH/Bulletin/2002/04_2002.pdf) (N:1044)>, 2002.

That is why it is better to use *sceptical* and *confused* rather than *realistic* to describe the evaluative mode of people's decreasing support for EU membership. In March 2001, the percentage of EU supporters was as low as 55 while that of opponents appeared at its highest (30) so far (Table 3). Then, when the uncertainty over the way towards accession began to disperse with the Gothenburg European Council in June 2001, the level of supporters increased, and in the accession referendum of June 2003, the level of 'yes' votes came to about 77 per cent. However, as Szczerbiak<sup>56</sup> predicted, the 'apathy and resentment' of the Poles towards the whole European integration project showed itself through a low turnout (59 per cent) in the referendum. People's lack of sufficient and accurate knowledge and their usual passivity about joining such voting should also be considered in construing the low turnout.<sup>57</sup>

There is other and more direct evidence to underpin the utilitarian character of people's orientation in Poland towards the EU. This is people's expectations of EU integration. In the IPA's survey (Table 5), when people were asked the main role of the EU, 79 per cent answered that it was an economic community. In addition, when the question was changed to discern what the main role ought to be, as many as 76 per cent replied again in the same way. On the other hand, the low proportion of respondents who saw the EU mainly as a political community, and believed that was what it ought to be, seems discouraging for the campaign to construct a sense of EUness and then pursue an ever closer Union. Worse than this for the EU project, as few as 28 per cent expected the EU to be a community of values and only a minority (9 per cent) defined the EU in its current structure as such a community. The latter datum, especially, can be accepted as strong evidence that people think the EU lacks any spiritual dimension and appears largely materialistic.

**Table 5:** The Role of the European Union

Q: What in your opinion is the EU mainly, and what should the EU mainly be?  
(Interviewees could make more than one choice) (N: 1200)<sup>58</sup>

|                       | The actual role | The expected role |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| An economic community | 79              | 76                |
| A political community | 59              | 36                |
| A community of values | 9               | 28                |
| A cultural community  | 9               | 15                |
| Hard to tell          | 12              | 10                |

**Source:** Warchala, M. "The Image of the European Union," in Lena Kolarska-Bobinska, ed., *Before the Great Change - Polish Public Opinion and EU Enlargement*. Warsaw, Institute of Public Affairs.

<sup>56</sup> Szczerbiak, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

<sup>57</sup> Jaworski, *op. cit.*,

<sup>58</sup> A national representative sample of respondents were asked through face-to-face method.

In the same vein, when people were asked in the CCE survey what the EU meant to them, the most frequent replies pertained to expected economic acquisitions: 73 per cent cited 'freedom of movement'; 69 per cent 'a way to create a better future'; 55 per cent 'guaranteed lasting peace'; 53 per cent 'a way to create jobs'; etc.<sup>59</sup> On the same question, the EU meant to only 28 per cent of Polish citizens 'European governance'. These data seem to reinforce our comments on the IPA's findings. Doubtless, utilitarian calculations are not limited to economic factors. But the dominance of economic expectations over others is the result of the dominance of economic motives in people's decision-making, especially during a tough economic transformation.

One more piece of evidence which is especially critical for us is the data from the CBOS<sup>60</sup> survey about people's attitudes towards the introduction of the euro in Poland. As many as 64 per cent of the respondents are ready to welcome the euro in place of the Polish zloty, whereas less than one quarter of them say they are not. According to the data of the survey, the euro is accepted not only by the majority of the supporters of EU membership (83 per cent) but also by 36 per cent of the opponents. Among the supporters of the euro, 18 per cent say they would like it introduced before integration. The euro as a common currency has not only an economic function but also a symbolic one in building togetherness between the citizens of the member states. However, it would be rather optimistic to say that Polish enthusiasm for the introduction of the euro derived from its symbolic implications and, accordingly, from some spiritual thoughts about the EU. This support for the euro can predominantly be explained by its economic function. People accept it both as a protest against the zloty (and thus against the economic situation in the country) and as a result of economic expectations from EU integration.

Apart from the actual developments and speculative reasons included in our explanations up till now, many other variables help to form public orientation towards the EU. From demographic characteristics (age, gender) to socio-economic ones (education, occupation and other qualifications), from geographical (regional or urban-rural distinction) to religion and so on, variables affect the crystallisation of individual orientations to a certain extent. If some general comments are to be made on the demographic and socio-economic status of people: in terms of both EU awareness and further evaluative orientations, an almost identical picture of the demographic and socio-economic categories of respondents emerges. According to the data of both the CCE<sup>61</sup> and IPA<sup>62</sup> surveys, being a young, well-educated, urban dweller, in a good job and especially in an executive position are features of the respondents who have more awareness of the EU and who also make an evaluation (mostly positive) about the EU.

