

Chapter IV

The political attitude of Great Britain towards Polish accession to NATO and the EU.

1. British political arena towards Poland's membership.

Great Britain's activity on the field of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the European Union has not restricted to the very process of enlargement. On the one hand, its involvement and acceptance of the expansions proved to result from British interests for widening rather than deepening the structures, especially as far as the EU was concerned, but on the other hand, the UK tended to enhance bilateral relations with the aspiring countries, one of which was undoubtedly Poland. However, the development of the British-Polish relations seemed to emerge more from the principles of Britain's foreign policy, as Poland was never a crucial political, economic or military partner in its European policy in the past. It did not mean, though, that Poland was not of any diplomatic interest for Great Britain, as it was, which was mostly determined by its location in a geopolitical arrangement in this part of Europe.

Nevertheless, it is important to emphasize that Great Britain's attitude to Poland's presence in the European as well as Atlantic structures after 1989 became favourable, with the approval of Polish aspirations. Such a political change, with reference to its approach after both World Wars, showed how much the state transformed its policy towards Central Europe, and discerned that leaving this part of the continent without any assistance might result in a European instability⁴⁵¹. Thus, both Britain and Poland could achieve their goals: Warsaw intentionally aspired for the guarantee of the future economic and military security and London could make attempts to retrieve the position of a superstate after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Moreover, the British also pressed for the membership of Poland in especially military structures for fear that either Germany or Russia could fill the role of a hegemonic protector in this part of the world.

⁴⁵¹ Gołembski Fr, *Polityka zagraniczna...*, op. cit., p. 138.

1.1. The Tories about Poland's accession.

Along with the system transformation in Poland, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, Great Britain's stance on the Polish membership in NATO began to be more crystallized. In November 1992 Polish Minister of Defence, Janusz Onyszkiewicz, visited the British Minister Malcolm Rifkind, with the purpose of reviewing the range of the development of the military cooperation⁴⁵². The Polish side explicitly expressed its strategic objective of entering the Atlantic Alliance, which met a positive reception of the British diplomats, leading to the increase of contacts at different military levels of the countries as well as the cooperation of army education and training programmes.

Moreover, the beginning of the 1990s abounded with the British-Polish encounters. On 25-26 May 1992 the then Prime Minister John Major paid an official visit to Poland, preparing for the British presidency of the EC in the second half of the year⁴⁵³. The head of the British Government put forward a proposal of the summit meeting between the Community and the Central European aspiring countries, which met for the first time after signing the European Pact in 1991. The meeting became an opportunity for the Polish Prime Minister, Hanna Suchocka, to discuss on 28 October 1992 the issues of Poland's membership in the Community with the assistance of the UK⁴⁵⁴. The process of enlarging the EC with, first of all, three EFTA states – Austria, Finland and Sweden, and accelerating the dialogue with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe in preparation for their admission, became one of the main objectives for the period of British presidency, therefore the UK's attitude to Polish presence in the European organization relied on perceiving interdependence between the state's reforms and the policy of the EC⁴⁵⁵. The United Kingdom was of the opinion that the Community should ensure the leaders in the transformation period a clear perspective for the EC membership, open its markets for Eastern European goods, especially those of high level of competitiveness with Western Europeans products, get involved in creating modern, socio-economic institutions as well as market economy infrastructure, engage capital and technology in the economic development of the post-communistic countries⁴⁵⁶.

⁴⁵² Ibidem, p. 139.

⁴⁵³ Janiec Z., *Stosunki polsko-brytyjskie*, Internet:

http://www.sprawymiedzynarodowe.pl/rocznik/1992/zygmunt_janiec_stosunki_polsko_brytyjskie.html.

⁴⁵⁴ Ibidem.

⁴⁵⁵ *The Prime Minister's speech to the British Parliament*, Internet: <http://www.parliament.the-stationery-office.co.uk/pa/cm199293/cmhansrd/1992-06-29/Debate-1.html>.

⁴⁵⁶ Janiec Z., *Stosunki...*, op. cit.

The British approval for Poland's efforts of NATO admission, however, was expressed by Mr. Rifkind, who on 12-14 February 1994 visited Warsaw bringing the assurance of supporting Polish aspirations in the Alliance⁴⁵⁷. Furthermore, he gave Poland a promise that only NATO and the aspiring states could decide about the entry, which was crucial for regard of a possible Russia's involvement. The speech of British Foreign Minister dispelled the Polish fears in this aspect and helped focus on the military preparations for the admission. One of the essential moves which was suggested by the British was a necessity of changing Polish system of the armed forces in the political dimension. The shift meant implementing a civil control over the army, the mechanism which Poland had not been familiar with under the Soviet Union's guidance.

However, all transformations, concerning a new democratic supervision over the army, or a new system of managing the forces in the face of democracy, were accepted by the Poles, as each time both partners met, the British reminded of the changes being made in order to adjust to the Alliance, and offered substantial help. Not only was the assistance proposed by the military experts, but also the political side got engaged, with a special concern of the former Conservative Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher⁴⁵⁸. The Iron Lady expressed publicly her favour for Polish membership in NATO, and when on 10 March 1996 she made a speech in Westminster College in Fulton, the USA, confirming the necessity of the enlargement of the Alliance, her statement was regarded as a symbolic moment, being made after 50 years of Winston Churchill's abolishing of the "iron curtain" in Europe.

The address of Mrs. Thatcher in the USA did not seem to be accidental, as the British governments in the 1990s pursued the policy correlated to much extent with the US European policy and both American presidents, Bush and Clinton, were eager to see the doors open for the Eastern and Central European countries⁴⁵⁹. The keenness to follow the American strategy towards the European continent in terms of enlarging the community suited Britain's European interests, keeping it in a distance from two significant problems concerning the process, i.e. the issues of Common Agricultural Policy and the Structural Funds. As the reform of CAP was considered by the UK to be inevitable, and as long as the state benefited from the Funds, they did not object to the shifts in these matters being carried out for the sake of the enlargement. Just the opposite, London wished that the entry of poorer states would force the reform of CAP for the simple reason of going bankrupt⁴⁶⁰.

⁴⁵⁷ Gołembski Fr, *Polityka zagraniczna...*, op. cit., p. 139.

⁴⁵⁸ Ibidem, p. 142.

⁴⁵⁹ Gowan P., *The UK in search...*, op. cit., p. 215.

⁴⁶⁰ Walker M., *EU counts cost of eastern promise*, The Guardian Weekly, December 7 1997, p. 6.

However, the matter of the farm policy occurred as an anti-enlargement problem during the Berlin Summit at the end of March 1999⁴⁶¹. The Tory MEPs were furious with handling the case of farm reforms by the EU partners, with the little concern being attached to the situations of newcomers, namely Poland. The Conservative MEPs' spokesman, Robert Sturdy, complained about the way the EU intended to solve the problems of the CAP reform, which could result in delaying the enlargement. In the face of Poland's problems with farm products, Tory MEPs tried to fight for the fair conditions for current as well as new members as far as CAP reforms were concerned.

Although the row over the agricultural issues presented the Tories involvement in the shape of the EU the newcomers should face, the British seemed not to be worried as much about migration issues or exports from the Visegrad countries as other EU states, mostly due to the fact of a great distance to Poland. Furthermore, the Conservative government perceived the EC expansion, with the countries economically favourable from the industrial point of view, to be a perfect point for questioning the European Social Model⁴⁶². These quite mechanical moves, however, turned out to have their consequences in a further development of the expansion process, when the debates focused on the very functioning of the European Union of 25 or even 27 members, which will be analyzed in the following subchapters.

Nevertheless, Great Britain's efforts for widening the EU should not be assessed as only its policy of profits. Since its early presence in the Community, Britain was a member with its own aspirations, objectives and policies fairly different from those of the organization. Although the British approved of the membership, they tended to loosen the bonds with the integrative structure as much as possible in order to save its sovereignty, which not necessarily collided with Poland's goals. The history of Poland proved how the Poles were attached to their nationality and any sign of losing independence might result in their objection. Thus, Warsaw appreciated the possibility of entering a stable and economically secure organization on the one hand, but it was also concerned about the necessity of a kind of subordination to the principles of the Union, on the other. Therefore, both sides made efforts to avoid incurring either financial or social costs: London persuaded the Poles to conduct necessary political and social reforms to reduce the costs of admitting new members and restrict the internal EU transformations.

⁴⁶¹ *EU Enlargement: Poland to restrict imports after Berlin Summit fails to agree farm reforms*, Agri-Industry Europe, Brussels, April 1, 1999.

⁴⁶² *Ibidem*.

However, with the signing the Association Treaty, Poland entered the road of a feasible beginning of negotiation procedures, the period which abounded with numerous difficulties. First of all, Poland was not aware how much institutional changes the EU needed to be capable of including ten more partners, the fact which was presented by Christopher Hum, British Ambassador in Warsaw, during his speech at Warsaw University⁴⁶³. Yet, as much as Poland relied on the British involvement in its assistance to be admitted to the integrative structures, the time showed that the actions did not support the words, which was proven in the speech made by the British Prime Minister John Major to commemorate 50th anniversary of the Warsaw Uprising on 6 July 1994: “...*democratic and sovereign Poland made a decision to aspire for the EU membership. I greet this with satisfaction. Europe will not be a unity without Poland as a full member of the EU. The values represented by the EU are the values your and our citizens fought and died for 50 years ago.*”⁴⁶⁴. His address, restricted to the statement that Europe could not be complete without Poland, convinced Warsaw that the enormous work to be done as a future EU member belonged only to Poland, with only an encouraging pat being made by the allies. The Polish could also feel “Britain’s whole-heart support” while the UK Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, was visiting Eastern Europe on the eve of British presidency in the European Council⁴⁶⁵.

Nonetheless, the very idea of enlarging the European Community had already appeared in the Tories under the leadership of Margaret Thatcher, and since then the party continued the strategy of avoiding the development of the EU institutions into a federal Europe in favour of widening its members, thus moving away the vision of federalism. The successor of the Iron Lady, John Major, appeared in the political arena as an enigmatic leader, whose intentions were not easily revealed, but with the tendency to have much of a chameleon⁴⁶⁶. Though, the Prime Minister did follow the plan of his party colleagues, insisting on the expansion of the EC with the former communist countries leading to a free market difficult for Brussels’ bureaucracy to be managed. However uncertain the Prime Minister’s vision for Europe for some EU partners might seem, his party policy on enlargement and encouraging Eastern Europeans was clear: the majority were in favour of the process and eager to help and welcome the newcomers for at least three reasons,

⁴⁶³ Gołębowski Fr, *Polityka zagraniczna...*, op. cit., p. 145.

⁴⁶⁴ *Zbiór dokumentów (The Collection of Documents)*, PISM (Polish Institute of International Affairs), Warsaw, no. 3 (1994), p. 258.

⁴⁶⁵ Walker M., *EU counts...*, op. cit.

⁴⁶⁶ *An Uncertain Idea of Europe*, The Economist, London, December 19, 1992, p. 59.

according to Roger Helmer, Tory Member of the European Parliament⁴⁶⁷. The first one resulted from a moral debt of Britain to the countries taken under control of the Soviet Union after the World War II. The second reason was connected with Great Britain's care for democracy and the rule of law in order to ensure security and stability, whereas the third one was the result of the UK's attitude to the European Single Market, which would be provided with development and prosperity owing to an extra hundred million people.

Although the intensions of the Conservatives in terms of the eastern enlargement were obvious, they still opposed the bureaucratic mechanism with the tendency to centralize its power, which was criticized by the Tory leader in 2000, William Hague, during his visit to Poland⁴⁶⁸. Mr. Hague called for a more flexible Europe, with looser EU rules, especially in the face of new partners. His speech also referred to the state independence, and the words of "*It [the EU] must allow Britain to be Britain. It must allow Poland to be Poland*" touched the issues of sovereignty, the issues both nations were sensitive to. Although the Tory leader arrived in the country desperately waiting for the accession and expected at least encouragement, the conference focused on the criticism of the EU organization and future vision as a structure of 25 or 27, thus, to some extent, discouraging the Poles to enter the EU of that shape: "*great majority of the people of Europe and the mainstream majority of the British people do not want to be a part of a European state*", the statement whose overtone seemed to be extremely anti-European⁴⁶⁹.

The address of the Conservative leader proved the Tories to be divided over Europe and, surprisingly, the changes of the leadership were not a remedy for the internal disagreements. The European policy of John Major was in general regarded as a policy of compromise, especially as far as the integration was concerned. There were two periods of his attempts to unite the party: between November 1990 and April 1992, and from September 1993 up to 1997⁴⁷⁰. For this reason, the Prime Minister did his best to be perceived as a Euro-enthusiast, in terms of his support for the European Monetary Union, the passage through the House of Commons of the Maastricht Treaty during the early 1990s, and his emphasis on Europe as a main function of a party management during late 1990s. However, as much as the issues of European integration played havoc among the Tories, the

⁴⁶⁷ Helmer R., *EU Enlargement? Yes but...*, Bruges Group, Internet: <http://www.brugesgroup.com/news.live?article=83&keyword=2>.

⁴⁶⁸ *Hague warns of EU superstate*, BBC News, 29 January 2000, Internet: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/low/uk_news/politics/621873.stm.

⁴⁶⁹ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁷⁰ Holmes M., *John Major and Europe: The Failure of a Policy 1990-7*, Bruges Group, Paper No. 28, Internet: <http://www.brugesgroup.com/mediacentre/index.live?article=75>.

process of enlarging the organization with the Eastern neighbours did not meet the opposition.

The Europe-favourable attitude of John Major was replaced in 1997 with quite a sceptical policy in this aspect of William Hague, who propagated the idea of limitation of European political integration⁴⁷¹. In May 1998 in the Insead Business School at Fontainebleau, he called for the necessity of creating a free and flexible Europe, instead of interventionism and regulation. Moreover, he maintained a positive approach towards opening the EU to post-communist countries, claiming that: *“The fall of the Berlin Wall has completely changed the challenge facing European states. Bringing prosperity and stability to newly freed states is now the most urgent of Europe’s tasks. (...) Push political integration too far and accountability and democracy become impossible to sustain.”*⁴⁷². Yet, the pronouncement included much of the everlasting, in the British European policy, aspiration for replacing the idea of a deeper integration with the thought of enlarging the club.

Mr. Hague’s opposition to Europe, however, met the majority of his party’s colleagues, including Chris Patten, the former Tory chairman, and appointed EU commissioner in Brussels in 1999⁴⁷³. He was against Hague’s European policy of the Tories, being aware that such a critical attitude would result in the party being unelectable in the next elections. Moreover, Patten could not comprehend how the Conservative leader was heading for blocking the treaty necessary for the enlargement, insisting on the veto. The EU commissioner realized that the British politicians accepted the eastern enlargement to be their “strategic and moral duty to bring in Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and others”, therefore questioning Hague’s resistance.

Nonetheless, the majority of the Conservative politicians expressed their support for the enlargement of the EU with the eastern countries, even with reference to the fact that the process should have taken place a long time ago when Margaret Thatcher called for it in 1988⁴⁷⁴. John Redwood, the Conservative politician, could notice the need for the emerging democracies of Eastern Europe as soon as the Berlin Wall came down, which would have helped them to adjust to the requirements of market economy and rules of law earlier. However, speaking as a voice of the Tories in 2001, he was able to offer the entrants some

⁴⁷¹ Holmes M., *William Hague’s European Policy*, Bruges Group, Paper No. 40, Internet: <http://www.brugesgroup.com/mediacentre/index.live?article=107>.

⁴⁷² Ibidem.

⁴⁷³ White M., *Patten joins attacks on Hague’s anti-Europeanism*, The Guardian, October 13, 1999, Internet: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/print/0,,3911889-103685,00.html>.

⁴⁷⁴ Oulds R., *The Rt Hon. John Redwood, MP speaks to www.brugesgroup.com*, Bruges Group exclusive, Internet: <http://www.brugesgroup.com/mediacentre/index.live?article=136#enlargement>.

tips about what to avoid as a future EU member⁴⁷⁵. Mr. Redwood was of the opinion that the states should definitely keep away from the euro zone, as their fragile economies would not bear the costs of the financial transformation, the issue which was always a tinderbox for the British. Furthermore, the Tory MP underlined the proper direction of the party policy, i.e. towards the enlargement, hoping that the membership would ensure the eastern states with better trade in particular, thus contributing to their prosperity. On the other hand, though, he could not resist mentioning the wrong way the EU was heading for in the face of 10 or 12 new members: too much centralization to cope with the new vision.

Nevertheless, the Conservative camp did not prevent themselves from the differences of opinions on the European issue. Lord Tebbit, a Conservative minister in Margaret Thatcher's Cabinet, was a leading Euro-sceptic in 1999, acting against the loss of national powers and supporting his views with the case of Poland and rest of the eastern countries which were beyond the EU at that time⁴⁷⁶. He multiplied the examples of the EU leading to the "Euro republic", with its own central institutions, symbols and policies, which forced the limits and compelled the nations, the British, to import the products. Mr. Tebbit gave the instance of the former Warsaw Pact countries, e.g. Poland, which were not the part of the EU, and still managed to survive. However, the statement only proved that some of the Conservative politicians were not completely aware how hard the aspiring states fought in order to become associated, then admitted to the integrative structures, and what were the reasons for their decisions. It was not, though, the case of a fancy, but the decision which was supposed to change the quality of living, the condition of the country, its economy and political system. Obviously, there were some people in the ranks of the Tories, as in each party, who did not realize the benefits that the membership in the Union could bring.

Except for the extreme anti-European slogans among the Tories, some party colleagues could also dispute each other's attitudes towards the European policy. Jonathan Collett questioned his party partner, Douglas Hurd, on his support of the enlargement in 2001⁴⁷⁷. He doubted whether Mr. Hurd's favour for the process resulted from the conviction of real benefits for the applicant countries once they were the EU members or the care seemed to be a cover for pushing away the deepening of the Union. Nevertheless, Mr. Collett concerned about true profits for the Eastern Europeans from their membership, being able to notice only the advantage of the access to West European markets, but with the

⁴⁷⁵ Ibidem.

⁴⁷⁶ Tebbit Rt Hon. L., *Against the „European Republic”*, June 1, 1999, BBC News, Internet: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/events/euros_99/news/355490.stm.

