

# National Attributes in Foreign Policy: Poland Eastern Partnership

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**Abstract:** In this paper, the authors analyze the proposals for the formation of Eastern Partnership of the European Union by Poland. Eastern Partnership is a form of EU cooperation with countries of Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and also Armenia which covers the political, economic, and social aspects. The author uses a theoretical framework of national attributes level of analysis that includes several variable namely size of country, geographic, demographic, and also political system. This paper argue that Poland's national attributes have an effect on its foreign policy making in the proposed establishment of the Eastern Partnership of the European Union.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Poland is one of the countries that dare to offer new policy programs in the European Union. Poland itself only became a member of the European Union in 2004 under the Treaty of Accession on 16 April 2003 in Athens along with nine other countries (CNN, 2004). One of the policy programs in question is the establishment of Eastern Partnership filed with Sweden (Rahimov, 2010). This policy program was presented in the European Union General Affairs and External Relations Council on 26 May 2008 in Brussels and represented by each foreign minister of EU countries.

Eastern Partnership is a forum aimed at enhancing EU political and economic ties with former Soviet Union countries (Rettman, 2009). The countries involved are Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine. The forum is then used to discuss issues related to free trade, visa access, and also energy security (Rahimov, 2010). All this time, it is only between countries that are members of the European Union that can collectively determine the above issues. In the meantime, there is a relatively intense relation between the above countries and the countries joined with the EU. Therefore, the need for a multilateral container that can accommodate the interests between the two sides.

In addition, Rahimov (2010) argues that there are several objectives for the European Union from forming the Eastern Partnership itself. First, Eastern Partnership is a counterweight to EU cooperation

programs so far. Previously, the EU does have a program of cooperation with other regions such as with Mediterranean countries embodied in the Union for the Mediterranean or with the United States. Secondly, Eastern Partnership aims to estimate the integration between the EU and the countries concerned. The integration is more specific to discuss economic integration. Eastern Partnership also aims to form joint political associations among the countries involved.

During this time, there are several policies of the EU related to its relationship with other countries. One of them is the European Neighborhood Policy which reaches to Russia in the east and Africa in the south. However, Copey and Pomorska (2014) argue that the formation of Eastern Partnership has a uniqueness over the previous policy because of efforts to establish the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area in the region. Unlike the previous European Neighborhood Policy, the European Economic Area, the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area are more profound because of issues such as visa liberalization. Therefore, it indicates the existence of integrative efforts of the EU that exceeds the cooperation effort solely with the European Economic Area.

The author believes that the filing of the Eastern Partnership is an interesting one. This is because the conditions of the countries included in the policy program are considered unstable and have internal conflicts (Rahimov, 2010). Between Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Moldova each have domestic separatist conflict. In addition, the struggle for power in the

Nagorno-Karabakh region between Azerbaijan and Armenia also became one of the instability of the area targeted by Eastern Partnership. Belarus has not yet undergone any economic or democratic reforms that are one of the values upheld by the European Union. The use of partnership terms is also a problem, given that its implementation emphasizes the EU's role as a top-down regulator rather than a linear partnership. Therefore, the authors feel the need for further research on why Poland proposed the establishment of Eastern Partnership to the European Union.

To analyze it, in this paper the author uses the level of analysis of national attributes. According to Fearon (1998), the national attribute is a characteristic that is the result of construction of the state used to carry out its foreign policy. Furthermore, Ripley (1995) explains that national attributes are not merely a characteristic of a country as can be seen from other levels of analysis such as domestic politics as well as national identity. National attributes are physical characteristics that can be viewed empirically and are used to run government policies in general.

## 2 NATIONAL ATTRIBUTES IN FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS

Hudson (2007) then mentioned several national attributes that can be used as variables in using this level of analysis, namely the size of the country, geography, demography, political system, military capabilities, and economic capabilities. Breuning (2007) argues that there are several variables that can be used as indicators of the size of a country. The first variable is the geography factor that measures the area of a country. The second variable is the population, which is to see the size of a country based on the number of population. Then, there are economic variables that generally see economic power as well as military forces that measure the military capacity of a country. By size, the state can be divided into two categories: large or small. East (1973) later stated that both small countries and large countries have a tendency of their respective foreign policy patterns. However, it provides a different perspective with other academics. Generally, small countries are perceived to be avoiding high-risk policies and choose to be neutral due to limited state capabilities. However, East (1973) states that even small countries will adopt high-risk policies in order to achieve

maximum national interest. It can be seen from the degree of intention that is communicated non-verbally or verbally. Non-verbally, small countries will tend to choose to adopt specific high-risk and conflictual policies. Large countries will choose to adopt low-risk, but wide-ranging policies. Verbally, a small country has a tendency to not comment remarkably on an issue, while a large country chooses to use verbal aspects of its foreign policy. This is due to the efforts to avoid excessive risks that can disrupt the stability in and outside the country that can be caused by the actions that conflict.

