

POSITION PAPER - Poland/Hungary - A modern budget for a union that protects, empowers and defends.

In the run-up to the meeting of the European council in autumn 2019 and to a potential agreement on the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027 (Consilium, 2019) as well as prior to the European elections in May 2019, the EU member states present their visions on the future of the European Union. A central topic is immigration, which the EU experienced greatly in recent years, still causing major differences. In the 2015 migration crisis, when almost 1.4 million asylum seekers applied in the EU, various countries tried to take their (limited) economic and social capacity into account. At the same time, European Commission introduced the idea of structural funds being dependent on compliance with refugee redistribution quotas and the rule of law. This proposal remains highly contentious, as it could negatively affect the economic and social situation of certain states (Griswold, 2012). The rejection of the agreed redistribution quotas by Poland and Hungary led to the opening of proceedings to trigger Article 7 TEU against them. Against the background of the strong migration of recent years, the associated problems, the dispute between the two main groups of countries and the Brexit, a new MFF, which all parties involved can approve, must now be agreed.

The relationship between Poland/Hungary and the European Institutions deteriorated since approximately 2011 concerning Hungary - and 2015 Poland. Hungary was criticized for its institutional reforms led by Viktor Orban and its so-called "illiberal democracy while Poland's in 2015 elected euro-skeptical party "Right and Justice" significantly toughened its tone towards Brussels (Broniatowski, 2018). Several European institutions were concerned with the evolution of the rule of law due to domestic reforms compromising the independence of justice and media. Moreover, one of the major tension points between EU institutions and Poland is related to the migrant crisis. Both countries applied a strict "anti-immigration" policy which was criticized by the European Institutions and both sides are entering into a wrestling match on these questions considering rule of law and immigration (European Commission, 2018). In this context, article 7 procedures were voted on two times, first against Poland in 2017, and second against Hungary in 2018.

Poland and Hungary strongly criticized the policy imposed by the EU regarding migration and expressed strong disagreement. Both countries support nationalization of the migration agenda and reject the top-down approach in this field. The European Commission sends a adverse signal to the Polish and Hungarian people simply tried to ensure their security, and foster the respect for traditional Christian and European values.

Poland and Hungary see the immigration issue through three distinct perspectives. First, there is a security issue with the risk of terrorism. This concern is important since it is widely known that there is a correlation between the volume of immigration and the risk of terrorism. Bove and Böhmelt found out that migrants arriving from countries that often feature increased terrorist activities are a source of possible ways through which terrorism propagates (Bove & Böhmelt, 2016). Furthermore, Schmid (2016) states that there is empirical evidence that arrivals of large refugee populations might increase the risks of attacks in the recipient country (Schmid, 2016). Poland and Hungary observe the security of their citizens as a priority. Second, there is a cultural aspect. Both countries strongly emphasize the change that migration from Muslim countries brings to the recipient countries. It has been documented that this type of migration changes attitudes, society, fashion or local cuisine (European Migration

Network, 2006). Hungary and Poland are working for the avoidance of communitarianism and Islamisation of Europe. Third, there are economic concerns. Poland and Hungary stress the point that the migration must be voluntarily accepted and countries should have the possibility to pick migrants according to national labour market needs. Not only migration might impede the labor market (Dustmann, et al., 2016), but it also puts considerable stress on the domestic educational and welfare systems. Evidence from the UK suggests that countries might not be able to develop quickly enough to match the increase in migration and subsequent population levels (Beckett, 2016). Furthermore, a report conducted by five Danish ministries concluded that Danish strict immigration policies saved the country approximately 6.7 billion euros over the years 2001 – 2011. This supports the fact that restrictions pay-off (Reimann, 2011).

Hungarian and Polish governments express only the voice of their people which are by nature European and who stand against forced immigration in their countries. As several reports show, Polish citizens (B. & Seges, 2018) as well as Hungarian (Foundation Institute of Public Affairs, 2018) citizens do not wish to welcome migrants, especially from Muslim countries.

Hungary and Poland can only deplore the fact that the European Union is trying to impose a technocratic vision of migration policy without the consent of a large part of European citizens who believe that immigration brings more issues than opportunities. (European Commission, 2018).

Hungary and Poland also regret the fact that the European Union tries to pressure both countries with the idea of conditionality of European funds to force both countries to accept immigration quotas. This conditionality pressure also concerns the domestic policies of both countries.

Hungary and Poland's more recent history can shed some light on their position and role within the European Union. By today, both countries have been free and independent for less than thirty years. After a long Soviet grip, they accomplished a remarkable rapid transition to a democratic market economy and entered the European Union in 2004. After the accession, the two countries involved themselves in the EU political landscape.

Both the Hungarian and Polish populations are in favour of EU membership for economic and political reasons (CBOS, 2008). Economic development is strongly linked to the four freedoms of the Single Market and good cooperation with other member states, which remains a priority for the Polish and Hungarian governments.

However, being part of the Christian-Jewish European community of values is also decisive. Although we are clearly in favour of leaving migration competence at national level, there is a need for a properly-focused European migration and border policy that implements existing laws such as the Dublin Regulation and restricts migration to those who genuinely need it. In doing so, common rules must be created for dealing with economic migrants and asylum seekers.

Due to the lack of such a reasonable migration policy and the unilateral violation of the Dublin rule by the German Chancellor in 2015, Poland and Hungary subsequently took measures to protect their societies from uncontrolled influx of refugees. While Hungary reacted at its own expense by building an EU border fence with Serbia, Poland refused to accept refugees who may not only pose a security risk but are also culturally distant from Poland (Irish Examiner, 2018). One of the main reasons Poland opposes migration is the threat of increased terrorism. According to Schmid, 2016 migrant diasporas in Europe could become a cultural hub for terrorists and could serve as bases for terrorist operations around Schengen countries (Schmid, 2016). However, it is important to note that Poland does admit refugees, as the large

number of Ukrainians escaping the war in Eastern Ukraine given shelter in Poland shows (Główny Urząd Statystyczny, 2018).

Poland and Hungary do not intend to conform to the European Union' refugee relocation scheme and will stay on the course on these questions. The priorities for both countries are the security of their citizens, the defence of the traditional (European) values and economic prosperity. For the latter, the preservation of the four freedoms – free movement of goods, capital, services and labour – is crucial (Muller, et al., 2017). In addition, EU funds for cohesion and the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) play an extremely important role for the former socialist states in catching up economically with Western countries (Maynou, et al., 2016). A reduction in the MFF 2021-2027 would thus be counterproductive for the European Union as a whole in the medium and long term. For this reason alone, Poland and Hungary do not support conditionality, as some countries do in connection with procedures for the rule of law and the reception of refugees.

EU funds should continue to be directed towards growth and development research. We are in favour of a united Europe but with a focus on the national competences of each Member State.

Poland and Hungary strictly reject the principle of conditionality of EU funds to the rule of law and the intake of refugees, especially from the Arab world, as proposed by some countries. Such an approach would undermine national sovereignty and take no account of historical differences in EU Member States. In this context, reference should be made to the official motto of the European Union: "Unity in diversity".

Instead, the Hungarian and Polish governments are proposing common prioritisation of a common security and defence policy. In addition, in order to protect European values and cohesion, a migration policy must be created and pursued that effectively deals with migration, in particular tackling illegal migration.

We look forward to a constructive debate on the future Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027 and hope that the European member states can agree on one with respect to the characteristics and priorities of every member state.

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