⁴⁷⁷ Collett J., *Response to Douglas Hurd's „Road to Nice”*, Bruges Group, Internet: <http://www.brugesgroup.com/mediacentre/comment.live?article=30>.

disadvantage of being engaged in high labour costs or bureaucratic regulation, on the other hand.

No matter what made the Conservatives look for the origin of their views and beliefs on the EU, though, the polemics proved their interests in the membership of Eastern European countries, including Poland, to concern mostly their vision of Europe and the place Britain could take as an EU power. The visits paid by the UK's Conservative officials to Poland were intended to enhance British image in Europe than express a real care for the applicant country. Moreover, the statements and speeches made by the Tories showed the genuine aspiration for enlarging the organization with the post-communist states, and even if the concern referred to the states themselves, their development, prosperity and security, the real reason which predominated still was to block a deeper integration within the European Union.

1.2. The Labour Party's attitude to Polish membership.

The attitude of the Labour Party towards Poland's admission to the Atlantic Alliance and the European Union was also favourable and even more open to the Polish side, especially during the rule of the Labourers. Since the beginning of Tony Blair in power, his politicians made attempts to sustain the status quo in British European policy, although a new Prime Minister strove for rebuilding Britain's foreign affairs, which were neglected by his predecessor, John Major⁴⁷⁸. The European issues, however, were not pushed into the background, as the government did its best to reposition the UK in Europe, with the completion of the single market and the enlargement of the EU to the east as the priorities⁴⁷⁹. Moreover, the Labour also intended to accelerate some processes, i.e. the expansion of the EU, during the British presidency in the first half of 1998.

No wonder, though, that soon after the Labour Party took over, the new foreign secretary, Robin Cook, paid a one-day visit to Warsaw in October 1997 with a speech at the conference titled "Great Britain and Poland in the European Union"⁴⁸⁰. The British statesman confirmed the UK's eagerness to support Polish aspirations for the EU membership, expressing his state's belief in the admission as soon as possible to make Europe complete, although without stating the exact date, the Polish officials were waiting for. However, Mr. Cook clearly admitted that Great Britain was ready to begin the accession

⁴⁷⁸ *Europe is Britain's world*, New Statesman, London, April 4, 1997, p. 20.

⁴⁷⁹ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁸⁰ Gołembski Fr, *Polityka zagraniczna...*, op. cit., p. 146.

negotiations with the aspiring countries, including Poland, on 31 March 1998, during its presidency, with the hope to welcome the Poles at the very beginning of the new century. Furthermore, the new secretary was also the advocate of the expansion of NATO on democratic grounds, giving Poland encouragement on their plans to be the part of the Alliance.

In his address in the House of Commons in July 1998, Robin Cook appealed to the artificial division of Europe made among the people who shared the same culture and heritage⁴⁸¹. Moreover, the statesman supported the NATO extension with the right of the post-communist countries to be in the community of democracy and freedom of speech, as well as be able to share the EU prosperity. He could convince the politicians of the rightness of his statement proving the move of the enlargement to be beneficial for the Alliance's current members as well. Once Poland and other former Soviet countries entered NATO, according to Mr. Cook, all military partners could gain from increased security and mutual defence. Besides, the foreign minister did not hesitate to remind his colleagues of a new role of the Alliance, since the end of the Cold War, to bring peace and stability, therefore to admit the Eastern European countries, which deserved the sense of safety.

The British foreign secretary's pronouncement on the expansion of NATO in the House of Commons turned out not to be groundless; it was a response to the letter sent to the Prime Minister by British military and defence experts in May 1998 with the opposition to the process⁴⁸². The opponents perceived the expansion to have "disturbing implications" on the Alliance, especially being concerned about Russia's reaction to the move. Nevertheless, the British politicians could accept the sensible arguments of Robin Cook in favour of the accession, rejecting the doubts of the experts and eventually signing the treaty.

The action for the membership on the Polish-British axis did not slow down; on the contrary, as both countries wished to take advantage of the period of the British presidency in the EU, although for different reasons. The clear objectives of the UK's European policy for the period of January-June 1998 were presented during the Warsaw speech of Christopher Hum, British Ambassador in Poland, at the Warsaw University in May 1998⁴⁸³. The ambassador clarified the government's vision of Europe, with the commitment of enlarging the community and accelerating the process of obtaining the membership for Poland. He could express his satisfaction for the possibility of introducing the Poles, and the

⁴⁸¹ *Cook supports NATO expansion*, BBC News, July 17, 1998, Internet: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/low/uk_news/politics/134393.stm.

⁴⁸² *Ibidem*.

⁴⁸³ Hum Ch., *Brytyjskie przewodnictwo w Unii Europejskiej* [in:] *Wielka Brytania-Unia Europejska, Materiały i Dokumenty*, Centrum Europejskie Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 1998, p. 7-8.

rest of eastern partners, to the European family, thus completing the challenge which appeared after the fall of the Iron Curtain. Mr. Hum did not hesitate to admit that the expansion could not only result from the British moral obligation, but it would also contribute to its own interest, i.e. a bigger and more prosperous single market, the respect for human rights and ethnic minorities, and the openness of Europe to the world.

In his address, the ambassador referred to the accession negotiations, which were supposed to officially start on 30 March 1998 in Brussels, and the day after Poland would begin its individual discussions⁴⁸⁴. Presenting the details of the negotiations, Christopher Hum indicated the areas Poland should particularly pay attention to, such as the restructuring of industry, Polish agriculture sector, the development of administrative structures or informing the society. However, the speaker also mentioned the EU assistance being given to Poland through PHARE programme, as a means of obtaining financial resources altogether with the access to professional knowledge and consultancy.

Nonetheless, the issues which appeared during Hum's speech concerned the necessary shifts in the EU structures in the face of the enlargement as well. The transformations in the functioning of the community became the core of the Amsterdam summit held in June 1997, the encounter which was supposed to bring the union closer to expanding to Eastern Europe⁴⁸⁵. Tony Blair, a brand-new Prime Minister, came out as a confident statesman, capable of fulfilling his national interests and obtaining a positive reception from his new approach to Europe. In the aspect of the eastern enlargement, however, all the crucial changes in the EU institutions brought more confusion than real solutions, leaving the summiteers with the idea of attempting to implement shifts as soon as the aspiring countries approached the entry⁴⁸⁶.

At the end of 1998, the EU leaders met the ten applicant countries, including Poland, in Vienna, and although the negotiations had already begun, the future members could not hear a firm date for the enlargement⁴⁸⁷. However, the aspiring states expressed their concern about the finances of the EU being reformed, but the UK Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, dispelled the misgivings with the reassurance of the resources being allocated to the entrants, no matter what budget limits could affect the EU. Mr. Cook's mission as the enlargement's advocate continued through the following years, declaring Britain to be the

⁴⁸⁴ Ibidem.

⁴⁸⁵ Palmer J., *No agreement on voting despite push from Blair*, June 19, 1997, the Guardian Limited, Internet: <http://politics.guardian.co.uk/britainabroad/story/0,,451346,00.html>.

⁴⁸⁶ *Cheer up, Europe*, The Economist, London, June 21, 1997, p. 17.

⁴⁸⁷ Heckenast L., *World: Europe Waiting at the EU's door*, BBC News, December 12, 1998, Internet: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/233839.stm>.

“champion” of the expansion to the ex-communist countries in July 2000⁴⁸⁸. Visiting Hungary, the aspiring country, the British minister convinced its citizens that Britain urged the final date of the Eastern Europeans joining the club.

Despite the assurances of helping the post-communist nations to enter the EU, though, the Labour politicians preferred the assistance of warm support than incurring any financial charges as a result of extending the organization. A good example of such an attitude towards the process was Tony Blair’s address on 6 October 2000 in Warsaw, which was heralded as a speech criticising the vision of Europe as a union of 27 members⁴⁸⁹. In his address, the Labour leader appealed to Poland’s substantial role in breaking the domination of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War⁴⁹⁰. He underlined the relationship between both nations in critical moments in Europe’s history. With reference to the enlargement, however, the Prime Minister multiplied the benefits for the eastern states, for instance open markets bringing prosperity, yet he did not hesitate to mention the concerns of the EU as well as the future members, namely the Common Agricultural Policy. Nevertheless, the Premier focused on the advantages resulting from the membership, indicating that it would not be possible for Poland and other eastern states to achieve prosperity, security and strength in another way. Therefore, as an exponent of Great Britain’s beliefs, Mr. Blair promised to push his European partners to end the negotiation road as soon as possible.

The rest of his speech turned to the place and role of Britain in Europe and the prospects of building a stronger and democratic Europe through the necessary changes being made to the functioning of the EU. The comments to the Warsaw address, though, could not resist mentioning his aspiration for creating the “collective power” of the EU members, economically and politically strong, but not a superstate – as the “hard core” states were heading for – but a superpower with free, independent nations whose own interests could only contribute to the common good⁴⁹¹. Moreover, Francis Maude, Tory politician, questioned whether Blair really believed the Union could be a superpower without being a superstate, and his tendency to rival America’s economic and political power would, according to Maude, damage good relations with NATO and the US⁴⁹².

⁴⁸⁸ Black I., *Cook champions bigger EU and urges deadline*, Special report: the European Commission, the Guardian, July 26, 2000, Internet: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/print/0,,4044239-106710,00.html>.

⁴⁸⁹ Brogan B., Evans-Pritchard A., *EU being pulled in wrong direction, Blair will tell leaders*, The Daily Telegraph, from October 6, 2000, Internet: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2000/10/06/weu06.xml>.

⁴⁹⁰ *Prime Minister’s speech to the Polish Stock Exchange*, Prime Ministers Speeches-2000, Internet: <http://www.number-10.gov.uk/output/Page3384.asp>.

⁴⁹¹ Brogan B., *Blair wants EU to become superpower*, The Daily Telegraph from October 7, 2000, Internet: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2000/10/07/weu07.xml>.

⁴⁹² *Ibidem*.

The reception of other participants of British political arena was not favourable as well. Andrew Duff, Liberal Democrat MEP, criticized the Premier's idea concerning the reforms of the EU institutions, indicating a certain crisis with the French and German partners, whereas Christopher Beazley, the Conservative MEP, summarised Mr. Blair's address as "another missed opportunity in Britain's relationship with the EU"⁴⁹³. *The European Report*, however, claimed that Blair's reference to the vision of a superpower was the response to Mr. Fischer's debate over a fully federal Europe and Mr. Chirac's desire to shape a two-speed Europe, both images the Prime Minister was not in favour of⁴⁹⁴. Nonetheless, whatever motives of the declarations and visions presented in his address, Tony Blair expressed his concern for the eastern enlargement, demanding for the process to be completed before 2004.

The following years, leading to the admission of Poland to the integrative structures, abounded with the meetings and discussions between British and Polish officials, with the involvement of the UK's Prime Minister Tony Blair. One of them was the interview of the British Premier and the Polish Prime Minister, Leszek Miller, soon after the suicide attacks by al-Qaeda on the United States, on September 11, 2001. Both leaders encountered on November 2 to commemorate the tragic events and took steps to give assistance, but the meeting of the heads of governments could not take place without reference to the approaching Polish accession in the EU⁴⁹⁵. Mr. Blair underlined the strong relationship between two nations, whose great contributor was common history of the countries. However the origin of the bond was, though, the Prime Minister referred to the position of Poland in Europe and the future of Europe as well.

Mr. Miller was reassured of Britain's strong support of Poland's membership in the EU, the event being part of the first wave of the admission, with a special appreciation of the progress Warsaw had made⁴⁹⁶. The UK's leader enumerated once again the profits Poland as a member state could gain, i.e. economic growth of the state, prosperity and increased living standards for people, which would definitely overshadow the difficulties related to the process. Moreover, Mr. Blair appreciated a common attitude to the future of Europe, both of the leaders shared. Receiving Mr. Miller's approval, the British statesman called for more functionality of an enlarged Europe, with gaining public acceptance of European

⁴⁹³ *Blair's Warsaw speech and the EU „superpower”*, The Times, October 10, 2000, , Internet: <http://timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/debate/letters/article987521.ece>.

⁴⁹⁴ *Blair calls for enlargement by 2004*, European Report, Brussels, October 9, 2000.

⁴⁹⁵ *Door step interview: Prime Minister Tony Blair and Prime Minister Leszek Miller of Poland*, Prime Minister's speeches-2001, 2 November 2001, Internet: <http://www.number-10.gov.uk/output/Page1641.asp>.

⁴⁹⁶ *Ibidem*.

institutions⁴⁹⁷. Furthermore, the politicians opted for the engagement of the citizens of Europe, the current and future members, in the discussions on institutional changes, with the law, the EU was based on, to be more comprehensible and accessible for people. The speech was the exclamation of a vision the United Kingdom had already forced among the EU partners, and having gained the advocate of its images in the form of Poland, it could become more confident and powerful in attempting to build a modern XXI century model of the EU.

The efforts of both Prime Ministers to aspire to, in the case of Poland, and to build, in the case of the UK, a new shape of Europe contributed to a common article titled “Poland and Great Britain together towards a future Europe”⁴⁹⁸. The article became a Polish-British contribution to the debate on the future of the EU, with a special reference to the actions for economic transformations agreed on in Lisbon in March 2000. However, not only the leaders focused on the necessary shifts to be implemented in the functioning of the EU to create a superpower, but also underlined the necessity of enlarging the structure with the eastern countries to be a great challenge⁴⁹⁹. The authors referred to the summit of the European Council in Laeken in December 2001, which confirmed the irreversibility of the expansion, considering the year 2002 to bring the end of the negotiations, and allowing the states, including Poland, to become the EU members in 2004. Therefore, Great Britain and Poland decided to join forces in order to achieve the target, according to the British Prime Minister.

A full commitment to Poland’s membership in the EU was given again by Mr. Blair in the press conference on 18 November 2002, during Mr. Miller’s visit to the UK⁵⁰⁰. With the appreciation of Polish partnership within NATO, Mr. Miller was one more time encouraged to cooperate with Great Britain on the plan of changing Europe and creating a new European Union. With the time leading to the crucial moment for Poland, however, the frequency of encounters between the politicians as the greatest allies increased.

At the end of May 2003 Poland was visited by the British head of the government and the American president, George Bush⁵⁰¹. The visits would not have surprised anyone,

⁴⁹⁷ *The Future of Europe. Bringing Europe Closer to Its Citizens: Polish and UK Contribution*, a Joint Statement by British Prime Minister Tony Blair and Polish Prime Minister Leszek Miller, London, November 2, 2001, Zbiór Dokumentów, no. 3-4/2001, p. 258-260.

⁴⁹⁸ *Wspólny artykuł premierów Polski Leszka Millera i Wielkiej Brytanii Tony’ego Blaira „Polska i Wielka Brytania razem ku przyszłej Europie” ukazał się w „Rzeczpospolitej”, Centrum Informacji Europejskiej, 14.03.2003, Internet: <http://www.cie.gov.pl/futurum.nsf/0/089A961127F12110C1256CAB002B7F3E>.*

⁴⁹⁹ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁰⁰ *Press conference: PM Tony Blair and Polish PM Leszek Miller*, Prime Minister’s Speeches-2002, 18 November 2002, Internet: <http://www.number-10.gov.uk/output/Page1733.asp>.

⁵⁰¹ Boyes, R., *Poles wax as Germans wane in New Europe*, The Times, May 19, 2003, , Internet: <http://timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/article1133710.ece>.

though, if it had not been for a kind of business, too. The United Kingdom had realized for some time the power Poland as the biggest new country would have in the EU, and moreover, with blessing of the USA, its position for the new members could become even more attractive and help the UK gain more allies to force its stance in the Union. Furthermore, the two states did not need to make efforts to gain Poland's favour, as the enthusiasm for the American leaders was obvious for, among the others, the sake of NATO admission, whereas recent endeavours of the British also brought them remarkable popularity among the Poles. On the other hand, though, such a distinction, Poland as the Eastern European country could be given, flattered the ex-communist country's clout and confirmed it in the conviction of the ability to introduce the balance on the European continent. All in all, the interests were supposed to be satisfied on both sides.

Nonetheless, the visit the British Prime Minister paid in May 2003 to Poland was not groundless, as apart from well-known reasons, he could also make sure the Poles would approve of the membership in the looming referendum⁵⁰². In his speech on Europe he could not resist mentioning the similarities both nations shared when facing the entry to the European community⁵⁰³. Mr. Blair propagated his vision of Europe referring to the goal of the Lisbon strategy: building a powerful Europe, capable of competing with other powers in the world for the sake of an economic balance and prosperity. What is more, he engaged Poland in his image of Europe and NATO, invoking to the Poles' partnership in the Atlantic Alliance, thus supporting the plans of reforming the organization, and convincing of the necessity of participating in the debate over Europe already in order to gain the most of it once they were a legitimate member. In the press conference part during the visit, however, the British leader met the Polish PM's support on the vision of his nation state, except for creating a federal Europe⁵⁰⁴.

For the period of six months the bilateral meetings between the UK and Poland increased to three, with the participation of the Prime Ministers. However, on the eve of the accession, on 28 April 2004, it was also Tony Blair who appeared as the host of an exquisite party at the Foreign Office to celebrate the historical and memorable event and to welcome ten new partners⁵⁰⁵. With the company of the celebrities, the entrants began the series of events around the official ceremony of inviting the new countries in Dublin on May 1, 2004.

⁵⁰² Boyes R., *Blair mission to woo wary Poles over EU*, The Times, May 30, 2003, , Internet: <http://timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/article1137369.ece>.

⁵⁰³ *Prime Minister speech on Europe in Warsaw*, Prime Minister's speeches-2003, 30 May 2003, Internet: <http://www.number-10.gov.uk/output/Page3787.asp>.

⁵⁰⁴ *Prime Minister: No doubt that Iraqi weapons exist*, Prime Minister's speeches-2003, 30 May 2003, Internet: <http://www.number-10.gov.uk/output/Page3788.asp>.

⁵⁰⁵ Booth J., *Blair starts enlargement party with Whitehall bash*, The Times, April 28, 2004, , Internet: http://timesonline.co.uk/tol/sport/football/european_football/article845674.ece.

