

# Individual Level of Analysis and Foreign Policy: Donald Tusk and Eastern Partnership

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**Abstract:** This paper departs from the issue of whether individual level of analysis can explain the policy of the Polish Eastern Partnership. This becomes problematic when the analytical sharpness is challenged to consolidate the personality, personal experience, perceptions, ideology, and nature of Donald Tusk with his Eastern Partnership policy. So in this case a thorough explanation of personal life is needed, such as how the dynamics of Tusk's interaction with his family and city of birth can have a significant influence on the formation of his character, coupled with his educational background and intellectual ability, and his first contact with communist politics that can create the riots made him a pro-democratic figure. Using the human nature perspective, idiosyncretic behavior, and organizational behavior, the authors explain the existing relationships of the three perspectives with Donald Tusk's personality, perceptions, and behavior.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 marked a period of transition to the politics of Eastern Europe and some countries in Central Europe such as Poland and Czechoslovakia from the communist system to democracy. Therefore, generally during the transition period, the instability of state politics is a sure thing to happen. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the countries of Central Europe and Eastern Europe experienced instability in both economic, social and political (Thompson, 2001). As countries that have just escaped the dominance and confinement of communism, these countries are experiencing worsening economic conditions, recorded since the 1980s when issues of Soviet communist collapse began to emerge, there have been several cases of political upheaval caused by a declining economy. Based on these problems, Eastern European countries feel the need to integrate with their neighbors to stabilize their economic and political conditions (Thompson, 2001). However, the oldest regional organization geographically close to them ie the EU was initially reluctant to enter into cooperation with the Eastern European countries because they did not want their relationship with Russia to be disturbed because many of the Eastern European countries that

had problems with Russia after the collapse of the Union Soviet.

However, in the midst of the declining economic conditions, Poland, which is a former communist state, takes advantage of the freedom they gain to improve the condition of their country. It is known that since the collapse of communism, Poland are examples of countries that experienced the most rapid adaptation of communism transition to democracy by applying free-market ideas to improve the economic conditions (Bartosiak, 2015). Recorded in 1991, Poland with Cekoslavia and Hungary entered into a partnership called the Visegrad Group to stabilize the conditions of their country by carrying out development programs such as free markets, educational scholarships, and the establishment of a working group of energy experts (Visegrad Group, 2000). Not only there, seeing the condition of the Eastern European neighbors who still do not rise from the economic downturn, in 2003 Poland proposed to the European Union to make policy the Eastern Dimensions of the European Union which aims to establish cooperation with the countries of Eastern Europe. However, the idea was rejected because Eastern European regions such as Georgia and Ukraine have a background of conflict with Russia which is feared could undermine the EU cooperation effort with Russia. Furthermore, the EU which has a

mission to expand the integration of the European region then issued a policy of Wider Europe.

Implementation of the Wider Europe is evident from the formulation of the policy of the European Neighborhood Policy, which aims to promote economic stability, security and sustainable development by expanding the European free market coverage to six Eastern European countries and ten Mediterranean countries. In 2004, Poland officially joined the EU. The authors argue that joining Poland in the EU marks the opening of access for the country to promote its idea of development in Eastern Europe, so in 2008 under the government of Prime Minister Donald Tusk, Poland proposed a new platform in the European Neighborhood Policy, Eastern Partnership, special development in Eastern Europe alone and encourage Eastern European countries that are not part of the European Union to apply change gradually to their politics and economies. As described by the European Union Commissioner for En- gement and European Neighborhood Policy, Stefan Fule (in ENPI, 2012), Eastern Partnership is a media of the European Union to bring their neighbors Eastern European countries to get closer to the EU. The existence of Eastern Partnership is expected to be a tool that can help the countries of Eastern Europe such as Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine in strengthening the stability and prosperity that bring direct benefits to the citizens of both Eastern Europe itself maupu EU countries (ENPI, 2012).