The next national attribute is geography. Simply put, these national attributes relate to geographical location and conditions in a country's territory (Hudson, 2007). This is due to the limitations and opportunities in the geographical conditions of a country which then form the behavior pattern of the country's policy. In addition, the existence of natural resources that are in the geographical condition of a country can also affect how the state acts. For example, Russia has a cold climate that does not allow for planting or harbor access throughout the winter. Therefore, Russia has an intensive relationship with Ukraine that provides ports and serves as one of the Russian food suppliers (Bates, 2014).

Then, there is a demographic national attribute explaining the population aspect of a country (Hudson, 2007). This national attribute looks at how population populations, mortality and birth rates, gender distribution, genetic diseases, and immigration can influence a country's foreign policy. For example, the United States, which implements foreign policy on migration from immigrants to their countries. Then, there is a national attribute related to the political system. There is a tendency that countries with similar or similar political systems will have better relations (Hudson, 2007). For example, democratic peace is based on the equality of democratic systems in each country (Doyle, 1983).

The next two national attributes are military and economic capabilities. Countries that have a military advantage will tend to be aggressive and feel superior to other countries (Hudson, 2007). For example, the magnitude of military power can be one reason for Russia to ignore international decisions related to annexation in the Crimea. Economic capability is also one of the important attributes given the global transition from politics to post-Cold War economics. Countries that have debt or economic dependence on other countries will tend

to follow the policies of a more economically superior country.

### 3 NATIONAL ATTRIBUTES: COUNTRY SIZE

Based on the opinion of East (1973), countries in the world can be categorized into two by size, namely large countries and small countries. If using country size indicators based on Breuning perspective (2007), Poland can be said to be a big country. This refers to four variables that act as an indicator of the size of the country, namely area, population, economic power and military strength. Geographically, Poland has an area of 312,685 km<sup>2</sup> (Cia.gov, t.t.). Poland itself is the sixth largest country in the EU by contributing 7.1% of the total area of the EU. According to data from Demografia.stat.gov.pl (2016), the total Polish population reaches 38,426,809 lives as of June of 2016. In the EU, Poland itself is the sixth largest country by contributing 7.7 % of the total population for the EU. In addition, Poland is the country with the 10th highest population density in the European Union with a rate of 123 residents per km<sup>2</sup>. Economically, the IMF (t.t.) notes that Poland has a gross domestic product of 749,033 billion US Dollars. Poland itself ranks eighth in comparison with other EU countries. In its contribution to the EU, Poland is the 11th largest contributor with a total donation of 2 billion Euros. Militarily, Poland is the country with the fifth largest military power in the EU with Power Index of 0.3909 (Global Fire Power, 2016). From the data of the above variables, Poland can not be categorized as a small country and more suitable to be referred to as one of the countries in the category of large countries according to Breuning indicator (2007) in the context of the European Union.

From the above categorization, Poland has a pattern of policy patterns as well as other major state policy patterns. If they look in the perspective of East (1973) on the pattern of foreign policy of a large country, Poland uses an explicit verbal aspect of its foreign policy. This can be seen from the remarks submitted by Polish representatives related to the Eastern Partnership issue. For example, Konrad Szymański's remarks as Poland's Minister of European Affairs on January 3, 2017:

*"The European Union has several times unnecessarily hesitated whether to open itself to cooperation with the East .... If such countries as Ukraine and Georgia have, over the years, shown willingness to cooperate, then the*

*European Union should not wait. "(Polskie Radio dla Zagranicy, 2017)"*

Verbally, remarks from Szymański indicate a demanding tendency for the EU to act immediately. In addition, the quote indicates a protest over Poland's disappointment with policies taken by the European Union. Based on the verbal categorization scheme of verbal foreign policy by East (1973), both of these points indicate an explicit degree of commitment explicitly. It is one of the characteristics of the great foreign policy pattern of the country which states that the big country will use verbal aspects explicitly and show a high degree of commitment to convey its foreign policy.

Non-verbally, Poland places more emphasis on non-specific and non-confidential foreign policy patterns. The Eastern Partnership's filing itself is basically also an example of a Polish policy pattern which tends to be cooperative and non-conflictual. This can be seen from approaches that are more cooperative than conflictual. For example, the visit of the Polish President, Bronislaw Komorowski, to Latvia can be categorized as non-conflictual foreign policy (Polskie Radio dla Zagranicy, 2012). The visit aims to establish good relations with Latvia with a discussion on Eastern Partnership in the future. Against the Eastern Partnership, Poland also prefers non-conflictual measures by engaging in intensive foreign relations as seen from the formation of the Polish-Belarusian Parliament (Belta, 2016).