After the glamorous party with sports, arts, media and business figures was held at the Prime Minister's office, though, Mr. Blair could receive the official visit paid by the Polish President, Aleksander Kwaśniewski, on 6 May, 2004. The significance of Great Britain for Poland was highlighted by the fact of the first visit after the admission to the EU to that country⁵⁰⁶. The President expressed his gratitude for Britain's support on the Polish road to the EU, looking forward to a close and effective cooperation as partners in the EU for challenging goals of a new enlarged Europe. Acting as the EU equal members, however, was to prove the partnership, struggling for the most convenient position, protecting the interest of the Union as a community of nations, but gaining the individual benefits as well.

2. British press towards Polish membership in NATO and the EU.

The processes of Polish admission to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the European Union did not take an extensive interest of British journalists, politicians and experts to debate over and discuss the intricacies of the events in the newspapers, magazines or periodicals, yet the articles which appeared in them tended to present Poland more in the context of the European or international political arena, with the events significant for Great Britain, its government and the citizens for some reasons.

The British press market consists of serious broadsheets, with well-edited articles, in conformity with a code of journalistic ethics, and tabloids, engaged in scandals and affairs, the former ones being the basis of research analysis in the thesis. The research focused on the articles printed in such newspapers as *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Times*, *The Guardian*, as well as such magazines as *The Observer* and *The Economist*. *The Guardian* and *The Observer* belong to the press of liberal and socio-democratic nature, with a pro-European, independent and objective attitude, whereas *The Daily Telegraph* is a very conservative paper, with some tendencies against a closer integration with the EU. *The Times*, on the other hand, is one of the oldest newspapers on the press market, which used to influence the policy of the government and public opinion in terms of international issues, with a slight change into a conservative way⁵⁰⁷. Finally, *The Economist* is known as a politically independent, economic-financial magazine, one of the most influential weeklies in the world, with responsible and sensible views of all world politics and global economy issues. Nevertheless, the British most popular press was enhanced by the articles published in less

⁵⁰⁶ *Prime Minister's press conference with the Polish President*, 6 May 2004, Internet: <http://www.number-10.gov.uk/output/Page5761.asp>.

⁵⁰⁷ Fałkowski M., *Pierwsze kroki w Unii. Polityka polska w prasie europejskiej*, Instytut Spraw Publicznych, Warszawa 2004, p. 79.

widely-read newspapers, such as *New Statesman*, periodicals, such as *The World Today*, American magazines, such as *Foreign Policy*, and a great news source of BBC.

Although the examined issues of Great Britain's attitude to Poland's membership in NATO and the EU proved to be average-significant events for the British, the enlargement of the organizations with eastern countries in general, however, found its essential place in the newspapers, especially with reference to the disputable matters of the processes. The expansion of the Atlantic Alliance was not so debatable in terms of necessary changes, concerns or fears for the functioning of the structure, but the circumstances of enlarging the EU turned out to be more favourable to inflammable points. The adjustment of common policies, with a special regard for the Common Agricultural Policy, the labour movement within the Union, the substantial transformations in the EU institutions or the intentions to create a European constitution brought the new members, including Poland, to the front pages. The so far encouraging and friendly attitude of Britain towards Poland's partnership in the integrative structures also had the moments of rejection, as when the sheer interests of national policy matter, even the closest allies are able to make an about-turn.

2.1. Polish admission to NATO.

With the beginning of a democratic era in post-communist countries, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization started to prepare for expanding within the eastern part of Europe. In the second half of 1993, the debates over the future of NATO, with opening the door to the eastern partners, hosted in the British press. *The Economist* raised the issues of discussing the Alliance's future moves, with the focus on the former Warsaw Pact countries' position⁵⁰⁸. The new situation of the ex-Soviet states was well-known for the Alliance's members: Eastern Europeans were stuck between secure Western Europe and unpredictable Russia, therefore it was the role of the military organization to include also those less fortunate countries, yet being left alone. Moreover, the goal of embracing them within the structure was perceived to be favourable for Western Europeans as well, since the EC members would like to provide the nations with their membership, they wished to see them economically and democratically stable, which was possible in the situation of military security.

However, the problem of transforming NATO into the organization serving the needs of a new order after the Cold War was over, took the interest of other magazines as well.

⁵⁰⁸ *A NATO that can say no*, *The Economist*, London, September 18, 1993, p. 22.

Foreign Affairs, the American periodical, could suggest the changes in the organization indispensable in the face of American and European new strategies⁵⁰⁹. It was observed that NATO needed to be transformed into an alliance aiming at projecting democracy, stability, and ability to manage crises in a broader strategic sense. The authors referred to the countries aspiring to the Alliance's and EC partners, i.e. Poland and other Visegrad states, regarding them as future members, but after fulfilling the accepted criteria. Poland was friendly approached as a country with greater possibilities to become a NATO member sooner than to join the EC.

The following year, though, the journalists of *The Economist* took a closer look at Poland as a candidate for the Alliance⁵¹⁰. The country's determination to enter a secure and stable world was perceived to result from its historic experiences, the hegemony of the Soviet Union and still no guarantee for safety from either the European Community or NATO. However, Polish attitude to press for the military integration as the state of "aggrieved by history" could have been regarded as not enough to fulfil the Alliance's criteria. The magazine noticed the weaknesses Poland had, which made it not ready for the admission, i.e. falling defence spending and the struggle of the generals for taking control of the armed forces. Moreover, the stance of the then president, Lech Wałęsa, did not also convince the Alliance of accelerating the process, being of the opinion that: "*all links in the chain don't have to be of equal strength because the confrontational structure is gone*"⁵¹¹.

When in 1995 the answer to the question of NATO expansion became a closer reality for Poland and other eastern countries, *The Economist* discussed the dilemma President Clinton faced, as welcoming new partners might have resulted in a row with Russia⁵¹². However, the US president realized that postponing the decision about the process was a wrong move, delaying the ex-communist countries on their road to the economic security. The caution of Mr. Clinton was then a justified action, yet he decided to press ahead the plans for extending eastwards, leaving the details of the accession unrevealed⁵¹³. Although the document draft which was created by the Alliance included the information about the reasons for the process, the influence on decision-making and the financial obligations, according to the *European Voice*, the names of the future allies were kept secret, although Poland was regarded as the most likely member to join⁵¹⁴.

⁵⁰⁹ Asmus R.D., Kugler R.L., Larrabee F.S., *Building a new NATO*, Foreign Affairs, New York, Sep/Oct 1993, p. 28-35.

⁵¹⁰ Brooke U., *Halfway in from the cold*, The Economist, London, April 16, 1994, p. 20.

⁵¹¹ Ibidem.

⁵¹² *That NATO headache*, The Economist, London, July 1, 1995, p. 19.

⁵¹³ Wise E., *NATO caution on enlargement plans*, European Voice, 21 September 1995, Internet: <http://www.europeanvoice.com/archive/article.asp>.

⁵¹⁴ Ibidem.

From the American point of view, however, the Western partners in the structure began to see either enlarging NATO or finishing its military activity as the only solution when the issue of admitting the Eastern Europeans became a predominant one within the EU⁵¹⁵. Moreover, the US observers brought the fears of the possible entrants, including Poland, concerning a fast enlargement, which, according to critics of the process, could diverge from the objective. The invitation of the ex-communist states to the Partnership for Peace in 1994 was considered to be a step of postponing the final decision, although the intention for that was to enable the countries to prepare in terms of NATO requirements. Nonetheless, Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic did not give up pressing with their membership, the acting which was understandable for the experts, and resulting from the aspiration to complete a political independence from Russia on the one hand, and to retrieve the sense of security, as living between Germany and Russia did not allow trusting the safety, on the other.

The readiness and attitude of the Poles towards joining the Alliance was subjected to scrutiny when the date of announcing the countries approached. In June 1996, *The Economist* presented the advantages of eastern candidates as well as their disadvantages concerning the chances to become future NATO partners⁵¹⁶. Poland was given the hallmarks of a reliable state, mainly due to its assistance in Bosnia, but the country's democratic credentials, especially in a military dimension, were not highly assessed. However, the situation with bringing the army under firm civilian control and subordinating generals to the defence ministers rather than the president changed as soon as the state rule was taken over by Aleksander Kwaśniewski. Not only did the Polish army become more civilian, though, but also the EU members regained the belief in clearly constitutional and democratic actions⁵¹⁷. Furthermore, Poland's keenness to join the military organization was again regarded as the move to keep away from Russia.

However cautious about Russia the Poles were described to be in the British press, though, the approach seemed to be a bit oversensitive, which was proven by the Polish president, Aleksander Kwaśniewski, in his speech at Chatham House in October 1996⁵¹⁸. Mr. Kwaśniewski emphasized proper relations between his country and Russia, with a special regard being paid to rapidly growing economic exchange. Nevertheless, the goal the Polish state of head wished to achieve with his talk was to convince NATO partners about a lack of threat from Russia's side once the organization enlarged. Moreover, he seemed to

⁵¹⁵ Ibidem.

⁵¹⁶ *Take three*, *The Economist*, London, June 29, 1996, p. 47-48.

⁵¹⁷ Ibidem.

⁵¹⁸ *Polish president pushes partnership*, *The World Today*, December 1996, p. 319.

have solutions to possible emergencies, namely the development of the relations between the Alliance and Moscow, thus not frustrating the state with the expansion. But since NATO authorities did assume a military Russia's reaction to be feasible, so the Polish president's convincing point of view must have been a cover for his real plans: he made the greatest efforts to push the accession to the organization forward.

On the eve of the NATO summit in Madrid in July 1997, the newspapers presented the views and stances of politicians and journalists specialised in the key issue. *The Economist* invited the American secretary of state, Madeleine Albright, to debate over the expansion from the US point of view⁵¹⁹. Mrs. Albright approved of the enlargement with only three European countries: Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic, being aware of the advantages such move could bring, namely the second wave of inviting next group of partners soon. In the discussion with the NATO partners from Europe, however, Britain agreed with the final decision, although still opted for Slovenia to be among the certain candidates. Taking the circumstances of individuals into consideration, though, Poland was regarded as the country with strong military potential. Nonetheless, the press tended to discuss whether the candidates really could take advantage of the possibility NATO offered?⁵²⁰.

Despite big hopes connected with the Madrid summit during which the invitations to the Alliance were given, the results occurred to be not as satisfying as some participants predicted⁵²¹. The meeting carried out by the American President, Bill Clinton, eventually fulfilled the expectations of some EU members, Great Britain among the others, which accepted Mr. Clinton's confidence that such an enlargement meant less money, easier to pass through the Senate and greater possibilities to look forward to the next one. The US president supported the intention of expanding the structure with Eastern Europeans with the argument of their struggle for liberty, bearing in mind heroic moments in the history of the nations.

The whole series of *The Economist's* articles soon after the event focused on the repercussions the decision would bring to the Alliance. However, there was not a slight regret with reference to inviting the three ex-communist states at all, although what gave some politicians sleepless nights was the fact of the costs to bear in relation to the process. It turned out, though, that so well promising relations between Europe and the USA could

⁵¹⁹ *Who will join the club?* The Economist, London, June 5, 1997, Internet: http://www.economist.com/world/europe/PrinterFriendly.cfm?story_id=90538.

⁵²⁰ *Welcome to Europe*, The Economist, London, July 19, 1997, p. 16.

⁵²¹ *Europe changes shape*, The Economist, London, July 12, 1997, p. 19.

have been squandered for the reason of some financial misunderstandings. In November 1997, the situation seemed to be serious as the row over the costs could have blocked the ratification of the enlargement treaty by the American Senate⁵²². Out of the sudden, both sides, American and European, found it difficult to agree on the amount each of them was supposed to pay. The core states of the EU, including Great Britain, were surprised to see the costs presented by the Pentagon, suspecting the US of taking advantage of the situation and decreasing its financial burden of the expansion under the pretext of improving own forces. The UK, altogether with France and Germany, opposed the argument, stating that it was first of all the newcomers which would have to bear the greatest expenditures.

The issue, however, which raised BBC journalists' curiosity in 1997 concerned the fact of a smooth and almost undisputable event of admitting eastern partners once the invitations were given⁵²³. Jonathan Marcus, the BBC's Defence Correspondent, considered the discussions taking place on the process of extending the Alliance, either in the US Senate or the EU members, coming to the sharing of responsibility of the partners and the future shape of the organization rather than the suitability and advantages of the entrants. Nevertheless, assuming that NATO accepted the potential members of only certain merits, what role would it play, if not as the structure providing the military security of all democratic and independent countries which headed for the stability of the world?

The experts' predictions over the debates to come did not turn out be groundless, as the period of sheer celebration of the invitation of the Eastern Europeans overshadowed a bit the troubles that were to appear in parliamentary discussions or reactions of particular countries, namely Russia. BBC News published in July 1998 Russia's president Boris Yeltsin's warning of a "cold peace" once the expansion proceeded⁵²⁴. It proved the fact, though, that the previous single voices of critics of the process or the threats were not imaginary, as Russia did insist on being treated seriously. Even when the Polish president sounded quite confident of his proper relations with Moscow, he could not predict that the ex-superpower would wish to remind the world about its existence and clout. Moreover, the concerns about the expansion began to appear in European states as well in the form of British military and defence experts' letter sent to the Prime Minister at the beginning of the year⁵²⁵. The authors of the letter, including Lord Healey, the former Defence Secretary, were afraid of threatening repercussions if the expansion continued in the form of Russia's anger.

⁵²² *The price of expansion*, The Economist, London, November 15, 1997, p. 53.

⁵²³ *NATO: Towards the next round?* BBC News, December 18, 1997, Internet: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/world/analysis/40349.stm>.

⁵²⁴ *17 July*, BBC News, July 16, 1998, Internet: http://www.bbc.co.uk/2/low/uk_news/politics/134002.stm.

⁵²⁵ *Ibidem*.

Moreover, the message expressed the opposition to give security of the Eastern Europeans through widening the structures of the Alliance as it would reduce the security of the current NATO states.

However, the letter was not the voice of the majority of the British, but only those ones who could not discern the real role of the military organization and did not wish it to antagonize Moscow with acting against its will. While some of the UK's experts' idea was to withdraw its approval for the enlargement, the Alliance in general had been convincing Russia for a long time that the process was not aimed at any country, but it was a right sequence of events after the arrangement of power had transformed on the continent. The intentions of the organization, though, headed for "drawing and redrawing the line" in Europe, not dividing it, and to make Russia comfortable about the extension, the USA confirmed its openness to all democracies, with the possibility of Moscow joining it one day⁵²⁶.

The concerns for the expansion appeared not to be the only ones, as *The World Today* published in November 1997 the article about Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic to be persuaded by potential suppliers to buy a fighter aircraft⁵²⁷. On the one hand, the situation of military demands provoked the companies to compete among the potential customers with the most favourable offers, but in the case of the Eastern Europeans on the verge of the membership, it was proved that they were given the informal message about making the right choice for their defence procurement source in order to be admitted.

Despite the appearance of the fears, possible contravention of law, and the criticism of Moscow, the three Eastern European countries officially became NATO members on March 16, 1999. BBC News, in the interview of the *World Affairs* correspondent, Nick Childs, commented the event to be crucial for the existence of the Alliance from a historic point of view⁵²⁸. The journalist paid much attention to the fact of a gentle enterprise by the organization and, what was more, exposed to countering the accusations of Moscow. Nonetheless, NATO's willingness to welcome Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic among the existing members was regarded as resulting from the role of sustaining stability throughout Europe. The interviewee's opinion about the choice of Poland and two other neighbours as first entrants was that the USA eventually decided about such a small expansion, and besides, these were the states which best fulfilled the criteria of the process. The issue, however, which allowed the countries to enter as the first group, was the

⁵²⁶ *Leaders: Europe's dual enlargement*, The Economist, London, March 21, 1998, p. 20.

⁵²⁷ Spears J., *Bigger NATO, bigger sales*, The World Today, November 1997, p. 272-273.

⁵²⁸ *Enlarging NATO: Q&A*, BBC News, March 11, 1999, Internet: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/low/294977.stm>.

capability of having a dialogue with the representatives of NATO and the ability to join the Partnership for Peace. Such eagerness proved the states to be committed future partners, the feature which Russia seemed to be devoid of.

The admission of Poland and two other Eastern European countries to the Atlantic Alliance gave rise to discussions on the vision of the new NATO of 19 members, with a special speech of Javier Solana, secretary-general of the Alliance, in *The Economist*⁵²⁹. His article appreciated the membership of “sovereign and self-confident nations”, which marked the Alliance’s close relations with the states around Europe. Poland, as its new military partner, was presented as the country aware of what the admission would mean in terms of benefits as well as accountability. Moreover, Mr. Solana emphasized the Eastern Europeans’ active role in the North Atlantic Council, with a special regard for their reliability each time NATO asked for the assistance either in Bosnia or Kosovo. The fact that Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic made huge efforts to restructure their armed forces and bring them under civilian control convinced the secretary-general, along with other Alliance authorities, that the states deserved their place among the current partners, and what was more, the organization would not become less effective or incapable of some actions due to enlarging with such big nations.

The favourable words towards the Eastern Europeans were also to prove the sceptics of the expansion that they were not the reason for the division of Europe, but on the contrary, their entry meant creating more connections between the regions situated further on the East, with reference to Russia⁵³⁰. The opponents of the process were again reassured that Moscow should not be feared of, as NATO had taken steps to engage it in building security in Europe as early as the three new members were to be invited to the structures.

All in all, Poland’s on the road to the Alliance appeared as a trustworthy, self-confident and reliable partner, whose aspirations for the membership resulted from the necessity to provide its nation with political and military safety, and prevented itself from the potential threat of Russia. The British newspapers and magazines emphasized the fact of Polish inconvenient location, which might contribute to the state’s possible problems, therefore fully supported its admission to NATO. Despite some sceptical voices which occurred on the way, Poland and the other countries, were not given a negative reception, and their determination to be always on the alert could dispel the doubts and show the candidates in a favourable light. Nevertheless, the issue of admitting Poland, among other

⁵²⁹ Solana J., *By invitation-NATO’s future: Growing the alliance*, The Economist, London, March 13, 1999, p. 23-25.

⁵³⁰ Ibidem.

eastern states, did not win much renown in the British press, the main concern of which occurred to be the debates on the relations with Russia in the context of the enlargement.