This support applies not only to government reform efforts but is also designed to enhance the role of civil society that has an important part in transforming the politics and economies of these countries (ENPI, 2012). The unforgettable part of this Eastern Partnership establishment is Polish interest to foster economic growth and political stability in Eastern European countries by bringing them closer to the EU. Furthermore, Polish interest is inseparable from the ideas and ambitions of Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk from the idea of the Eastern Dimensions of the European Union to the realization of Eastern Partnership, Donald Tusk has an important role behind the ideas. Based on this, the authors analyzed Donald Tusk's policy of realizing his predecessor Prime Minister's ideas about Eastern Dimensions of EU into Eastern Partnership using individual level of analysis by reviewing personality, perception, educational background, and interaction with individuals and other groups.

## 2 INDIVIDUAL LEVEL OF ANALYSIS IN FOREIGN POLICY

Individuals as policy makers, both president and prime minister, become the main focus in individual level analysis. This individual level analysis focuses on the background of an individual in making policies reviewed through personality, perception, personal experience, and their interaction with other individuals or groups (Neack, 2008). Reviewing Eastern Partnership's policies by Poland through individual analytical levels, the authors will use the three perspectives described by John T. Rourke (2009) in his *International Politics On The World Stage*, human nature, idiosyncretic behaviour, and organizational behavior that can be used analyze the behavior of policymakers. The human nature perspective explains the biological factors of policymakers that are divided into two, namely nature and nurture. Nature refers to an innate personality or more commonly referred to as a natural trait such as innate emotion and physical impulse, while nurture is a personality formed by the socialization of individuals with their environment and intellectual level, such as interaction with family, experience, education, religion, and ideology (Rourke, 2009).

The idiosyncretic behaviour perspective explains the existence of personality factors, physical and mental health, ego, ambition, personal experience, and perceptions that influence the behavior of decision makers in making foreign decisions and policies (Rourke, 2009). Breuning (2007) says that personality factors explain the beliefs, characters, and values held by the leader and the things above might motivate them to make foreign policy. Furthermore, the above factors will then shape the perceptions of the decision makers that motivate them in making a policy, one of which is how the individual views the world in certain events which then encourages them to act rationally in accordance with the existing phenomenon (Breuning, 2007).

The last perspective is organizational behavior that refers to bringing the personality and perceptions of decision-makers into their activities as a head of government. This is what Rourke (2009) calls the role behaviour that in the organization, in this case the state, the individual has a tendency to behave in accordance with the role they have based on their personalities and perceptions. Based on its role, according to Breuning (2007) leaders tend to induce their thinking based on personality and perception into the national interest element of the country, in

line with the classical realist thinking leaders and decision makers in achieving 'fantasy' personality should induce thought and act within the framework of national interests to show the strength of their country. So according to Neack (2008) every individual who is in a position to be responsible for foreign policy is generally influenced by their socialization with the environment through education and the process of political selection to pursue common goals.

Furthermore, according to Rourke (2009) role behavior is in line with the assumption of realism about the level of individual analysis proposed by Neack (2008) that realism holds that as a representation an individual country must work or make decisions in accordance with the national interests of the country. In this case the individual will enter their personal goals in line with the common goal of the state to strengthen the sense of common interest. So when something goes wrong with their original goals, the leader will respond by using framing that uses the instrument of the national interest of his country. Framing itself is defined as actions taken by policy makers with an estimated risk to be received related to the phenomenon that is happening (Breuning, 2007).

### **3 DONALD TUSK HUMAN NATURE ANALYSIS**

Donald Tusk has a natural personality that refers to extroverted attitudes. An extrovert is generally easy to interact with people in large numbers, optimistic, and dare to take risks. This then makes the extroverts have a natural ability to inspire people and make it a charismatic figure (Jones, 2015). In an interview with a 2016 Consilium reporter, Tusk said that his hometown and family took an important role in developing his extrovert nature. Tusk describes Gdansk as a traditional of Europe. In the city there is interaction and harmonization of various cultures such as Jews, Scots, Poles, Kashubians, and loyalty to Christianity. From here Tusk learns about unity, peace and harmonization, which he will later pour in the goal of the Eastern Partnership. Born in 1957 from a working family in Gdansk, Poland, his father was a carpenter who had strong principles and personality, through his father Tusk was taught to be an optimistic and hardworking person (Consilium, 2016).