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<sup>59</sup> European Commission, *op. cit.*, (N: 1000), 2002b.

<sup>60</sup> CBOS. Bulletin 2002/02. <[www.cbos.pl](http://www.cbos.pl) (N: 973)>, 2002.

<sup>61</sup> European Commission. *op. cit.*, 2002b.

<sup>62</sup> IPA., *op. cit.*, 2001.

## CONCLUSION

The establishment of institutions and norms has to be underpinned and strengthened by a sphere of orientation and spiritual-emotional linkage to the EU. In this article, we have tried to investigate whether such a sphere had been constructed in Poland before her membership to the EU.

The first finding is that whatever the mode and extent of orientations, these were constructed on a relatively low level of awareness about EU-related facts and issues. According to the analysis of various survey data, people's awareness of the EU is not sufficiently well developed to prepare them for further attachment and active involvement, in other words for citizenship of this Union.

Secondly, although they have limited awareness of matters concerning the EU, the Poles of course made evaluations about the EU in this fog of half-knowledge. In principle there has been long-standing enthusiasm among the Poles to consider themselves a part of European community. It has been shown that, basically powered by this enthusiasm, a high level of affective orientation was prevalent among the citizens as well as elites at the outset of the period. Nonetheless, the decoupling of the EU from Europe in people's minds for various reasons (the EU's attitude towards Poland, people's unfulfilled expectations after the regime change and so on) seemed to paralyse these idealistic attributions that might otherwise have made people feel more warmly towards the EU. Thus, citizens' orientations towards the EU curved to more utilitarian views, while an important level of affective affinity still continued among the elite. Membership of the EU was mostly a cost-benefit issue for the people of Poland before the membership. People developed separate orientations towards Europe and towards the EU. They do not see the EU as an institution of Europeans.

Another conclusion can be drawn from the reverse angle. The findings of this chapter show that the success of the 'ever closer Union' ideal depends, above all, on satisfying people's economic expectations of this closer cooperation. Without dispersing the fears or satisfying the expectations of people with regard to the economy, any other attempt or incentive to promote their enthusiasm for the EU seems useless.

In this study, we have not made an operational analysis of domestic or EU-centred policies or assistance to construct an EU orientation in Poland. However, the above-mentioned findings and especially the decoupling of EU and Europe in people's mind, seems to prove the failure of EU policies for the domestic diffusion and development of EU discourse in the country.

As Duchesne and Frogner<sup>63</sup> found in the case of member states, Poles hold some evaluative attitudes towards the EU but not a sense of belonging as to a political community. Following on from people's evaluations of and expectations from the EU,

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<sup>63</sup> S. Duchesne, and A. Frogner. "Is There a European Identity?" in O. Niedermayer and R. Sinnott, (eds), *op. cit.*, 1995, p. 223.

it can be asserted that the relationships between the EU and the CEECs seem similar at best to those in the early founding years of the EC. That is to say, first something should be achieved in the economic realm as the initial step on a neo-functionalist path. Whether after this or simultaneously, while positive attitudes among people in the CEECs are meant to be increasing, EU symbols and all information about EU facts should be circulated more intensively and effectively to increase people's true knowledge about the EU and to ensure normative adoption, especially of symbols.

### **Annex**

**Eurobarometer Surveys:** Over 30 years, the European Commission has been conducting Standard Eurobarometer surveys to monitor the evolution of public opinion in the Member States. Each survey consists of approximately 1000 face-to-face interviews per Member State (except Germany: 2000, Luxembourg: 600, United Kingdom 1300 including 300 in Northern Ireland). Also an annual general public survey was carried out from 1990 to 1998 as Central and Eastern Eurobarometer (CEEB), specific to the CEECs. The CEEB has been changed to the Candidate Countries Eurobarometer (CCE) by 2001. The methodology of both CEEB and CCE is almost identical to that of the Standard Eurobarometer. That is to say 1000 respondents were interviewed in their homes.

([www.europa.eu.int/comm/public\\_opinion/archives/ceeb\\_en.htm](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion/archives/ceeb_en.htm))

**CBOS Surveys:** The Public Opinion Research Center (CBOS), established in 1982, is a publicly funded independent research centre. It is one of the largest and most renowned public opinion research institutes in Poland. CBOS conducts research to satisfy the needs of Polish public administration bodies and societies at large, as well as various other interested institutions: local government, the press and television, industry and advertising agencies. They offer a full range of data collection techniques, including face-to-face and telephone interviews, various group discussions, executive and in-depth interviews, mail surveys, etc. All the CBOS surveys in this study are the product of face-to-face or telephone interviews with a random address sample of the population of Poland. ([www.cbos.pl](http://www.cbos.pl))