2.2. Poland's road to the EU in the light of the most disputable issues.

The enlargement of the European Union with the Eastern European countries found a lot more place in British newspapers and magazines, as the process abounded with a greater number of substantial transformations of the functioning of the integrative organization. Poland, as the biggest state aspiring for the membership turned out to be more debatable in the context of its adjustment to the EU, the necessary changes being implemented in the EU institutions as well as the fears or concerns connected with Polish accession.

With the beginning of Poland's official announcement about applying for the membership in March 1994, *The Guardian* presented the demands of Eastern Europeans as "the pressure to begin eastern expansion"⁵³¹. The move, however, was understandable on the one hand as the result of Russia's closeness, but the Community standing in the face of being widened with Austria, Finland and Sweden, was not too eager to even consider the issue, on the other. Nonetheless, some of the European members, including Great Britain, put forward an initiative of bringing the eastern states closer to the concept of integration by involving them in the EU foreign and defence policy, which meant a plan to connect them with the Western European Union. That was the intention which was supposed to omit Russia's dissatisfaction with Poland's and other countries' partnership with NATO, whereas the EU or WEU did not raise so many doubts. Moreover, such a well-thought-out strategy proved Britain and other EU states to be friendly towards providing ex-communist countries with security and welcoming them within their structures one day.

The Economist, however, analyzed the prospects of Polish membership in the EU on the grounds of its economic condition, aiming at pointing out the country's weaknesses and overrating aspirations with being unfounded in reality⁵³². Poland's possible admission was compared to Spain's entry, in terms of economic criteria as well as the standards of living, unfortunately in favour of Spain, although the membership was not stated as impossible, according to the journalist. What did raise a kind of concern, though, was Warsaw's belief in early accession, with the full awareness of the majority of legislative work to be done in order to adjust to the EU standards.

⁵³¹ Palmer J., *Poland joins the queue for Europe*, *The Guardian Weekly*, March 13, 1994, p. 3.

⁵³² Brook U., *Halfway in...*, op. cit., p. 21.

The issue of Poland and other Eastern Europeans as future EU partners came back to press discussion forums with the summit in Amsterdam in 1997, which was to make some changes necessary for the Union to function in a larger group of states. Before the summit, however, *The World Today* made attempts to figure out why for the last previous years the Western Europeans had done so little to create a vision of a future enlarged Europe⁵³³. The lack of reaching the compromise among the EU states about the looming process might have proven, according to the author, the difficulties not only on the entrants' side, but also inside the Union. William Wallace was concerned about the little crisis especially with reference to the eastern countries, which had already begun an informal integration, such as Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovenia⁵³⁴. He was of the opinion that mainly Poland was the country significant for both, NATO and the EU, in terms of having the biggest economy and population, as well as possessing half of the other EU candidates' agriculture population, therefore the essential transformations within the organization had to take place to make the admission less troublesome.

Thus, the Amsterdam summit was to prepare the EU to begin enlarging to eastern Europe, nevertheless reaching an agreement on that issue occurred to be more time-consuming. *The Guardian* described the results of the meeting as the failure as far as reforming the decision-making institutions for the expansion was concerned⁵³⁵. The shifts in the Council of Ministers, the extension of majority voting or the improvement of the Commission were avoided, hence the predictions of five or more new members in the EU would have been condemned to decision-making paralysis, let alone ten or twelve entrants. What could have been surprising, though, was the attitude of the British Prime Minister, who, in order to defend the UK's national interests, called for no further institutional changes as the EU would manage with the enlargement in the form as it was.

The Economist, however, also commented on the Amsterdam as the summit "unwilling to make the changes necessary to cope with a Union of 20 or 25 members", although it was inclined to shift the unsatisfactory result on to the difficult economic times⁵³⁶. The magazine claimed the current EU states objected to the changes in CAP or structural funds as part of the enlargement plan for fear of the fewer benefits they might obtain, convincing the eastern partners of developing their market economies in order to survive in a competitive world once they joined the common market.

⁵³³ Wallace W., *On the move-destination unknown*, *The World Today*, April 1997, p. 99.

⁵³⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 100.

⁵³⁵ Palmer J., *No agreement on voting despite push from Blair*, *The Guardian*, June 19, 1997, Internet: <http://politics.guardian.co.uk/britainabroad/story/0,,451346,00.html>.

⁵³⁶ *Welcome to...*, op. cit., p. 16.

When the emotions after the summit calmed down, *The Economist* published an article about Poland as the future EU partner, but with a kind of educational message for the Poles in the context of Polish governmental elections and the expectations after the entry⁵³⁷. The article was probably to present the British with the country which was aspiring with such determination to share the privileges of the EU with them, but which missed so much to become an equal partner. Poland was described as the state with numerous drawbacks of the whole economic, social and political aspects of life, yet there were some statements of the authors which could imply that the nation eventually chose a proper way on their struggle for a well-developed country with high standards of living. Nonetheless, unscrambling the message the magazine tried to convey both for the Poles and Britons, turned out to be a hard task. Even if the intentions were to discourage the Polish side with the presentation of all “missing points” with the EU, the determination of Poland did not surrender, and if the plan was to threaten Britain with the state full of troubles when in the EU, thus depriving them of the profits, the target was not, fortunately, achieved.

As it soon appeared, however, the goal was closer to the first assumption. When the accession negotiations with Poland were due to begin, the debates around the biggest country to join the EU increased, with a little fear of Great Britain. At the beginning of 1998, *The Economist* started to worry about the situation inside the Union, namely about the attitudes of core states, once Poland entered the structure⁵³⁸. Why? Suddenly, the British press tended to perceive the Poles to be unaware of a big quantity of work on the way to the organization, therefore the articles were more of a warning nature. Nevertheless, the presentations of Polish economic and political conditions turned out to be a basis for pointing out Poland’s self-confidence in political strength as well as its faith in taking a leadership of Central Europe, the conviction, according to the magazine, unfairly kept. Moreover, the message which was clearly conveyed through the press concerned the British fear of the Poles’ behaviour as the EU members, resulting from their overconfidence and eagerness to fight, kept mostly by France and Germany, which could see the advantages of such an attitude. The Franco-German axis made efforts to sympathize with Poland for the sheer reason of creating a lobby forcing the issues favourable for all, e.g. farms. Therefore, the British began to spot a threat for their position in the EU, namely changing the balance of power among the current members⁵³⁹.

⁵³⁷ *Unfinished business*, *The Economist*, London, September 20, 1997, p. 23-24.

⁵³⁸ *Europe: Awkward would-be partners*, *The Economist*, London, February 28, 1998, p. 54.

⁵³⁹ *Leaders: Europe’s...* op. cit., p. 20.

Nonetheless, Poland occurred to be a country with the ability to take advantage of the situation it was in, as *The Guardian* noticed, or maybe it was just a compensation for the losses and crimes the country was exposed to?⁵⁴⁰. The journalist described Poland as a demanding state, quite “aggressive”, which used the anniversary of Germany’s invasion 60 years before to obtain its goal, i.e. a fast and early admission to the European structures. The event, however, was presented as the Polish president’s, Aleksander Kwaśniewski, hysteric impatience about the slow pace of the process, which resulted in the German feeling of the duty, thus making the Polish nation be accepted as the EU member as soon as possible. The occasion of meeting to commemorate the anniversary produced, indeed, the possibility to close all historic legacy, and moreover, to encounter one of the leading states of the EU, did create favourable conditions to raise the issue of enlargement, whereas the political experience of the Polish president would never allow him to make any demands.

However, a tenacious attitude in politics did not turn out to be a domain of Poland only, as Great Britain soon proved its intransigence on tax reforms before the EU summit in Helsinki at the end of 1999⁵⁴¹. The British Prime Minister found it difficult to reach compromise with his EU partners on the issues related to the European institutions, whereas other countries felt disappointment when it came to more essential matters for the EU, which undoubtedly resulted from a lack of understanding, unwillingness to prefer Europe’s interest to own business or eagerness to prove its position in the organization.

The closer Poland approached the historic date, the more favourable coverage happened to appear in the British press. In the *Central Europe Review* the beginning of 2000 was presented as the period with a more friendly attitude to Polish membership in the EU⁵⁴². The visit the Polish Prime Minister, Jerzy Buzek, paid to Brussels on 6 April 2000 improved the relations between the EU and Poland in terms of necessary negotiation areas to be accelerated, and with more faith put in Polish efforts. Moreover, the Prime Minister kept Poland’s confident approach as far as the completion of the requirements was concerned, expressing his belief in the commitment on the EU side, the words which revealed a more gentle tone of the British press.

Nevertheless, *The Economist* could raise the issue of Poland not being prepared in order to complete the Union quick and secure admission’s plan, which would either lead to letting the state in, without fulfilling the criteria, or delaying the accession until Warsaw met

⁵⁴⁰ Traynor I., *Germany and Poland lay ghosts to rest*, *The Guardian*, September 2, 1999, Internet: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/print/0,,3897760-103681,00.html>.

⁵⁴¹ Black I., Bates S., *Europe’s leaders unwilling to march in step*, *The Guardian*, December 9, 1999, Internet: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/print/0,,3939940-103520,00.html>.

⁵⁴² Craske O., *Poland Pushes for Commitment*, *Central Europe Review*, 10 April 2000, Internet: <http://www.ce-review.org/00/14/craske14.html>.

the demands⁵⁴³. Despite the advantages of postponing the process, though, the authors did not see the option to take place, as neither the European Commission nor the most likely states, Poland and Hungary, supported the offer. Moreover, another issue which would seem to be a re-appeared problem for the new EU was called: deepening or widening? The more members within the organization, the more difficult to decide which way to follow.

However, the question of either deepening or widening did not seem to be an issue for the observer of the European arena from the *Central Europe Review*, Andrew Cave, who demonstrated the point to be a goal for the EU itself; it was the organization which should take care of supporting the states and encouraging them to develop their national identities while in the Union⁵⁴⁴. Yet again, the author analyzed the role each state would find and play in the EU, referring to Poland as the country with the sense of leadership, although a dangerous place to take, in the aspect of France or Great Britain, before its position was consolidated as equal partners. Moreover, then, Cave observed another drawback of the Polish state, i.e. an inability to develop an identity, and the whole country's confidence in the EU membership, which might have contributed to an unsuccessful EU admission once its leading role was questioned. Nonetheless, the expert seemed a bit controversial to put forward such a daring assumption, difficult to agree with, especially as far as "the inability for an identity" was concerned, the feature which had always been cherished, maintained and distinguished in the Polish nation. It was another clue, though, that the British press was desperately striving for avoiding Poland to be a significant player in the EU, let alone depriving Britain of its place in the hard core.

The end of 2000, however, marked another turn in the European policy, with gaining a more friendly approach by Poland in terms of the improvements the state had made⁵⁴⁵. Nevertheless, not all newspapers noticed only positive points on the Polish side, as *The Daily Telegraph* presented the country to be a problem in an enlarged EU due to the majority of farmers among the Poles, which obviously posed a threat on the EU agricultural policy⁵⁴⁶. Furthermore, Evans-Pritchard from *The Telegraph* observed a favourable, for Poland, turn of British policy towards the enlargement, being actually a step back from the core states' attitude to the process. The British Prime Minister decided to build alliances with smaller EU states in order to oppose the policy of France and Germany, which pressed for a two-speed Europe, the shape Mr. Blair would never accept. Therefore, the PM's

⁵⁴³ Ibidem.

⁵⁴⁴ Cave A., *Finding a Role in an Enlarged EU*, *Central Europe Review*, 22 May 2000, Internet: <http://www.ce-review.org/00/20/cave20.html>.

⁵⁴⁵ Craske O., *A means As Well As an End. EC 2000 Progress Reports*, *Central Europe Review*, 15 November 2000, Internet: <http://www.ce-review.org/00/39/ukpress39.html>.

⁵⁴⁶ Ibidem.

address in Warsaw occurred not to be accidental, as the UK's government leader turned to Poland again to look for a proponent to propagate a vision of his Europe, a European superpower. The uncomfortable situation Blair was found in was noticed in September by *The Economist*, when either French nation-state or German federal Europe did not take to the Premier, thus searching for the allies⁵⁴⁷.

The year 2002 brought the Copenhagen summit in December and revived discussions on the future of the new EU. *The Times*, with the looming date of the entry, noted the Commission report on the fulfilment of the EU criteria by the aspiring countries⁵⁴⁸. The requirements included numerous areas to adjust to the Union's demands, with Poland lying behind "a political, administrative and business culture" which had to resist corruption. Moreover, on the eve of the summit, Poland was again depicted as a demanding state, struggling for bigger funds for farmers, and proving itself to be a significant member among the ten as well as the one fighting fiercely to show its Euro-sceptics how much the state could obtain⁵⁴⁹. However much trouble the Polish entry caused to the EU, though, the enlargement had to change the shape of Europe, and bury the vision of creating a superstate with ten more members to join⁵⁵⁰.

The following year was dominated by the press comments on Poland's EU referendum, but before June 2003 *The Guardian* published the article on the influence of the US on the attitude of some Europeans, the issue which was also directed to Poland⁵⁵¹. Poland's Foreign Minister, Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, replied categorically to the alleged accusation of being forced to act or demand some actions, thus proving the state's independence of attitude and confidence in its activities. *The Economist*, on the other hand, focused on the commentaries of the EU referendum in Poland, hence emphasizing the significance of the country due to its power in population in the EU as well as its close ties with the Atlantic policy, in favour of the UK⁵⁵². The coverage in the magazine was able to prove the British experts' fear of Poland's making allies on different European issues⁵⁵³. The concern, however, about the Polish possible compromises being made could mark the meaning the state would have and the partners and relations it would choose. As for the

⁵⁴⁷ Blair's vision..., op. cit.

⁵⁴⁸ Watson R., *EU poised for huge expansion to the East*, *The Times*, October 10, 2002, Internet: <http://timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/article1169309.ece>.

⁵⁴⁹ Watson R., „Big Bang” to reunite Europe in 25-state Union, *The Times*, December 12, 2002, Internet: <http://timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/article801194.ece>.

⁵⁵⁰ Riddell P., *Enlargement will set Europe on the Road to reform and renewal*, *The Times*, December 17, 2002, , Internet: <http://timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/article760923.ece>.

⁵⁵¹ MacShane D., *Europe must now be united*, *The Guardian*, March 23, 2003, Internet: <http://observer.guardian.co.uk/print/0,,4631330-102273,00.html>.

⁵⁵² *Come on, try getting excited*, *The Economist*, London, June 6, 2003, p. 35.

⁵⁵³ *Back into the fold*, *The Economist*, London, June 14, 2003, p. 43.

political strength, though, the image of Poland as the meaningful member did not seem to be so obvious, as the journalists were inclined to believe that Warsaw would become a strong partner provided its power was proven at home, which did not occur to be plausible at the times of Leszek Miller's in rule.

The Times, however, brought the image of Poland as the country celebrating and cheering the victory of the EU referendum, with a deserved triumph of an open and ambitious mentality, yet with some restrictions on the sense of sovereignty⁵⁵⁴. The favourable tone of the article was diminished by the comments of Polish unwillingness to surrender a part of independence to Brussels, and the fact of perceiving Warsaw as “uncomfortable partner”, for the reason of being a medium-size power among Britain, Germany, France, Spain and Italy, and the power introducing the voice of the Eastern Europe.

In two months after the referendum, though, Poland was still under the discussion, being called “a category of its own”⁵⁵⁵. Although the country was regarded as the one to be worked on the most, due to its size, among the others, it was still looked closer at. The dissatisfaction from home policy was seen as a potential reason for the Poles to perceive the EU as a possibility of short-term gains when already a member. Moreover, Warsaw's picture was completed by the eternal fear of appropriating the EU money through farm subsidies and structural funds allocated to poorer countries and regions. As for the Atlantic dimension of Poland and Europe's policy, however, the future EU member was regarded as the one eagerly waiting for developing foreign relations rather than defence policy through the organization. The most surprising argument which revealed from the discussions in the British press on Poland's entry to the EU seemed to be a sheer calculation the state would rely on, the profits it would gain, instead real hopes for a secure and prosperous life, with an economic and political balance in favour of its citizens, altogether with the care for its own interests not to be omitted in a large group of 25 members.

However, it was eventually comforting and giving faith to read *The Economist's* article on May 1, 2004, the historic and memorable date for the EU itself but first of all for the citizens of the new members, that the event occurred to be a victory considered in several aspects⁵⁵⁶. The most significant of them seemed to be a fact of implementing some former communist countries to complete the secure Europe, and the ones being much more

⁵⁵⁴ Boyes R., *Poland celebrates a huge “yes” to EU membership*, *The Times*, June 9, 2003, Internet: <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/article1140320.html>.

⁵⁵⁵ *A nervous New arrival on the European Union's block*, *The Economist*, London, August 30, 2003, p. 8.

⁵⁵⁶ *Special Report: A club in Need of a New vision-The future of Europe*, *The Economist*, London, May 1, 2004, p. 25-27.

poorer than current members, which marked the moment of joining the continent after 45 years divided by the Iron Curtain. Although there was a day to remember, the gloom seemed to dominate the mood of the EU, which was the result of the biggest concern ever, i.e. the diversity of the new states in terms of an economic development⁵⁵⁷. According to the forecast presented by the magazine, though, Poland was supposed to reach the EU average GDP in 59 years' time, which was the depressing information as for the first day in the EU.

Moreover, what made the Union lack the sense of enthusiasm was also the fact of a slow economic growth in the "old" member states in connection with the organisation losing popularity with the European society, *The Economist* forebode. The author raised even more concern about the entry of the easterners when he predicted the increase of dissatisfaction once the 15 states' population realized what ten new members could actually mean, i.e. less money and bigger migration.

One could think, however, that the aim of the article was to threaten the old as well as the new European states with the reality of their cooperation, but fortunately, a depressing tone was tempered in the end with a smart remark about bringing some positive aspects to the EU by the newcomers. The author was able to see ten members giving encouragement to accelerate the economic growth since they were developing fast, or creating a new model of the organization, a competitive one to the USA. Although comforting as the final comments were to sound, the atmosphere of celebrating the May Day in the British press did not appear to be enthusiastic, but rather convincing the public of the right decision.