Meanwhile, her mother works as a board at a hospital, Tusk describes her mother as a kindhearted, loving, simple but very wise and after her father died

when Tusk was 14 years old her mother had to work hard to support herself and her sister. It was from his mother that Tusk learned to love and to help others, not to discriminate on the basis of race or religion, and to make wise decisions (Consilium, 2016). Tusk said that after his father died despite living below the poverty line but they live in the family who love each other. Having a passion in the field of history, especially the history of Ancient Greece, Tusk underwent his studies as a student majoring in European History at the University of Gdansk and found that Europe is recorded to have a long history and is recognized as an advanced continent both economically and politically. From here onwards Tusk's perception of European greatness is formed, that Europe must integrate with each other to become as big as it once was, this perception then underlies Tusk to realize the Eastern Dimension of Europe ideals that the EU had previously rejected into the Eastern Partnership. Tusk assumes that embracing Eastern European countries is an important step towards achieving European unity (Consilium, 2016). Interaction with his family and his city of residence, as well as his Tusk educational background which later formed his nurture.

### **4 DONALD TUSK IDIOSYNCRETIC BEHAVIOUR ANALYSIS**

From the perspective of idiosyncretic behavior, in personality as described earlier, Donald Tusk has an extroverted personality. It is ambitious that Tusk has the ambition of achieving European glory again, since Tusk, although he was born of the Kashubian ethnic group in a small town in Poland, is part of Europe that has a spirit of European unity (Consilium, 2016). Based on personal experience, Tusk's political behavior was influenced by his first interaction with the people movement while spending his teenage years to join the hooligans, the teenage boys group in his town and take small but radical actions to frighten the government workers of the communist regime at that time. Through this experience Tusk saw how then the actions of a small group of people could influence the government at the time, as evidenced by the 1970s small groups in Gdansk, including the Tusk group, took action against the communist regime. More than a thousand people took to the streets, rioting occurred, Tusk saw police firing on people, many people killed, public buildings on fire, from the 1970s unrest that perceptions of Tusk about

communist and repressive regimes formed that it turns out their existence can create riots (Consilium, 2016).

Tusk says that communism is something so hideous that you have become an anti-communist and pro-democracy (Rettman, 2014). Evidently, when Tusk became a student, he engaged in illegal pro-democracy activities secretly working, Tusk then formed and directed a group of students who called themselves Democratic Opposition in 1976 (Szambelan, 2014). In 1979, Tusk teamed up with underground groups namely Free Trade Union and Solidarity led by Lech Walesa. Both Tusk and Lech Walesa share the same vision of Europe that European integration as a whole can only be achieved if communism collapses. To that end, Lech Walesa suggested to Tusk to form the Independent Student's Association as part of Solidarity and with the student group he formed, Tusk worked as a journalist for the Solidarity newspaper. In the same year the Democratic Opposition, Solidarity and Independent Student's Association started a movement called Solidarity Movement that propagated the values of democracy, liberal, free market with their writings through Solidarity newspaper (Consilium, 2016).

In 1981, the movement of Solidarity was interrupted by the communist regime under the command of General Jeruzelski which resulted in some people being arrested and unknown and some living in hiding (Consilium, 2016). Despite hiding in some time, finally in 1982 Tusk was captured and became a political prisoner, then the following year Tusk and other political prisoners were granted amnesty and freed. In the same year 1983, Tusk formed a monthly magazine that worked illegally called Political Review which propagated economic liberalism and liberal democratic rule (Consilium, 2016). From this it can be seen how then Tusk's uncooperative communist interaction has built a perception in him that a good way to prosper is through liberal values. Then after the collapse of communism in 1989, Tusk again formed an informal think-tank body that supported Lech Walesa to advance as President elected through Poland's first elections in 1990. In the first elections Lech Walesa emerged as Poland's first President elected by popular vote and Donald Tusk serves as Deputy Speaker of Senate (Consilium, 2016).