According to Rahimov (2010), Poland has a goal to help the countries of Eastern Europe. The effort has been made many times by Poland in the Eastern Dimension of the European Union and also the European Neighborhood Policy. In addition, Poland also hopes that the EU itself can develop its influence to other regions. Both of these points out Polish foreign policy that has a wide scope and impacts not only on the country but also on other countries. This is in accordance with one of the foreign policy styles of other major countries that have foreign policy that has a wide scope and impacts for many countries. Therefore, the Eastern Partnership's filing by Poland is a foreign policy that represents Poland as a major country.

### 4 NATIONAL ATTRIBUTES: GEOGRAPHY

Then, there is a geographical national attribute that influences Poland's foreign policy to establish Eastern Partnership. Geographically, Poland is

directly adjacent to Ukraine in the Southeast and also Belarus in the East. In addition, Moldova is also located not far from Poland although it is not immediately adjacent considering Moldova borders with Ukraine. Poland is also one of several EU countries that is not entirely adjacent to other EU countries. Therefore, Poland can be said to be a buffer country between the EU and other countries. According to Adamczyk (2010), Poland itself has been considered a representative of Eastern European countries for the European Union and vice versa. Given the geographical closeness, Poland also has intense interaction with Eastern Partnership countries economically, politically, and socially. The establishment of Eastern Partnership can certainly enhance cooperation with the countries involved with Poland which in the future can also benefit Poland.

According to Adamczyk (2010), the filing of the formation of Eastern Partnership Poland itself is a manifestation of changes in Polish geopolitical patterns. In Europe itself, there are generally two major political forces between the European Union and the Soviet Union or Russia. Both have a sphere of influence based on geographic proximity which generally western European countries share a similar view to the EU while Eastern European countries choose to approach the Soviet Union or Russia. Previously, Poland had a tendency to follow geopolitical currents along with the Soviet Union or Russia and other Eastern European countries. The changes can be seen since the intention of Poland to enter the European Union before 2004 until finally joining the regional organization. The Eastern Partnership's filing by Poland which invites countries that traditionally belong to the sphere of influence of the Soviet Union or Russia can be said to change the geopolitical pattern of Poland itself. This suggests a change in Polish perceptions of the identification of his country as an Eastern European country affiliated with the Soviet Union or Russia into an EU country (Adamczyk, 2010).

According to Shapovalova and Kapusniak (2011), one of the causes of Poland proposing the establishment of the Eastern Partnership is the Polish tendency not to continue to be a frontier country for the EU in Eastern Europe. The cooperation of Eastern Partnership can be a stepping stone for the countries involved to join the EU. Thus, it can be seen that Poland seeks to shift the status of frontier countries to Eastern Partnership countries that are not currently incorporated in the European Union. This is related to the high interaction of Poland to neighboring countries such as Ukraine, Belarus, and

Moldova, but has a different framework. If these countries have the same framework as Poland, then it can facilitate policy making on its neighbors. From the above explanation, it can be seen that the national attribute of geography can lead to Polish decision to propose the formation of Eastern Partnership.

## 5 NATIONAL ATTRIBUTES: DEMOGRAPHY

Furthermore in the national demographic attributes, the authors see there is one important aspect to note that is related to the number of foreign workers in Poland. So far, Poland is a country known as a labor-sending country rather than a recipient country. Moreover, Poland's accession to the European Union in 2004 further made Polish labor easier for entry into other EU countries (Duszczyk, 2013). This is due to visa freedom as well as work permits for Polish citizens to work in European countries. Of course, this makes it easier to access and speed up the Polish emigration process.

Compared with the number of immigrants in Poland, the flow of emigration from Poland is greater. However, slowly the number of immigrants in Poland is getting bigger (Duszczyk, 2013). Initially, the number of foreign workers in Poland is relatively small and does not provide more significance in Polish life. However, since Polish citizens tend to emigrate to other EU countries, the number of Polish workers is increasingly reduced. Therefore, the existence of immigrants to Poland aims to cover the shortage of the number of workers in Poland who have been abandoned by Polish citizens themselves.

Of the total countries that send immigrants to Poland, the countries involved in Eastern Partnership are among the largest contributors. In his writings, Duszczyk (2013) sees the influence of immigration flows from countries such as Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova that have geographic proximity to Poland against the proposed Eastern Partnership formation by Poland. It can be seen from the table above that every year there is an increase in the number of workers from Eastern Partnership countries to Poland. The problem arises when Poland has not had a concrete container to deal with the problems in the immigration sector. This is because Poland in the EU must follow the regulations of the EU on employment issues. Yet on the one hand, Poland also needs foreign workers from other countries,



especially countries in Eastern Partnership, to continue to run the wheels of the economy.