2.2.1. Common Agricultural Policy.

The issue of agriculture and the subsidies for farmers had always aroused concern among the EU states for the reason of a different size of rural areas, thus unequal division of subventions allocated to the members. No wonder, then, that when Poland, a country with the biggest population among the candidates and a great number of farmers, aspired for the membership, the doubts about the reform over CAP increased, with the peak of the farm debates falling on the period after the accession negotiations began.

However, Poland, altogether with Hungary and Czechoslovakia, became a part of the EU discussions, observed by *The Economist*, in terms of their membership as early as in 1991, when the paper issued by the European Commission considered the countries to have such areas as agriculture, which were a contradiction to their EU aspirations⁵⁵⁸. Polish

⁵⁵⁷ Ibidem.

⁵⁵⁸ *Guilt by Association*, *The Economist*, London, July 11, 1992, p. 25.

condition of this branch of economy, though, was compared to the third-world economies, with a surprising and unthinkable phenomenon that the state almost did not subsidize its farms at all in 1991, although a 36% fall in farm incomes had been already noted between second half of 1990 and the first half of 1991. Despite the fact that the image of the countries in the British press was not favourable, and even ironic, the magazine did believe that some EU members would support their membership, even for the price of increased costs, to delay the process of deepening in favour of widening. Paradoxically, the move concerned the British as well.

Nonetheless, the eagerness and confidence of the ex-communist states met the response of some EU members, namely Germany. *The Economist* published the reaction of Franz Fischler, the European Union's commissioner for agriculture, to the attitude of Germany's Chancellor Kohl, when he commenced supporting Poland's admission by 2000⁵⁵⁹. The German leader perceived agriculture to be a key element strategy of bringing Polish nation to the EU, the belief which raised the commissioner's opposition with the fear of "killing of the common agricultural policy" once such countries joined the organization. Moreover, what caused a real concern in the vision of "Poland and other easterners in the EU" was the fact that agriculture accounted for almost 27% of employment in those states, whereas there was only less than 6% in the EU. The threat, however, resulted from a huge amount of produce in the Eastern European countries, which would encourage them to a bigger production when the high prices of CAP were extended to them.

Therefore, the reality of having such partners in the Union did not sound encouraging, yet placing the EU authorities in the face of the question: was it better to reform the policy, scrap it or postpone the enlargement? It soon appeared, though, that reforming CAP was to solve the problem. When a few days after the negotiations began, *The Economist* was committed to a real struggle between Mr. Fischler's "totally unacceptable reforms" and the EU members⁵⁶⁰. Both events, the official opening of talks with five states from Central and Eastern Europe and Cyprus by Robin Cook, and the transformation of the agricultural policy marked a symbolic date, yet painful for the candidates, as the overhaul was connected with drastic cuts, which could symbolise an unfriendly approach. However, an uncompromising move of the European commissioner proved the area of agriculture to be the most significant field in the EU and the most difficult one in the negotiations with the new members.

⁵⁵⁹ *Farm follies*, *The Economist*, London, July 29, 1995, p. 36.

⁵⁶⁰ *Charlemagne: Farmer Franz Fischer digs in*, *The Economist*, London, April 4, 1998, p. 62.

As soon as the negotiation process was in progress, the issue of farming could not have been omitted. *The Guardian* presented the looming vision of creating a more integrated union of states with the hard core to lead and guide the other countries, which also influenced the aspiring ones in terms of their future in such a structure⁵⁶¹. The fear of building a divided organization did not convince either the current partners or the waiting ones, although Poland and its neighbours were nervous when a disagreement over the extension to which the EU would subsidize inefficient agricultural sectors occurred. Moreover, not only the concern about supporting small farms which resisted the era of communist collectivisation gave especially Poland sleepless nights, but also the fact of entering the organization with a division again; both scenarios appearing as a threat.

Nevertheless, it did not take a long time since a reaction to Germany and France's plan of the new EU began to tell on the Polish society. The visit of Romano Prodi, the Head of the European Commission in Poland in 2001 was related by *The Economist* as an open clash with the opponents of the membership, with the majority of farmers⁵⁶². One of the reasons of such an unwelcoming reception was the fact that the Poles were more and more convinced of being treated not as equals when they became the members. Furthermore, although they used to perceive the EU to be a source of financial aid, with the greater awareness of the Union's actions, the Polish citizens were more inclined to believe in bearing more costs than gaining benefits. Finally, the magazine also focused on Poland's weakest point, i.e. agriculture, with two hottest negotiating problems: quotas and subsidies, in a range of which the country fought fiercely to persuade the authorities that Warsaw deserved being treated on equal rights, not only had equal obligations.

The reactions to the issue of agriculture took even a more serious form and the concern of the Polish negotiators at the beginning of 2002, when the EU began to prepare for the eastern admission. *The Daily Telegraph* presented deep dissatisfaction of Poland in return of Günter Verheugen's statement that the big group of 10 states would "receive only a quarter of the vast subsidies given to existing members"⁵⁶³. The indignation over Brussels' restrictions on farm aid again raised Warsaw's worry about the vision of unequal treatment after the accession. Moreover, according to the Polish Prime Minister, Leszek Miller, there was a threat of the objection to the EU membership which might result in saying "no" in the referendum. But a worse thing that revealed from Poland was the anti-EU campaign

⁵⁶¹ *Eastern Europe awaits*, *The Guardian*, July 31, 2000, Internet: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/print/0,,4045871-103682,00.html>.

⁵⁶² *Survey: Looking west, looking east*, *The Economist*, London, October 27, 2001, p. 7.

⁵⁶³ Evans-Pritchard A., Isherwood J., *Angry Poles lead protest against EU farm curbs*, *The Daily Telegraph*, January 31, 2002, Internet: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2002/01/31/wpole31.xml>.

promoted by the leader of the Polish Self-Defence Party, Andrzej Lepper, who could threaten the efforts of Polish government with a “propaganda war” over the membership. Although Brussels’ decision met the frustration of all aspiring countries, the response of the Polish side seemed to be the boldest, which did not go unnoticed by the journalists. What was more, though, the fiery attitude, according to the *Daily Telegraph*, was the consequence of Poland’s confidence in its strong position in the EU, whereas the European Commission acted so bravely to calm down some of the current member states, whose opposition to allocating an increased number of subsidies might have contributed to delaying the enlargement.

However, the picture of Polish farmers in the light of the CAP reform was presented by Charles Clover in the *Daily Telegraph* almost as relics of the past, which could have contributed to the false image of Polish farming if it had not been for balancing it with the picture of a modern, prosperous and well-off farmer, on the other hand⁵⁶⁴. The author’s aim was probably to contrast Polish farms, which, although differed, still were afraid that their conditions might have deteriorated due to unfair EU subsidies. However surprising it could sound, though, the British seemed to understand the Poles’ fears, as their farmers felt much pressure of the cuts put on especially cereal farmers⁵⁶⁵.

The other light was cast on the alarming protest of Poland by *The Economist*, whose presentation of the Polish harsh reaction referred to the country’s dramatic history of the land exploited by powerful neighbours⁵⁶⁶. The magazine did not tend to blame Warsaw for the anger at the issue of direct payments, but rather expressed its disappointment for the EU to ruin such a historic event – the reunification of Europe – with the clash over milk quotas and subsidies. However, frustration and strong emotions on both sides proved the issue of agriculture to be of the highest priority due to the facts of involving about half of the EU spending and being the main source of the income for the majority of people in the candidate states. Moreover, the situation did not seem to be easy to solve. Although the future members did hope for common persuasion to do miracles in the EU, the present EU states would push Brussels to be even less generous. Nevertheless, *The Economist* discouraged to investigate whether the EU states’ meanness or the Poles’ nationalism should be found guilty, as it was the very Common Agriculture Policy, with its cost and complexity

⁵⁶⁴ Clover Ch., *The peasant farmers of Poland fear EU threat to simple life*, *The Daily Telegraph*, June 21, 2002, Internet: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml>.

⁵⁶⁵ Evans-Pritchard A., Uhlig R., *UK farmers face £62m cut in Euro subsidies*, *The Daily Telegraph*, June 13, 2002, Internet: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml>.

⁵⁶⁶ *Europe: The angry farmers; Poland and the European Union*, *The Economist*, London, February 9, 2002, p. 34.

as well as sometimes stupidity of its functioning, which should be blamed for the incapability of creating a satisfying plan for the enlargement.

In July 2002, *The Economist* was still busy with agricultural matters, although in the context of the European and the world affairs⁵⁶⁷. The magazine focused on the farm problems as having the impact on the following year Doha round of trade talks and the EU enlargement. The concern which was revealing from the issue, however, was supposed to show a different tendency towards agriculture in the EU; while the USA increased farm subsidies connecting them with production, the Europeans cut them off, for the sake of widening the organization and protecting their interests. Although the efforts seemed to be logical, *The Economist* could spot a hidden danger: with entering the countries as Poland, so strongly supporting farm subsidies, the created farm lobby would enhance the actions on CAP.

With the time leading to the EU summit in Brussels opening on 24 October 2002 on financing the entry of ten new members, *The Times* published a series of articles on the farm battle between France, the biggest beneficiary of CAP, and Great Britain with the agricultural rebate. Few days before the crucial meeting the newspaper mentioned the fighting spirit which would accompany France's resistance to conduct the reform of CAP, referring to the 1999 Berlin summit which fixed the policy budget until 2006⁵⁶⁸. On the eve of the summit, however, the French began their struggle for postponing the cuts by threatening the British to change their "discount", the rebate which was the victory of Margaret Thatcher in 1984 to compensate Britain for its huge contributions to overall spending⁵⁶⁹. Nevertheless, Paris decided to defend its source of CAP subsidies, even for the price of challenging London, as the reform was indispensable in the face of entering Poland and other poorer new states, whose demand for financing farming would kill the annual EU budget.

The Brussels summit, though, appeared to be the arena of pushing Britain to resign from the rebate in favour of financing the expansion, *The Times* stated⁵⁷⁰. The British, however, could resist the French "suggestion", supporting their stance with the fact that Mr. Chirac personally approved of the "cheque" at the Berlin summit on March 25, 1999. The stalking of Paris did eventually succeed, as the Franco-German deal over financing the

⁵⁶⁷ *Leaders: Cleansing the Augean stables; Farm subsidies*, *The Economist*, London, July 13, 2002, p. 14.

⁵⁶⁸ Riddell P., *Hope is ahead of reality for EU optimists*, *The Times*, October 18, 2002, Internet: <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/politics/article1180221.html>.

⁵⁶⁹ Bremner Ch., Watson R., *Chirac threatens British rebate in row over CAP*, *The Times*, October 23, 2002, Internet: <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/article816610.html>.

⁵⁷⁰ Charter D., *Straw dismisses Chirac's cuts threat*, *The Times*, October 24, 2002, Internet: <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/article817018.html>.

enlargement occurred in the night of the meeting, driving Britain out of the hard core, though⁵⁷¹. As a full supporter of the ongoing process, France and Germany presented a joint solution of the CAP reform, with the subsidies rising gradually in the first three years of the new countries' membership up to 2006. From 2007, however, the CAP spending would be limited to the previous year's level and would increase only with inflation.

Despite the compromise, the French president still delved into the issue of British rebate, since the EU had to manage its expenditure carefully, thus investigating the areas some states benefited from⁵⁷². The conflict over the agricultural policy, with reference to the eastern enlargement, became the basis for losing Britain's authority and its position in the hard core. However, London's frustration contributed to taking a revenge over the French gambit in the form of threatening the enlargement as the squaring with France's victory⁵⁷³. The conclusion which revealed from the events predominant in 2002, though, was that the Common Agricultural Policy became the battlefield for the EU members, overshadowing the anger, fury and disappointment that Poland expressed once the farm reform became the key element of the accession.

At the end of the year, however, Poland let the European Union know about its looming membership and its entitled rights. Warsaw's insistence and fight for more improvements on the EU policies in favour of its nation during the Copenhagen summit did not meet with much understanding, according to Rory Watson from *The Times*⁵⁷⁴. The Poles again raised claims to direct payments to farmers as well as lower VAT rates on new building and new farm equipment, which was commented by the Danish Prime Minister and summit host, Fogh Rasmussen, as an inappropriate attitude to the efforts that had been made to assist the eastern countries since 1989 in order to bring Europe together. In the newspaper's assumptions, even if Poland was to refer to Britain's annual budget rebate towards its pay as a significantly poorer state, a determined approach of the host would not disturb the proceedings of the enlargement negotiations at the summit.

Nonetheless, the results of the Copenhagen summit on 13 December 2002, the meeting concluding the accession negotiations, for Poland occurred to be partly successful, especially in the area of agriculture. On the British website forum of EU policies, actions and actors, *Euractiv.com*, Poland's road to the EU and the outcome of the negotiations at the

⁵⁷¹ Watson R., Charter D., *Farm subsidy deal to cover cost of EU enlargement*, *The Times*, October 25, 2002, Internet: <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/article817400.html>.

⁵⁷² Ibidem.

⁵⁷³ Charter D., Watson R., *Britain attacks France over EU subsidies*, *The Times*, October 26, 2002, Internet: <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/article817848.html>.

⁵⁷⁴ Watson R., *Polish demands delay agreement at summit*, *The Times*, December 13, 2002, Internet: <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/article801639.html>.

time of the summit were evaluated as an overall success⁵⁷⁵. The discussions with the biggest of the candidate countries abounded with tough stances, demands, failures and compromises, the largest of which turned out to be the transfer of money allocated for rural development on direct payments, giving big amounts of the funds to farmers. Moreover, the Polish negotiators succeeded in persuading tenacious representatives of the Danish presidency to make smaller concessions altogether with gaining some non-financial benefits in terms of agriculture⁵⁷⁶. The first of them was the increased amount of milk quota, especially significant for Poland as the majority of farmers relied on a few cows, whereas the second one – safeguard clause for agriculture markets. It meant for Poland having the Commission's declaration that the EU could monitor the inflow of food into the markets and in case they were disrupted the institution took immediate action, which provided Polish markets with economic safety.

Although Poland attracted the British press attention during the hottest period of the negotiations, the general reception of the stubborn, determined and sometimes uncompromising attitudes of Polish politicians in the fight for farm benefits, eventually successful, met general favour of the coverage. The Polish aspirations and ambitions to satisfy the needs of its citizens, mainly farmers could be perceived as a positive feature of the state, though some tended to call Poland an uncomfortable partner. Heather Grabbe, the deputy director of the Centre for European Reform, was able to find similarities between the Poles and the British in terms of being mistrustful of the intentions of other member states, yet for the different reasons⁵⁷⁷. The author discerned the main difference in Poland's obsessive belief of disregarding their interests in the EU, which would definitely result in becoming awkward each time the budget debates took place, with Grabbe's prediction of Warsaw tough fight during the 2007-2013 budget plan, as the Polish farmers would struggle for compensating smaller amounts of subsidies in comparison with France and Germany.

Moreover, a positive aspect resulting from Poland's fiery attitude to oppose the unfair farm policy and a federalist foreign policy run by Brussels, was appreciated by the British as Poland did approve of joining "anti-Common Agricultural Policy" club led by Britain, Germany, Holland and Sweden⁵⁷⁸.

⁵⁷⁵ Grabbe H., *The Copenhagen deal for enlargement*, Center for European Reform, January 19, 2003, Internet: <http://www.euractiv.com/en/enlargement/copenhagen-deal-enlargement/article-11015.html>.

⁵⁷⁶ Ibidem.

⁵⁷⁷ Grabbe H., *Poland: The EU's New Awkward Partner*, CER Bulletin, Issue 34, February/March 2004, Internet: http://www.cer.org.uk/articles/34_grabbe.html.

⁵⁷⁸ Evans-Pritchard A., *President of Poland joins call for EU farm reform*, The Daily Telegraph, October 11, 2002, Internet: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml>.

2.2.2. From Nice to Copenhagen summit.

Apart from the concerns around the Common Agricultural Policy, though, Poland became present in the issues of institutional changes and overall transformations connected with the enlargement ranging from the Nice summit to the official completion of the accession negotiations and the invitation given at the Copenhagen meeting. The significance of the Nice summit was crucial for the reason of being the moment to end with the Treaty compared with Maastricht, and the one included necessary shifts to function as the Union of 27 members.

Few months before the essential event for the EU, *The Guardian* was still worried about the agreement among the current members, therefore the summit in Feira, Portugal, in June 2000, was supposed to motivate the states in order to accelerate the pace of consensus-building and decision-making processes⁵⁷⁹. Although the newspaper realized that the slow progress was not the cause of the EU reluctance to welcome the new countries, it emphasized the required changes to be made in the areas of qualified majority voting (QMV), the weighting of votes in the Council of Ministers, the composition of the Commission and Parliament, otherwise, though, the road for the candidates might have lengthened to 2005.

On the eve of the summit, *The Daily Telegraph* published the clash between the Tories and the Labourers on the Prime Minister's decision to give up some amount of sovereignty in favour of making the way of expansion easier and improving the decision-making process⁵⁸⁰. The readiness to contribute to the enlargement, however, met the Conservatives' opposition, the attitude which was commented by the Government leader's spokesman as "betraying countries such as Poland and Hungary" in their dogged determination to reject the extension of qualified majority voting.

During the first day of the summit, however, the aspiring countries were invited to participate, therefore Poland and other candidates took advantage of the opportunity and requested the EU for enabling the historic reunification of Europe to eventually happen, which was observed by *The Guardian*⁵⁸¹. The Polish minister for European affairs, Jacek Saryusz-Wolski, encouraged the European leaders to take faster steps as Poland was determined to enter the integrated Europe, no matter how long the Union decided to

⁵⁷⁹ *Work in progress*, *The Guardian*, June 19, 2000, Internet: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/print/0,,4030989-103682,00.html>.

⁵⁸⁰ Jones G., *Britain may sacrifice vetoes for bigger role*, *The Daily Telegraph*, December 6, 2000, Internet: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtm?xml=/news/2000/12/06/weu06.xml>.

⁵⁸¹ Black I., *East grows tired of waiting game*, *The Guardian*, December 8, 2000, Internet: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/print/0,,4102235-106710,00.html>.

complete the process. The address proved Poland to realize the destination it headed for, thus putting impact on the proceedings of the meeting. The speech of the Polish representative, however, turned out to be going as the UK intended, which helped Mr. Blair to refer to Poland, “a proud, independent country” in trying to convince his partners of putting aside the extension of QMV.