Together with Lech Walesa, Tusk initiated the formation of Visegrad Group in 1991 along with Czechoslovak and Hungary to stabilize the conditions of their country by carrying out development programs such as free markets, educational scholarships, and the establishment of a working

group of energy experts (Visegrad Group, 2000). Visegrad Group is the second step of the Walesa and Tusk missions to unite Europe after the Solidarity Movement. Although Lech Walesa finished as Polish President in 1995, Tusk's struggle for his vision and ambition to unite Europe continues. However, Lech Walesa still helped Tusk from behind by funding the formation of the Civic Platform Party in 2001 and won many votes and seats for Sejm's position in the Polish Congress, while Tusk held the position of Deputy Speaker of Sejm and with other members of the majority people from the Civic Platform Party, Tusk proposed the Eastern Dimensions of EU in 2003 to the Senate and had been submitted to the EU Assembly although ultimately rejected because it would disrupt EU relations with Russia, but still consider the idea of Poland by forming the European Neighborhood Policy which contains about EU cooperation with Mediterranean and Eastern European countries (Consilium, 2016). This then becomes a good stage for Poland's image in the European Union as a country that provides the idea for such regionalism in the policy of expanding the influence and the area of cooperation of their organizations (ENPI, 2012).

## 5 DONALD TUSK ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOUR ANALYSIS

In 2007, Donald Tusk was elected Prime Minister of Poland for two periods of government and served until 2014 (Consilium, 2016). The rejection of the EU Eastern Dimension proposal caused Tusk to respond quickly to the phenomenon in its first year as Polish Prime Minister, so in response to these conditions Tusk framing its foreign policy by redefining its national interests, it was effective when the European Union approves the establishment of Eastern Partnership as an element of the European Neighborhood Policy (Traynor, 2014). The steps Tusk undertakes to redefining Poland's national interests are reflected in the reorientation of Poland's foreign policy to the EU by pursuing an active, objective, constructive, and coalition-based approach (Cianciara, 2009). Furthermore, the reorientation of foreign policy towards the EU is implemented by helping to overcome the European economic crisis, energy security issues and environmental change, assisting the EU in carrying out its enlargement strategy, mediating the Georgian conflict, and

overcoming the Russian-Ukrainian gas crisis, and supports EU negotiating with Russia.

The European economic crisis of 2008 caused countries in the region to experience a crisis of trust and solidarity. As stated by Czech Prime Minister Mirek Topolánek, that the economic crisis will bring the EU to a crisis of confidence, if that happens the EU will lose the opportunity to stand together in the future (Cianciara, 2009). Accepting the statement, Tusk initiated steps to tackle the economic crisis to avoid a crisis of confidence, and Tusk held an informal meeting between CEE members and the Commission's President of EU before the 27th EU general meeting. This informal meeting was aimed at demonstrating the full support of the new EU member states against the single market rules and suggest cooperative actions of the EU Commission to resolve the economic crisis. This meeting resulted in Lisbon Treaty signed by all EU member states, this agreement contains on strengthening and improving the institutional foundations of the EU including the harmonization of foreign policy and security of the European Union. For Poland this agreement will provide new energy for EU unity (Cianciara, 2009).

Furthermore, the Georgia conflict with Russia and the gas conflict between Russia and Ukraine indicate the potential for destabilization between countries in Europe. In addition, it will also adversely affect relations between Russia and the European Union, therefore Tusk advises the EU to strengthen relations with Russia through cooperative measures such as calling on the country in negotiations and new treaties to resolve the Georgian-Russian and Ukrainian-Russian conflict. Furthermore, for that Poland who had not previously agreed on EU relations with Russia began to stop its action in blocking the negotiations with Russia (Cianciara, 2009). The Polish government believes that the EU-Russia Summit in Samara in May 2007 will contribute greatly to the consolidation and unity of the EU position as this will also impact Russia's policy of becoming more constructive than ever before, while for the energy crisis that causes Russian-Ukrainian conflict, Donald Tusk suggests to strengthen energy security by expecting cooperative action from other EU countries that tend to be concerned with their own country (Cianciara, 2009).