According to data from Duszczyk (2013), the majority of foreign workers from Eastern Partnership countries are rough laborers who do not require high education qualifications. In addition, foreign workers from the Eastern Partnership countries also fill out unregistered "shadow" sectors. This is due to the lack of genuine Polish workers who fill these sectors because on average they emigrate to other EU countries. Thus, the Polish economy has little dependence on foreign labor from Eastern Partnership countries, primarily Ukraine, Belarus, and Moldova.

The fact of dependence on foreign workers is a problem when there are regulations on employment and also the migration of the population from the EU to its neighbors. In the policies of the EU so far, there is no policy to discuss about it. Therefore, Poland proposes the establishment of Eastern Partnership to the EU to facilitate such matters (Duszczyk, 2013). This is because Eastern Partnership supports the exemption of visas and employment permits for member countries. Thus, the flow of employment can run smoothly without any obstacles. In addition, Eastern Partnership can also serve as a platform for Poland to manage immigration issues more clearly and favorably for Poland (Duszczyk, 2013). From the above explanation, it can be seen that demographic national attributes related to immigration can affect Polish foreign policy related to the establishment of Eastern Partnership.

## 6 NATIONAL ATTRIBUTES: POLITICAL SYSTEM

According to Fedyszak-Radziejowska (2010), Poland has been in transition from communism to democratic form. This new form of Poland is referred to as the Third Polish Republic phase, a phase in which the values of communism have been lost in Poland. This is due to the collapse of the Soviet Union and the idea of communism itself. This change of political system also led to Poland's successful entry into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in 1999 and the European Union in 2004 requiring member states to use the notion of democracy.

The use of a system of democratic government by Poland is one of the reasons why Poland proposes the Eastern Partnership to the European Union. If it

refers to Pisarska (t.t.) opinion, one of the Polish goals in the Eastern Partnership's filing is to support democracy as well as reforms in the countries involved. This goal can be explained by using a democratic peace theory which states that a country with a democratic political system will have a tendency to not conflict with other democratic countries (Doyle, 1983). It can be seen that the action proposed for Poland aims to avoid conflicts with its neighbors in order to create regional stability in Eastern Europe.

Of the countries involved in Eastern Partnership, there are two countries that have geographical proximity to Poland which lacks political stability and has not used the optimal democratic system of Ukraine and Belarus (Shapovalova & Kapusniak, 2011). If it refers to democratic peace theory, then both countries need to use the political system of democracy to allow conflict opportunities in the region around Poland to be spared. Within the Eastern Partnership itself there are programs that support democratic reforms in the countries involved. Therefore, Eastern Partnership can be used as a means for Poland to create regional stability. It shows the role of the national attribute of the Polish political system towards its policy-making in relation to Eastern Partnership.

## 7 CONCLUSION

Eastern Partnership is a form of EU cooperation with its neighbors, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan. The policy aims to integrate the EU with its member countries politically, economically, and socially. Politically, Eastern Partnership supports democratic reform. Economically and socially, Eastern Partnership supports economic reform through the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area as well as the exemption of visas and special employment permits to the countries involved. Eastern Partnership can be said to be one of the EU's efforts to cooperate with the eastern region as in the previous European Neighborhood Policy. During this time, the EU is working with the United States in the west as well as the Mediterranean countries in the south.

Using the theoretical framework of level of analysis of national attributes, the authors conclude that national attributes influence Polish policymaking to shape Eastern Partnership. In this paper, the author takes several variables of national attributes such as country size, geographic, demographic, and also political system. As a major

country in the EU, Polish policymaking has a wide scope as it manifests in the Eastern Partnership which is influential not only for its country but also the surrounding countries as well as the European Union itself. Verbally and non-verbally, Polish foreign policy is also in line with the concept of a large country alternative by East (1973) that is explicit but with a non-conflictual and low-risk foreign policy. Poland geographically adjacent to Ukraine, Moldova, and also Belarus has a close relationship with the Eastern Partnership countries.

In addition, there is an effort for Poland not to change the geopolitical pattern in Eastern Europe so that the Eastern Partnership countries are in the sphere of influence of the European Union. Poland also does not want to be a frontier country for the EU in Eastern Europe, so in the future Eastern Partnership countries can join the EU and become a new frontier country to replace Poland. Demographically, especially employment, Poland's high dependence on immigrants from Eastern Partnership countries led to the need for a framework capable of accommodating the labor flows of these countries embodied in policies supported by Eastern Partnership. In the political system, Eastern Partnership seeks to spread democracy in the countries involved. This relates to Poland's democratic political system and seeks to reform the Eastern Partnership countries, primarily Ukraine and Belarus, to use the same political system. This is in accordance with the democratic peace theory that states that democratic countries tend not to conflict between each other and cause stability of the region around Poland.

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