The Economist's review of the summit brought more enthusiasm about the success of the event, though⁵⁸². The magazine focused on determination of both sides, the EU and candidate states, to agree on the transformations that needed to be carried out in a mutual interest. Nevertheless, there were some questions raised by the author, which could bring some concerns, but the replies were expected to provide satisfying solutions. To make the vision less euphoric, the article wondered whether Poles, Czechs and other nations would move freely across Europe to find work once they were members. A positive coverage of the Nice, however, could give more confidence in the EU's successful cooperation in order to satisfy the newcomers' expectations, one of them being Poland.

The optimism before the summit could be referred to by *The Economist* soon after the memorable event came to an end⁵⁸³. One may wonder, however, whether the success of the negotiations, according to the summiters, resulted from sharing equal opinions and reaching a consensus, or going through an exhausting marathon of five-day disputes? Whatever the reasons, though, the big states in the club could express their satisfaction with the agreements on the number of votes in the Council of Ministers, unfortunately at the expense of small countries. Moreover, the summit was signed off with extending the areas of QMV, although the Germans could complain about not a satisfying result, as there were still about 20% decisions subject to national vetoes, therefore not making the summit integrative enough.

What was the reaction of the candidate countries to the changes, then? On the day of the summit, the German Chancellor Schroeder, visiting Warsaw before his flight to Nice, reassured Polish leaders that the idea of reuniting the continent and restructuring a new Europe would motivate the meeting, with the European interests taking priority to the national ones⁵⁸⁴. The words of the German leader were of great importance to all aspiring states, which felt tiredness with the date of the admission being postponed for a long time, as if any of the EU member had not been keen to take the responsibility. However, a wait-and-see attitude did not bring an expecting result, as Poland, altogether with Slovenia, two most

⁵⁸² *Leaders: Grow, Europe*, The Economist, London, December 9, 2000, p. 23.

⁵⁸³ *So that's all agreed, then*, The Economist, London, December 14, 2000, p. 25-27.

⁵⁸⁴ Black I., *EU told to rise above national interests*, The Guardian, December 7, 2000, Internet: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/print/0,,4101647-106710,00.html>.

advanced in accession negotiations countries, could not see the end of the process⁵⁸⁵. The statement of the Polish Prime Minister, Jerzy Buzek, after the Conference, referred to defining the final date, but the Nice Conclusions' draft could only mention the candidates to enter the EU in time for the 2004 European elections. Moreover, the Polish leader opposed openly the idea of a "Big Bang" joining the Union in favour of the fast track single candidates, Poland, Hungary, Slovenia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic and Estonia being the most possible ones.

Obviously the summit was of greater significance for the member states, which reorganized the structures to build a well-functioning union of 27 members, thus the calculations on the number of votes in the Council of Ministers aroused the biggest concerns⁵⁸⁶. The weighting of votes in the institution was related to the fear the big four, i.e. Germany, Britain, France and Italy faced in the light of entering up to 12 newcomers and the possibility of being outvoted by a coalition of smaller nations. Therefore, the states had to work on such a system that could require the participation of at least three of them in the decision-making. On the other hand, though, the smaller members could see the threat of eliminating them from the process and creating a "directory" of voting power. Eventually, the compromise contributed to allocating the same number of votes, i.e. 29, to the biggest ones, with a powerful number to be given to Poland, 27, as a country with a leading quantity of people as well.

After the Nice struggle, however, the EU as well as the aspiring countries looked forward to Copenhagen, which was supposed to officially mark the completion of the accession negotiations. Two months before the summit, though, the European Commission issued a declaration of the ultimate date of ten easterners to be admitted, although, as *The Daily Telegraph* observed, with some worries⁵⁸⁷. The Copenhagen summit was regarded as the final stage of the decision, nonetheless, the Commission had some doubts concerning the state of the adjustments. The article gave an impression that although the EU could truly fight for the longed-for final, the decision could more result from the historic duty, with the statement of "none wants to be seen to be failing in their moral duty to embrace the once-captive nations of the Soviet Union", than with the sheer need to reunify Europe⁵⁸⁸. In the Commission's report, Poland was again subject to criticism for corruption, and perceived as

⁵⁸⁵ *Euro-East: European Conference: Forced smiles hide could-be members' frustration*, Euro-East, Brussels, December 19, 2000, Internet:

<http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=65456472&sid=3&Fmt=3&clientId=56968&RQT=309&VName=PQD>.

⁵⁸⁶ Black I., *Europe's big four pull rank on minnows*, *The Guardian*, December 11, 2000, Internet:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/print/0,,4103471-106710,00.html>.

⁵⁸⁷ Evans-Pritchard A., *Euro chiefs press on with Big Bang entry of 10 states*, *The Daily Telegraph*, October 10, 2002, Internet: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml>.

⁵⁸⁸ *Ibidem*.

the state which desperately strove for aid on the one hand, and missed the mechanisms to manage it, on the other.

Nevertheless, *The Guardian's Observer* issue's accuracy of information allowed aiming the criticism at, not only the would-be members, but also the EU itself⁵⁸⁹. It seemed that the newspaper could notice how much the Eastern Europeans managed to achieve in terms of their industries, economies open to trade and investment and the adoption of the EU legislation. Heather Grabbe also enumerated the areas which still lacked some work, although could see the role of the EU in providing the future members with the resources to develop high-tech goods, knowledge-based services or investment in technology and education. To present an honest picture, however, the EU's state of preparations was also taken under scrutiny. The critical comment was put on the budget and institutions as well as on the European public opinion, little prepared to accept the enlargement.

The period leading to the official membership designation abounded with analyzing the possibilities of the entrants. *The Economist* took a closer look at the newcomers' capabilities of entering the euro-zone once they were formal members, publishing the Commission and the European Central Bank's warning of too fast euro inclusion as the disturbance of monetary flexibility and an economic growth⁵⁹⁰. One may wonder why such deliberations appeared so soon, but the euro discussions on the eve of the Copenhagen summit were provoked by the new members themselves, namely Poland, whose finance minister, Grzegorz Kołodko, presented his EU partners with the fiscal strategies to bring the country closer to euro. Therefore, the EU, anxious about the economic stability, warned the easterners of any bold moves, and focused on the economic development instead.

The real battle, however, took place two days before the summit, and as *The Daily Telegraph* presented, the massive attack directed at Poland was the result of acting at its own request⁵⁹¹. The Polish dogged determination of demanding bigger subsidies frustrated the host of the meeting, Denmark, whose foreign minister, Per Stig Moeller, attempted to make Poland aware of the limits of its exaggeration. Moreover, he tried to make Poland also realize that such a tenacity of its claims may have resulted in leaving the club before it joined. Although other candidates initially objected to the EU unsatisfactory proposal in different areas, all of them surrendered, or reached some kind of compromise, whereas Polish attitude was, according to the newspaper, unacceptable.

⁵⁸⁹ Grabbe H., *Enlargement, ready or not?*, December 8, 2002, Internet: <http://politics.guardian.co.uk/comment/story/0,9115,855941,00.html>.

⁵⁹⁰ *Finance and Economics: What convergence? EU enlargement*, The Economist, London, December 7, 2002, p. 100.

⁵⁹¹ Evans-Pritchard A., *EU warns Poland it could be excluded*, The Daily Telegraph, December 10, 2002, Internet: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml>.

The Times could not also omit the opening of the summit with a tough Polish stance on demanding more money, although less accusing tone of the article allowed realizing that the other aspiring states were holding out for better terms as well⁵⁹². The host of the meeting, Danish Prime Minister, advised Warsaw either to give up or to adulate to mainly Germany to obtain some more funds, which showed a human nature of the politician known for a firm chairmanship during his six months as the EU president.

The so far comments on Poland's haggling in Copenhagen had not been so harsh, as *The Daily Telegraph's* overview of the summit, which tore the Polish behaviour to pieces⁵⁹³. Evans-Pritchard gave a picture of the Poles as the nation using their sense of national tragedy to achieve their goals and abusing a well-off club of Europeans, leaving the impression of money-grubbing Eastern European countries. To complete a bitter profile of a new greedy member, the author cited the words of one Polish official who claimed that the EU would lose a lot more if the enlargement did not take place. However, unbelievable as it seemed to be for Mrs. Evans-Pritchard, such a reprehensible acting found the support of some EU states, namely Germany, whose chancellor persuaded the EU heads to agree to speed up the payments to the Poles instead of spreading them over three years, which satisfied the Polish Prime Minister, Leszek Miller⁵⁹⁴.

The reception of the Copenhagen summit by *The Economist* was far more favourable, with the encouraging prospects for a new EU of 27⁵⁹⁵. The magazine brought readers the picture of easterners, eager to join the organization, yet with referendums still to come, the most expecting one to be in Poland. Although the next step was the official membership on 1 May, 2004, the concerns that seemed not to leave the EU referred to the cooperation after the admission, especially in terms of an economic development and its influence on the Union itself. The predictions for the growth of the Eastern Europe's economies appeared to be quite positive, though, with the exception of Poland, whose economic indicators approached the unsatisfactory line for the EU experts.

Nevertheless, it looked a bit gloomy that Poland, with its determination to fight for more, and aspirations for aiming higher, could have appeared as a big disappointment for the EU leaders who supported its membership and believed, or it was convenient for them to believe in the Poles' capabilities and the country's economic abilities. The concerns were

⁵⁹² Watson R., *Polish demands...* op. cit.

⁵⁹³ Evans-Pritchard A., *Entry becomes a hard-fought battle for Poles*, *The Daily Telegraph*, December 13, 2002, Internet: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml>.

⁵⁹⁴ Helm T., Evans-Pritchard A., *EU expansion is set in motion*, *The Daily Telegraph*, December 14, 2002, Internet: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml>.

⁵⁹⁵ *Europe: And now let's have another look at the road map; After the EU summit*, *The Economist*, London, December 21, 2002, p. 43.

not groundless, however, as *The Economist* noticed at the beginning of 2003, when Poland was subject to a crisis⁵⁹⁶. The magazine observed the cabinet of Leszek Miller involved in the corruption and scandals, which contributed to losing the society's trust, an economic slowdown or the stagnation of the legal system, taking years of minor cases to be heard. Although the picture of a strong "Polish tiger" resembled more a domestic cat, which was perceived to be losing the world political arena's confidence as well, there was still faith in rebirth of an energetic, muscular state, which held promise for a big success.

2.2.3. **EU constitution.**

With the idea of creating the EU constitution and appointing the EU Convention under the leadership of Valery Giscard d'Estaing, there was no end of the discussions and debates on the contents of the document as well as the transformation of the EU it would cause. The current states altogether with the still aspiring countries disputed about the consequences of the constitution for Europe, presenting their stances and demanding the changes to make the draft acceptable for all, two of them being of a special interest: Great Britain, whose sceptical attitude to a legislative restriction resulted from the lack of such a document and Poland, whose belligerence and drive for power had attracted publicity of the British press.

Before the Convention officially completed the draft on 10 July 2003, *The Guardian* presented the difference of opinions between Prime Minister Tony Blair and the president of the European Commission Romano Prodi⁵⁹⁷. Although both politicians put criticism on the document, the origin of it was quite different, and gave rise to the debate on Europe in Britain, with the ultimate settlement whether to be out or in Europe as well as whether to be more integrated with the EU. Blair's reassurance of benefits from the place in Europe, in terms of peace and prosperity, led to avoiding the constitutional referendum, the idea of which appeared during the discussions, and which was the last thing Blair wished to have in the light of the euro struggle. The debate on Europe, however, showed two polar opposites: Blair perceived the retention of the national vetoes on such areas as taxation and defence and foreign policy to be the key element of the EU, whereas Prodi regarded them as a "step backwards". Nevertheless, the Prime Minister in his efforts to convince the EU partners again supported his goals with such a "proud nation" as Poland, which would never agree to

⁵⁹⁶ *Europe: A bad patch; Poland's government*, *The Economist*, London, March 1, 2003, p. 35.

⁵⁹⁷ White M., Black I., Hall S., *Time to decide on Europe, says Blair*, *The Guardian*, May 29, 2003, Internet: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/eu/story/0,,965989,00.html>.

surrender its sovereignty after tyranny it had come through. Obviously, it was convenient for the British leader to refer to Poland in such sensitive issues in order to protect his policy against British Euro-sceptics and oppose the EU's visions.

Before the areas of decision-making process in the draft of the EU constitution came under scrutiny, *The Daily Telegraph* focused on Poland's claims to Christian reference the preamble to the EU constitution⁵⁹⁸. Although the Polish president admitted being an atheist, Evans-Pritchard wrote, he accused the draft of not including the Christian values, which were so significant to the development of Europe. However, the title of the article suggested that an atheist fighting for Christianity did indicate an attempt for sustaining the clout Poland as the biggest candidate country had, thus putting impact on the project. Moreover, the call was supposed to convince the Poles of not playing the second role as the EU members, the faith which was so crucial in the pre-referendum period. Again, the journalist emphasized the anxiety Polish political scene felt just before the final Polish decision, paying attention to disappointed Catholics on the one hand, and the upset farmers, on the other, which completed the picture of Euro-sceptical and nationalistic Poles.

The determination of Poland to prove its rights in the EU was signalled again in *The Daily Telegraph*, when the Polish president made alliance with the Czech head of state to demand for revising the constitutional draft⁵⁹⁹. As the document implemented changes in the number of states' representatives in the EU institutions, to the newcomers' disadvantage, therefore Prague and Warsaw combined their forces in order to protect the nations from the potential threats, i.e. the new rearrangement in the bodies, the creation of the EU president and foreign minister, which brought the Union closer to the vision of a federal state unacceptable by the states.

The Economist, however, made efforts to avoid political judgements, yet presenting clear stances on the actions towards the EU constitution. At the beginning of November 2003, the magazine published the warning Poland received from the European Commission about improving the adjustments otherwise it may have lost the resources⁶⁰⁰. In the context of the slowdown, Poland was shown as the candidate causing the greatest number of concerns, with the oversights on some professions, agricultural areas or the legal and computer requirements necessary to obtain the EU money. Moreover, the Poles seemed to

⁵⁹⁸ Evans-Pritchard A., *Atheist premier attacks lack of Christianity in EU constitution*, *The Daily Telegraph*, June 4, 2003, Internet: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml>.

⁵⁹⁹ *East Europe leaders want more power in larger EU*, *The Daily Telegraph*, September 26, 2003, Internet: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml>.

⁶⁰⁰ *Europe: Big bother is still watching; European Union enlargement*, *The Economist*, London, November 8, 2003, p. 42.

be taken to task by the magazine, when the comparison between the neglected areas and the claims of the constitutional draft's revision was made, to Poland's disadvantage.

Nonetheless, the picture of Poland which *The Economist* placed at the end of the month turned out to be an overview of the Poles after a long time of battles in the European arena⁶⁰¹. The distinctiveness of the article may have been found quite shocking, although the presentation was based on the accuracy of the account, from different points of view. Taking the reception of the Polish nation by the EU states into consideration, though, one could learn that a "selfish, greedy, nationalistic, unEuropean" nation was the Polish nation, with the lack of political culture, common sense and the ability to make compromises. The claims in terms of the EU constitution that Warsaw made, however, were regarded as well-grounded, although the would-be member was considered to be lacking a wider vision of Europe, but cherished its national interest only. In the light of self-centeredness, *The Economist* contrasted Polish attitude with the approach of the EU states, and proved Germany, France or Britain to act as egoistic as Poland.

With a critical outlook on Poland in its aspirations for the EU membership, one should agree that *The Economist's* remarks were much of the favourable advice given to the state with a short period of democratic experience, to the country with little time of being respected and acknowledged in the international scene, therefore taking the comments at face value. On the other hand, however, the picture of a poor, clumsy and politically awkward newcomer was overshadowed with a sarcastic image of the nation being patronized by the members, with the inclination to consider Poland's manner liberated from the yoke of the history, thus always excused. With frustration, though, the magazine pointed out the country's daring as the virtue sometimes undesirable when the core states made a decision.

With the time leading to the crucial summit in Brussels on 12-13 December 2003, during which the fate of the constitutional draft was supposed to be decided, *The Daily Telegraph* took under scrutiny the attitudes and reactions of all states to proposed regulations of the project. Few days before the event, however, the coverage was full of dissatisfaction the EU and aspiring countries expressed with the proposal, for the main reason of France and Germany's leadership of the others⁶⁰². The newspaper's tone accused the two core states of manipulating the other partners into rising the interest of Europe above the national ones, which stood in contradiction to the goal both states attempted to achieve,

⁶⁰¹ *Those pesky Poles*, *The Economist*, London, November 29, 2003, p. 46.

⁶⁰² Evans-Pritchard A., *Power struggle in EU threatens new constitution*, *The Daily Telegraph*, November 28, 2003, Internet: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml>.

i.e. to rearrange the institutions in such a way to accumulate the power among the biggest members.

The hard and memorable day of the Brussels summit was commented in the series of coverage in *The Daily Telegraph*, which showed the determined attitudes of the EU and candidate states to the constitutional project's changes. On the day of the meeting, Poland was presented in the context of having an argument with Germany about the division of votes in the institutions, the row which resulted from the change against the Nice system⁶⁰³. Three of the EC founders, Germany, France and Italy, warned the opposing countries, with Poland and Spain taking the lead, of sustaining their alliance as long as the opponents stopped pushing for the Nice restoration. Moreover, Poland and Spain's initiative was in favour of Britain, whose Prime Minister wished to take advantage of their demand as it would mean for the UK not being in isolation with its counter-arguments. Mr. Blair strongly objected to creating a federal super-state, and the fear of leading to a two-speed Europe and leaving Britain behind gave him a boost to reaching a consensus eventually.

During the second day of the summit, however, the British leader changed the attitude, which clearly showed how the "culture of compromise" worked⁶⁰⁴. Soon after his claims on tax, foreign policy and budget rebate were to be accepted, the UK's premier took a role of a mediator between Germany and Poland. With the final revised draft to appear at the end of the Brussels' talks, though, the haggling began. According to the commentary of Evans-Pritchard, the rebellious approach of Poland and Spain put Germany and France against their determination, although Spain, a more experienced international player, could show a sense of diplomatic tactics and was willing to reach a "reasonable" consensus, whereas the emotional attitude of the Poles as well as a lack of political manners, left the nation in its own battle. Although Britain was perceived as the state to help mediate the compromise with Spain and Poland in gratitude for the acceptance of its "red lines", Mr. Blair did not make an effort.

Paradoxically, in the interview for the *BBC News*, the UK Foreign Secretary Jack Straw expressed his regrets over the unsuccessful summit on the EU constitutional draft⁶⁰⁵. He referred to main disputable issues, such as Polish and Spanish insistence on voting arrangements or the threat of creating a two-speed Europe with the rule of France and Germany, although "life would go on" despite a lack of agreement.

⁶⁰³ Evans-Pritchard A., Jones G., *EU prays for miracle to end deadlock*, *The Daily Telegraph*, December 12, 2003, Internet: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml>.

⁶⁰⁴ Jones G., Evans-Pritchard A., *Blair cast as summit peacemaker*, *The Daily Telegraph*, December 13, 2003, Internet: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml>.

⁶⁰⁵ *UK regret over EU summit failure*, *BBC News*, December 14, 2003, Internet: http://news.bbc.co.uk/pr/fr/-/2/hi/uk_news/politics/3317473.stm.

However, Mr. Straw's attempts for diminishing the failure of the Brussels meeting was criticized by *The Daily Telegraph*, which brought into public the leaders' recriminations⁶⁰⁶. The Irish Prime Minister, who would take over the EU presidency, tried to cool the atmosphere after the summit, thus suggesting taking time to consider the issues, whereas the Czech Republic's president, in a more distinct statement, accused the most powerful states of persuading serious changes without a common accord, but for the sake of "personal prestige". Furthermore, the person who met more personal accusations was the chairman of the summit, Silvio Berlusconi, whose attitude of little involvement frustrated the participants and was also believed to bring fiasco of the meeting. Finally, the approach of the UK's playing a double game became a point of criticism for the French president, whose expectations towards Mr. Blair concerned the support of building a strong core of states cooperating on economics, defence and crime-fighting.

In a tone of smaller accusations the failure of the Brussels summit was commented by *The Guardian*, which could consider the conflict of interests between the states' aspirations and the EU's integrative model to be the biggest reason⁶⁰⁷. However, the coverage of the event in terms of the German and Polish clash looked much less accusing for Poland, as the newspaper emphasised Germany's cupidity for power and a lack of integrationist attitude to accept a "poor, undeveloped nation of around 40 million people" to share equal rights. Moreover, the British premier's approach, criticized by *The Daily Telegraph*, was excused in *The Guardian* as a manner of a sophisticated political player, controlled and steady, who "aware of the difficulties, recognised the realities, protected his own interests but cooperated in search of the solution", making a perfect picture of an ideal statesman.

The Times, on the other hand, published Tony Blair's account of the Brussels' fiasco to the British parliament, giving the House of Commons a picture of his successful participation, bravely opposing the idea of a two-speed Europe⁶⁰⁸. The Prime Minister agreed to allow the most sensitive issues of the constitutional project some time and fiercely criticised the vision of Europe the core states proposed, meeting his colleagues' approval in this area, yet being laughed when praising Berlusconi's chairmanship. Moreover, the House of Commons could appreciate Poland's insistence to block the agreement since it prevented the draft from gathering all states' acceptance, the result which satisfied the British.

⁶⁰⁶ Evans-Pritchard A., Jones G., *EU constitution "in the long grass" for at least a year*, *The Daily Telegraph*, December 15, 2003, Internet: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml>.

⁶⁰⁷ *Back to the future*, *The Guardian*, December 15, 2003, Internet: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/print/0,,4819363-106710,00.html>.

⁶⁰⁸ Hurst G., *Blair pours scorn on two-speed Europe*, *The Times*, December 16, 2003, Internet: <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/article1043936.ece>.

Although Poland's clinging to its fight for votes' justice in the EU found the understanding and acceptance among the British Conservatives, cited by *The Observer*, there were worries about much greater number of difficulties to appear on the way to the enlargement⁶⁰⁹. The British political arena went into a discussion once the summit finished, which brought the participants to the conclusion that the rearrangement of Europe was indispensable in the face of 25 or 27 members, provided that the changes were carefully contemplated.

However, the comment of Will Hutton, pro-European representative of the British politics, in *The Observer*, did not present such a peaceful reception of the Brussels⁶¹⁰. The politician expressed his disappointment with the attitude the European nations had towards the EU: instead of the eagerness for sustaining the organization, improving its structure, developing a sense of pride, the members as well as would-be states tended to criticize in the atmosphere of nationalism and Euro-scepticism. To emphasize the inglorious manner the participants of the summit presented, though, Hutton referred to Poland's unacceptable way of claiming its voting power and the rapacity of Germany or Britain for forcing their interests. He also disapproved of the members' drive for power, domination and gaining control, while treating the rules, requirements and decisions to govern and manage the Union as an enemy.

Furthermore, *The Observer's* journalists summarised the failure of the meeting to result mainly from Poland's fierceness and not praiseworthy haggling⁶¹¹. The Polish approach was shown in such an impermissible light that one might consider the state to be of the highest clout as to obtain tolerance with such a manner of political debates; the conviction which undoubtedly turned out to be wrong. However, in the newspaper's eyes, the crisis between Poland and Germany proved the two nations to stick firmly to their opinions: Poland, to the agreement on the votes reached in Nice, Germany, to the belief in being harmed as the most populated state, hence demanding their rights. Moreover, the German sense of injustice on decision-making system was supposed to stem from Poland and Spain's broken promise for supporting the enlargement, for this reason, though, Berlin called for reweighing the votes. Whatever the cause, Poland, not even being the official member, was presented as the source of all evil in the EU and mainly responsible for the fiasco of the constitutional summit. Obviously, then, there must have been always a

⁶⁰⁹ Ahmed K., Hinsliff G., *Blair faces backlash amid fears of EU chaos*, *The Observer*, December 14, 2003, Internet: <http://observer.guardian.co.uk/print/0,,4819112-110406,00.html>.

⁶¹⁰ Hutton W., *Why I fear that the dream is doomed*, *The Observer*, December 14, 2003, Internet: <http://observer.guardian.co.uk/print/0,,4818960-102273,00.html>.

⁶¹¹ Hinsliff G., Traynor I., *Europe's grand folly*, *The Observer*, December 14, 2003, Internet: <http://observer.guardian.co.uk/print/0,,4818958-110406,00.html>.

scapegoat, and since Poland fought uncompromisingly, it was a perfect country to be blamed for.

Germany's eagerness to find a perpetrator of the failure found its place in the articles on *EurActiv* website which referred to the most disputable issue, i.e. Poland and Spain's persistence to rearrange the votes in the Council of Ministers⁶¹². According to the commentary of John Palmer, although the summiteers made efforts not to blame for the disastrous meeting, though, Germany's disappointment led to a bullet aiming at the two countries: "Poland and Spain have shown that they are not at the level of European history". Such a harsh judgement did not give them a good sign for cooperation, moreover it heralded their big trouble in the negotiations on the following seven-year budgetary period, according to chancellor Schroeder⁶¹³.

Surprisingly, the UK joined the issue of the Polish and Spanish demands' cuts as soon as the British leader spotted the interest in the French-German axis, *The Guardian* observed⁶¹⁴. The British change of the attitude to Poland proved the mastery of the "culture of diplomacy", or rather a sense of craftiness, although Tony Blair claimed the decisions of cutting the budget expenditures of the four biggest contributors to the EU budget, i.e. France, Germany, Britain, with the support of Austria, Sweden and Holland, was made before the collapse of the Brussels summit. Nonetheless, the two events coincided at the same time, which could not allow limiting the EU spending to fund aid to poorer regions to be regarded differently than Warsaw and Madrid's punishment for blocking the agreement on the draft constitution. Despite the fact that the decision had been prepared before, though, the situation perfectly suited Germany, which did not even attempt to avoid this kind of impression, as one British senior diplomat stated.

A few days after revealing the unexpected news, Ian Black returned to the alleged plan of the greatest contributors before the meeting, in his vision over a new Europe⁶¹⁵. He could see the uncomfortable situation which was created after Brussels, and regardless of the blame, the connection between the budgetary cuts and the fiasco summit was too clear to deny, with the biggest losers, Poland and Spain. The case of how much the Poles lost, however, was analyzed by Kirsty Hughes, senior fellow of the Centre for European Policy

⁶¹² Palmer J., *After the Failure of the Constitutional Treaty Negotiations: New Directions for European Integration?*, the European Policy Centre, December 15, 2003, Internet: <http://www.euractiv.com/en/future-eu/failure-constitutional-treaty-negotiations-new-directions-european-integration.html>.

⁶¹³ *Summit failure re-opens debate over „two-speed Europe”*, the European Policy Centre, December 15, 2003, Internet: <http://www.euractiv.com/en/future-eu/summit-failure-opens-debate-speed-europe.html>.

⁶¹⁴ White M., Black I., *Blair backs move to punish Spain and Poland*, *The Guardian*, December 16, 2003, Internet: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/eu/story/0,,1107806,00.html>.

⁶¹⁵ Black I., *Inside Europe*, *The Guardian*, December 22, 2003, Internet: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/eu/story/0,,4824209-103390,00.html>.

Studies, who believed Poland's intransigence and a lack of compromising policy resulted in undermining its political credibility as well as political capital in the EU, so thoroughly being built by the European minister, Danuta Hubner up to the convention⁶¹⁶.

The sounds of the unsuccessful summit appeared on the eve of the admission, when *The Times* summarised Blair's achievements in terms of the European policy⁶¹⁷. In the light of his failures, however, the revival of the constitutional debate marked the approach of the turn of events, with the willingness of the Spanish to compromise with France and Germany, and the signs of reconciliation coming from the Polish government.

It would be impossible to deny, however, that the presence of Poland in the British press during the EU constitutional project was scanty. Just the opposite, as the Poles stood out with their attitude of a proud and rebellious nation, whose objection to being subordinated or manipulated made the EU members' life a misery. On the one hand, determination to act against all odds was perceived to be the state's virtue, but sometimes the frustration of the observers contributed to Poland's picture of an inexperienced, politically unprepared to face compromises, nationalistic and with a lack of political culture country, which so willingly referred to history, each time its European fate was endangered.

3. British public opinion towards Polish accession.

The image of Poland and the Polish nation for the British population had been a mystery, as while the British political scene could learn a lot from the direct relations with the Poles as well as their presence and participation in numerous European events, the Britons, as a society, were deprived of such knowledge. Moreover, the British Prime Minister, altogether with the representatives of his cabinet, and the distinguished politicians of Labour and Conservative Party paid visits to Poland, or received Polish diplomats in their country, hence having opportunities to meet and recognize the picture of the future EU partner from a political perspective.

Furthermore, the coverage of the British press, especially around the most significant events for the EU, presented Poland in a wider European context. The image of the Polish nation coming from this source, however, could not necessarily reveal the real view, as the commentaries were more than once marked emotionally, or with political sympathies.

⁶¹⁶ Hughes K., *Summit Collapse: Ongoing Crisis for the Enlarged EU*, Centre for European Policy Studies, December 19, 2003, Internet: <http://www.euractiv.com/en/future-eu/summit-collapse-ongoing-crisis-enlarged-eu.html>.

⁶¹⁷ Riddell P., *Blair's long goodbye to his European dream*, *The Times*, March 25, 2004, Internet: http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/columnists/peter_riddell/article1051342.html.

Therefore, the reception of the Poles for the average British person might have been quite vague and, without a proper information policy on the future EU member, with a tendency to be misleading.

The British newspapers were not unambiguous about the profile of the Poles, though, as in the context of analyzed issues of the labour market, or the political arena, or the picture of Polish village, the nation's portrayals varied from these of a positive, favourable approach to those of a negative, full of fears and threats attitude. Nevertheless, such a publicity resulted from the events which Poland participated in, and its manner of approaching them. The friendly coverage accompanied the situations with Polish engagement, aspirations to prove its commitment, whereas the more anxious commentaries were connected with Poland's uncompromising moves, which raised frustration, or the moments which made the British realize the Polish potential as the would-be member.

However, despite the emotions Poland's membership caused among the British, the fact was that the picture of Polish nation was influenced by both, real virtues that the Poles could reveal to the Britons as well as the stereotypes which still persisted for the majority of British society.

3.1. The Poles in the eyes of the British.

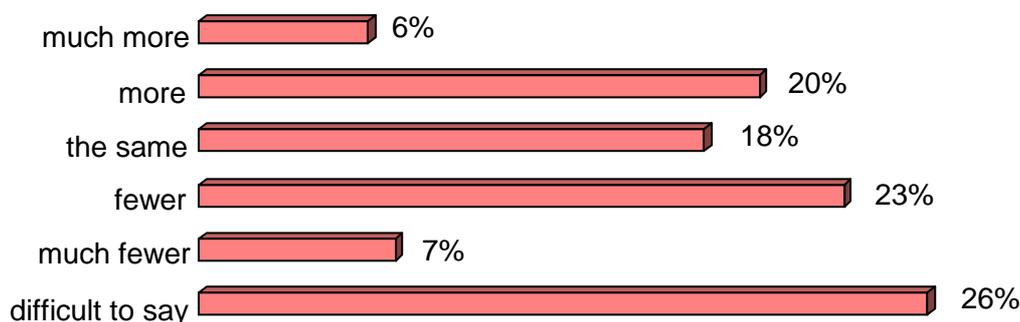
At the beginning of 2001, ICM Research Institute conducted a survey on the picture of Poland and the Poles in Great Britain, whose results were determined by such factors as: the frequency of information about the Polish nation in Britain, the presence of Polish goods on the British market or a lack of Poland's participation in the world arena for almost two centuries⁶¹⁸. Although these issues could be perceived as trivial, though, they did contribute to quite a fragmentary picture of the Poles in the eyes of the British.

Taking the above deliberations into consideration, however, one may state that the knowledge of the UK's citizens about Poland was scanty: every fourth Briton regarded the area of the future EU member to have a bigger population than their country, and almost every fifth was of the opinion that the area was of the same size, which stretched the truth⁶¹⁹.

⁶¹⁸ Strzeszewski M., Wenzel M., *Polska-Wielka Brytania. Wzajemny wizerunek*, p. 174-176, [in:] Kolarska-Bobińska L., *Obraz Polski i Polaków w Europie*, Instytut Spraw Publicznych, Warszawa 2003.

⁶¹⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 175.

Graph 3. Do you think Poland has more inhabitants than the UK?



Source: Instytut Spraw Publicznych, *Obraz Polski i Polaków w Europie*, Warsaw 2003.

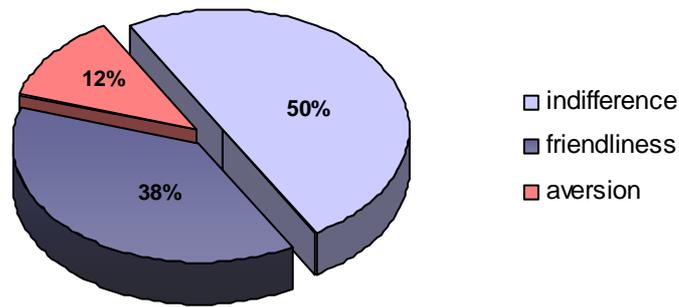
Moreover, the portrayal of the internal situation of Poland, in the chosen aspects, was not satisfactory either, as the majority of respondents marked the political elite and the Polish administration with a bad quality, considering the bureaucracy and corruption to be on too high a level. Furthermore, the British people's knowledge of economic and political condition of the future EU partner was also little in the light of the research, though, as only one fifth of the asked Britons realized that Poland was a market economy with a parliamentary system.

The fact that the inhabitants of the United Kingdom knew so little was the reason of sparse contacts between them and the Polish nation as well as a limited access to available sources of such information. The survey revealed that every twenty-fifth person had visited Poland, every seventh knew a Pole, and every ninth could admit having any relations with the Polish citizens. Since, then, direct contacts were not the source of learning about the representatives of this aspiring country, was it the British mass media or literature, though? As the results showed, the answer, in the years up to 2001, was negative: four times fewer Britons than Poles were inclined to watch a Polish film or read a Polish book. Moreover, a smaller number of the nation in question could perceive television to be the source of information about Poland than in the opposite instance.

Nonetheless, despite being "cautious" to refer to the sources of knowledge, the Poles were likeable among the British society, with the majority of 38% for and only 12% expressing aversion⁶²⁰.

⁶²⁰ CBOS, *Brytyjczycy o Polakach, Polacy o Brytyjczykach*, Research Release, March 2001.

Graph 4. Attitude of Britons to Poles



Source: CBOS, *Brytyjczycy o Polakach, Polacy o Brytyjczykach*, March 2001.

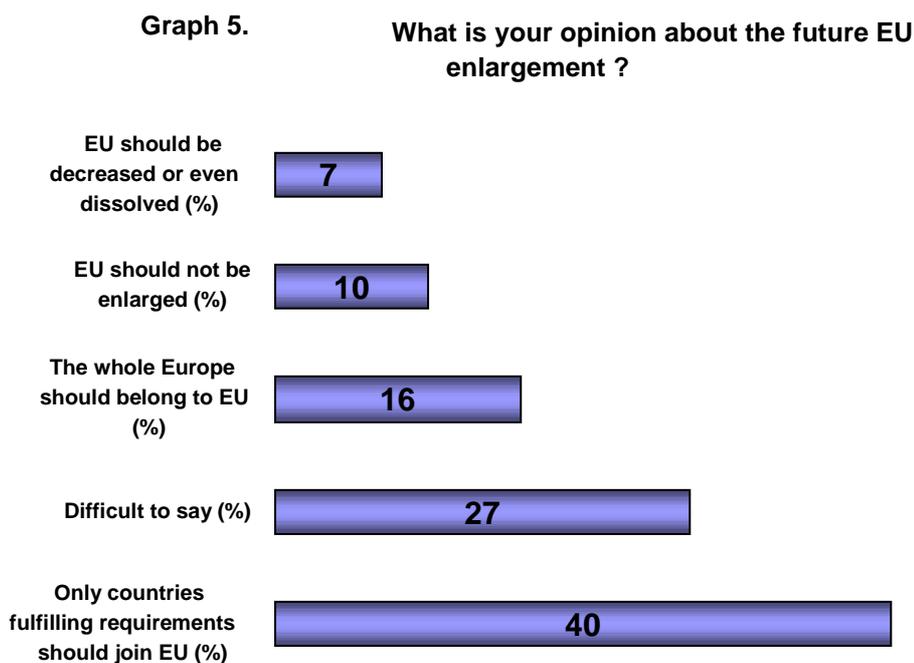
Moreover, while being asked about the similarities of Poland's inhabitants to the Western Europe's nations, 36% respondents stated they resembled western Europeans, with 23% being of a different opinion. What could be surprising, and a bit alarming, though, was the fact that as many as 27% were not able to define whether the Poles were or not similar.

Although the amount of knowledge, altogether with the range of sympathy towards Polish nation, could indicate the British public opinion's attitude to Poland and its citizens at the beginning of the accession negotiations, as the approach as well as stance of the political elite influence the society, but the public opinion has an impact on the political arena either. Before the results of the British' attitude could be contrasted with the outcomes of the society's survey on the verge of the admission and their reference to Britain's political views, the examined group of Britons portrayed the Polish nation according to their distinctive features, which built a stereotype of a Pole in Great Britain⁶²¹.

In the eyes of the British, though, the Polish citizens were regarded as religious and hard-working, with 40% of those being convinced of their self-discipline, responsibility and friendliness. As for the negative feature, 32% enumerated backwardness and a lack of modernity. However, in the light of the survey the biggest group of respondents presented indirect attitudes, which contributed to an indistinctive picture of a Pole in Britain in 2001, for instance the views on whether the nation was successful or unsuccessful were divided, whereas the opinion that a Pole was efficient predominated over inefficiency. Almost every third perceived them to be tidy, with one out of ten to admit their untidiness. Adding honesty and tolerance as the features mentioned by the asked, completed eventually quite a positive profile of an average Pole.

⁶²¹ Strzeszewski M., Wenzel M., *Polska-Wielka Brytania...*, op. cit., p. 192-194.

The next important issue in the Polish-British relations put into examination was Poland's membership in the EU and the British attitude to the enlargement. In the research included the period from 1993 to 1996, however, 40-42% were convinced that the European Community should be expanded with Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary, while 28-31% opposed⁶²². The 2001 research results showed that 40% of the British agreed for the new members which fulfilled the EU requirements, with as many as 27% undecided, making the results comparable⁶²³.



Source: CBOS, *Brytyjczycy o Polakach, Polacy o Brytyjczykach*, March 2001.

Moreover, the interviewees, in 27%, considered Poland to become the EU state within 5 years, with a majority of opinions supporting the accession for economic reasons (35%), international security in the world (25%) as well as enhancing the EU with new traditions and cultural values. On the other hand, however, 39% of the British expressed concern and fear of the flow of cheap labour force from Poland, whereas 20% worried about the functioning of the organization with 25 members and the increase of costs for the current states. The areas of anxieties will be thoroughly discussed in the following subchapter.

The issue of building the British' awareness, however, was taken into consideration as well, and unsurprisingly, it turned out that the interviewees mentioned the media as the

⁶²² *Attitudes to the EU*, MORI survey, May 1996, Internet: <http://www.ipsos-mori.com/polls/1996/t960526.shtml>.

⁶²³ CBOS, *Brytyjczycy o...*, op. cit.

first source of the information about the EU, including the candidate states⁶²⁴. As a possible way of accessing knowledge the respondents indicated the Internet used by a substantial minority. When asked, though, people also displayed interest in participating in local, open debates if such meetings took place, but when national political figures were suggested to them as possible “mediators” for the EU information, the idea was often automatically discredited, to a benefit of a European Commissioner, though.

Surprisingly, however, the results of “trust” levels in the UK revealed that the British citizens’ belief in the press was at the end of 2003 at startlingly low level of 17%, which was less than half the EU average of 44%, and less than a third of that in Spain reaching the highest 61%⁶²⁵. The outcome of little trust to the press resulted in the number of people who had a feeling of having any information about the process of enlarging the EU with the Eastern Europeans, as only 58% of the Britons could confirm such knowledge⁶²⁶.

On the one hand, such a result with reference to the coverage in the British press should not be astonishing, as the information about Poland seemed to be incoherent as well as incomplete. On the other hand, though, despite a lack of a complex and consistent picture of Poland in this source of information, it was impossible to acquire at least some pieces of knowledge about the aspiring country, and with eagerness to widen or confirm such an image in other sources, the overall perception could be quite satisfying. Nevertheless, without making an attempt to excuse the commentaries in the press, an average Briton was able to learn about Polish politicians that they were determined and intransigent to achieve their national goals, as well as with prospects to be a strong, stable and influential partner in the European and world arena. As for the profile of an average farmer or an entrepreneur, however, the British were able to find out that they could either be technologically backward and poor landowners, or modern, prosperous and aspiring for the EU funds businessmen.

Finally, the way Poland was portrayed did not also clarify the British nation a real picture of the country, as once it was perceived as an economically and politically unstable state, while the other day the view changed to being a predictable ally and a responsible partner. No wonder, then, that the citizens of the UK did have problems with comprehending the information in order to get familiar with a new EU member. What were the reasons for

⁶²⁴ *Perceptions of the European Union. A qualitative study of the public’s. Attitudes to and expectations of the EU in the 15 members states and in 9 candidate countries. Summary and results*, the European Commission, June 2001.

⁶²⁵ *Public Opinion in the European Union. National Report-United Kingdom*, Eurobarometer 61, European Opinion Research Group EEiG, the European Commission, Spring 2004.

⁶²⁶ Kurczewska U., *Opinia publiczna w Unii Europejskiej wobec rozszerzenia UE*, PISM, no. 42 (146), 2003, Internet: http://www.pism.pl/biuletyn_content/id/84.

concerns which was interspersed between the symptoms of admiration for the aspiring country, then?

3.2. British fears of Poland's membership.

The period around Poland's accession to the European Union in the British press was portrayed with the debates about opening the labour market for the newcomers. According to the research conducted by MORI institute in 2001, 40% of Poles declared living and working in another European country within the following five years⁶²⁷. Although the member states had assumed the free movement of workers once the easterners became part of the EU, the estimations stated that if there were no restrictions within this negotiation area, between 1.6 to 2.4 million people would attempt to move from Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary to the EU by 2006. However, the vision presented with the outcomes of the survey did not seem to threaten the EU states, including Britain, because, as Mark Ambler, the leader of the research team noticed, the flow of skilled workers would contribute to decreasing emerging skill shortages in the member countries, which would be beneficial to them⁶²⁸. On the other hand, the phenomenon which posed a threat in terms of employment, was the influx of unskilled or unemployed people who would damage the EU states' markets' conditions.

Nevertheless, the researchers could also discern a disadvantage of labour market's flexibility for Poland's economy provided that the estimated number of skilled Polish workers did decide to work abroad. Interestingly, 58% of Poles, Swedes and 52% of Czechs were in favour of easier possibilities of working and living in other EU countries, whereas only 25% of Britons and 20% of Germans could agree with that notion, which explicitly indicated little enthusiasm to the new nations visiting and occupying their markets. The least unfavourable attitude of Germany to that issue was reflected in imposing transitional periods in the area of labour movement between Poland and Germany, the British government, however, did not take the suggested approach of the public opinion into account, and opened its borders to the newcomers as soon as the states became the EU members.

When asked about the motives of leaving their country, though, the Poles tended to refer to the increased payment more than the residents of any other candidate countries, and moreover, as the biggest obstacles, they enumerated a lack of information about work

⁶²⁷ *New Insights Into Labour Migration*, Ipsos MORI, 27 September 2001, Internet: <http://www.ipsos-mori.com/polls/2001/pwc.shtml>.

⁶²⁸ *Ibidem*.

possibilities, poor command of language and the difficulties in obtaining work permits⁶²⁹. Therefore, the citizens of Poland longed for the moment of admission to begin to experience the new working and living opportunities, but did the EU members and their residents look forward to it with the same enthusiasm?

The right-wing newspapers as well as the British tabloids criticised Tony Blair for the policy of “open door” with reference to the potential immigrants, whereas the commentaries in more opinion-forming press focused on the disputes over how the presence and flow of ten new members could affect the situation of the UK⁶³⁰. *The Times* emphasized the significance of the enlargement not only for the reason of its size, but also its diversity of living standards and economies between the current states and the joining ones⁶³¹. Although the article indicated the advantages of Britain for the new citizens in terms of migrations, such as immediate employment and residential rights, or the right to full access to the welfare system, the tone gave the impression of a bit of concern: “Britain’s welfare system will prove a powerful attraction for new EU members”, especially connected with the unskilled and unemployed workers, though. Moreover, the author slipped a dose of fear when mentioning still small incomes in Poland, Slovakia or Estonia in comparison to the UK’s salaries, which made the country even more attractive for their nations.

Furthermore, the fact that the very Poland was the biggest and highly populated state out of the ten newcomers attracted the press, which usually presented Polish workers as reliable, diligent and cheap unlike idle and spoiled by the public sector Britons⁶³². Polish employees had a distinguishing feature of being experts in their trades, therefore the British homeowners needed a Polish worker to do a good job for a reasonable price, the newspaper claimed. What is more, however, the Poles were considered to be well motivated labour, which was ready to take long journeys and would not complain about hard work. All these positive pictures of Polish immigrants were encouraging and motivating on the one hand, but they also pointed out the condition of the Polish economy and high level of unemployment, on the other.

The Times’ discussion on the labour opportunity led to the conclusion that one of the eastern Europeans’ incentives to work in the UK was high wage level, citing the EU analysis which suggested the purchasing power of Polish wages was equivalent to about 40% of the

⁶²⁹ Ibidem.

⁶³⁰ Bobiński A., *Wizerunek Polski w opiniotwórczej prasie brytyjskiej (grudzień 2003-maj 2004)*, p. 89, [in:] Fałkowski M., *Pierwsze kroki w Unii. Polityka polska w prasie europejskiej*, Instytut Spraw Publicznych, Warszawa 2004.

⁶³¹ Browne A., *East Europeans learn benefits of open borders*, *The Times*, June 19, 2003, Internet: http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/newspaper/sunday_times/britain/article1099292.ece.

⁶³² Clard R., *Let them come in, they do more than idle Brits*, *The Times*, February 24, 2004, Internet: <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/thunderer/article1028180.ece>.

current EU members⁶³³. Moreover, the journalist referred also to the fact of undeveloped benefit systems in whole eastern Europe, making reference to Poland and its 19% of unemployment, whereas the rate in the Czech Republic amounted to 7.6% and 5.9% in Hungary. No wonder, then, that the British Prime Minister's speech at the House of Commons just before the entry called for the possibility of changing the welfare benefit rules in Britain in order to discourage "benefit tourists"⁶³⁴.

The inconsistency of Poland's portrayal in the British press was proven by presenting Poles as highly skilled people who, although more than once worked as labourers, trades people or service sector workers, could apply their skills more rationally in the EU market due to the membership, and contrasting such an image with a traditional, a bit backward society⁶³⁵. Following this way of perception, though, the Poles were a nation still dominated by the Catholic church and Poland was a country afraid of discussing such issues as prostitution or paedophilia. The observation that Poland was a catholic state, where families took care of the elders, and the care for others constituted a national feature, completed the view from a different perspective, leaving a reader with a question: how wrong such a picture should be according to the "European standards"?

The issue of no labour barriers in the UK took the greatest coverage at the time of the accession, when the press referred to Poland in the context of the other entrants, just as *The Times*, or dedicated more commentaries to Poland only, like *The Daily Telegraph*. The debate on the range of Great Britain's diversity and its "capacity" to include more nations appeared in *The Times* three weeks before the big day⁶³⁶. The question of multiculturalism in Britain contributed to the area of fears as the observer claimed not to oppose the migrations or undermine the government's ability to manage the issue, nevertheless, the concern was more of functioning of the state. The Poles were placed in the context of the greatest flow of foreigners to Britain, which allowed defining the problems in question: the impact of ethnic and cultural differences on the state, and moreover, country's physical capacity to accommodate the strangers. Thus, even if Britain's government considered the open door policy not to be a threat for its residents, there were and would appear the issues which influenced the immigration indirectly.

The day of the accession, however, became the moment to celebrate with the series of articles about Poland in *The Daily Telegraph*. On the eve of the membership, the

⁶³³ Clard R., *Let them come in, they do more than idle Brits*, *The Times*, February 24, 2004, Internet: <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/thunderer/article1028180.ece>.

⁶³⁴ Ibidem.

⁶³⁵ Bobiński A., *Wizerunek Polski...*, op. cit., p. 90.

⁶³⁶ McDonagh M., *Comment: They're concealing the true cost of mass immigration*, *The Times*, April 11, 2004, Internet: <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/article821033.ece>.

newspaper showed Poland's strong reaction to the EU's ban on workers in the form of "revenge" over some EU states, hence implementing similar limitations to those willing to work in Poland⁶³⁷. Although Hungary had declared imposing the restrictions either, it was the biggest joining country which attracted *Telegraph's* attention, with the possibility to present the state's dogged determination and emotional response.

On 1 May 2004 *The Daily Telegraph* made attempts to dispel possible British concerns about Poles' flooding its labour market, citing the statement of Jan Mokrzycki, the president of the Federation of Poles, who believed Britain could experience only a short-term arrival of his countrymen⁶³⁸. To convince themselves, however, the journalists referred to economists and statisticians, according to whom the movement of workers to the UK would be attractive for only first years, then the admiration would slow down⁶³⁹. The assumptions were based on the data from 1980s, when the Europeans feared the admission of Greek, Spanish and Portuguese craving for better working and living conditions. Moreover, the experts of migrations reassured that those of the fresh members who wished to emigrate had already been in the EU, therefore it was groundless to worry about "eastern invasion".

The press coverage became the source of information about Poland's lack of opportunity for young people to earn decent money in order to lead a comfortable life⁶⁴⁰. The young Polish generation complained about low salaries despite the fact that they had degrees, but also mentioned willingness to learn a foreign language as a reason for leaving the country. They seemed to be so desperate as to take up any work for some time in order to satisfy their needs, i.e. to buy a flat, car or to start a family. Furthermore, the British newspaper did not hesitate to present Poland as a potential threat for other EU newcomers, namely Hungary⁶⁴¹. Hungary appeared as a wealthier country, which worried about its labour market and considered imposing curbs: "...consider the fact that more and more old EU members are limiting access of the new workforce from new member states to their labour markets, then the next consequence is that Poland, with 18% of unemployment (...) – where could they go? (...) – for example Hungary"⁶⁴².

⁶³⁷ Connolly K., *Poland fights EU job bans*, *The Daily Telegraph*, April 27, 2004, Internet: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml>.

⁶³⁸ Davies C., „*Few will stay long, it is too expensive*”, *The Daily Telegraph*, May 1, 2004, Internet: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml>.

⁶³⁹ La Guardia A., *Number of immigrants „will be tiny*”, *The Daily Telegraph*, May 1, 2004, Internet: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml>.

⁶⁴⁰ Connolly K., *Poles catch the bus to work in Britain*, *The Daily Telegraph*, May 1, 2004, Internet: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml>.

⁶⁴¹ *Ibidem*.

⁶⁴² *Ibidem*.

Another issue, which took the British publicity, and could be perceived as a possible concern was a Polish political arena, with every symptoms of the government's instability taken into consideration. *The Times* noted down the problems with the public support of the Polish Prime Minister, Leszek Miller, regarded by the majority of British newspapers as one of the most essential EU leaders⁶⁴³. Under the headline: "Unstable newcomers pose threat" the author presented his analysis of political scene among the entrants, including Poland, with the concern about having unpredictable new partners for the Western Europe if their governments were to change so often. Unstable cabinets, the newspaper claimed, might contribute to reaching compromises in the European arena as well, as with each shift of the government its policy transformed.

The fact which resulted from Poland's political instability and was against its strong position as the EU member was the tendency to corruption scandals, the defect noticed by all newspapers. *The Guardian* interspersed this with all unfavourable features of Poland, such as less than 20% of Miller's popularity, 20% of unemployment, problems with farmers meeting the EU hygiene standards, maliciously calling the state "full of attraction"⁶⁴⁴. Moreover, the British newspaper could sow the seeds of doubts in the EU 15 states with presenting the "worst" features Polish politicians possessed, being a tough, self-centred, uncompromising partner, with a nationalistic, sometimes un-European approach some of the EU members did not hesitate to state, yet the partner for the European Union impossible to resist⁶⁴⁵. Although Poland was perceived as "behaving like the principal power in the region", described as having "acquired a reputation for combining the worst characteristic of the member of existing awkward squad (...) the arrogance of the French, the Euro-scepticism of the British and the stubborn selfishness of the Spanish", one could not deny it had excellent examples to follow.

All in all, the British attitude towards Poland, in terms of possible fears, began to change the closer the enlargement date approached. Although at the beginning of the accession negotiations, as well as during the demanding process, the Poles were perceived as a nation with both strengths and weaknesses, but to the strengths' advantage, the peak of the event brought more and more concerns. The features which used to be called advantages of the Poles, such as the eagerness to fight for better living conditions, tended to be described by the British public opinion as potential threats. Out of the sudden, the UK's citizens were

⁶⁴³ Browne A., *EU fears stormy front arriving from the East*, *The Times*, February 6, 2004, Internet: <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/article1056446.ece>.

⁶⁴⁴ Tempest M., *Poles of attraction*, *The Guardian*, May 16, 2003, Internet: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/print/0,,4670864-106710,00.html>.

⁶⁴⁵ Black I., *Poles apart*, *The Guardian*, October 31, 2003, Internet: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/print/0,,4787311-105806,00.html>.

in fear of the Polish nation's invasion, especially attracted by the welfare benefits. Moreover, the government almost joined the panic acceding to the society's call for paying attention to the "open door" policy. Such an approach was the example of mutual dependence between public opinion and the politics, which influenced each other, though.

However, despite the fact that the hysterical reaction of the British to the admission of Poland did cause a great concern among the political elites, the press made attempts to prove the membership not to make a revolution, thus easing the alarming voices. If the public opinion was to decide about Poland's membership in the EU and the conditions of its accession, the outcome of the negotiations would definitely be of a different turn of events.