According to Tusk, to overcome the above issues, EU countries should cooperate with each other because there is no energy company to be funded by the EU if countries are still uncooperative to improve energy security together. Furthermore, this energy security is needed to avoid extortion resistance from non-EU energy suppliers, this is also aimed at

diversifying energy sources and transit routes, and creating an energy delivery infrastructure infrastructure between EU countries (Cianciara 2009). Besides, Poland is also experiencing an energy crisis due to climate change and forcing the country to use coal as an energy source causing an increase in electricity prices almost 90% of the normal price. The ideas from Tusk were then accepted by the European Union in 2008 and implemented with funding to build energy development infrastructure for countries that agree to establish a common energy security policy. In exchange for the idea of Tusk, Poland gained additional funding to modernize its energy development infrastructure in the country by 2020 (Cianciara, 2009),

The impact of the aid fund is that Poland can develop energy from fossils, per capita income up to 20%, and electricity prices return to normal. Furthermore, to gain the hearts and good image of the EU, Poland supports efforts to extend the EU's influence to non-member countries of the regional organization by helping Ukraine to become a more democratic country in order to meet the requirements of the European Union (Cianciara, 2009). Based on these things can be seen that Donald Tusk has the ability to persuade that can affect others in a subtle way to achieve its goal of realizing the Eastern Dimension of EU. It is evident from Tusk's own recognition that he is not a naive person, if he stays for a moment his ego and his ambition to follow the EU's willingness to solve internal problems and help a lot for that regionalism can realize its true purpose why not (Consilium, 2016). This is in line with the concept of role behaviour role behavior described by Rourke (2009) that in a leader country must act in accordance with its role in the country, in the sense of working on elements of national interest to then achieve the ultimate goal of its ambition as an individual.

## 6 EASTERN PARTNERSHIP REALIZATION

Poland's cooperative action that supports all EU policies plus the persuasive ability of Donald Tusk, in 2008 Poland took Sweden to jointly propose the Eastern Partnership proposal to become an element of the European Neighborhood Policy. The EaP proposal contains the procurement of cooperation between the EU and the Eastern European countries in terms of economic development, poverty alleviation, legal development and democracy. The

EaP is aimed at political association, economic integration, mobility, and strengthened sector cooperation based on shared values such as democracy and rule of law, respect for freedom and human rights, and commitment to the market economy (EEAS, 2016). The EaP cooperation is based on two dimensions of bilateral, which indicates the effort to develop the proximity of the European Union with partner countries and multilateral which indicate the efforts to bring cooperation partners into the framework of cooperation. Furthermore, the bilateral dimension encompasses new contractual relationships, integration into the EU economy, travel convenience to the EU with visa exemptions, energy cooperation, economic and social development, and financial assistance (EEAS, 2016).

Meanwhile, the dimension of multilateralism refers to efforts to strengthen integration in Europe through forums to share experiences and information, the instruments of aid of joint projects (EEAS, 2016). The Polish competence in promoting the EaP agenda was appreciated by the EU countries, then accepted by the Council of the European Union in March 2009 and the EU spent 600 million euros on the Eastern Partnership program as evidence of their support (Cianciara, 2009). Polish success in realizing the Eastern Partnership is inseparable from Donald Tusk's ideals of uniting Europe and embracing the marginalized countries due to the collapse of communism and their inability to transition to democracy, evident from Tusk's persistence in winning the hearts of the EU with the reorientation of foreign policy to prove that cooperating with Eastern European countries would not threaten the EU's good relations with Russia (Machitidze, tt).

## 7 CONCLUSION

Based on the above exposure the authors draw the conclusion that the individual level of analysis can explain Polish Eastern Partnership policy. Initiated by Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk, who has an attractive, charismatic, and persuasive personality, Poland has attracted the appreciation and support of other EU members to realize the Eastern Dimensions of EU into the elements of EU cooperation. The countries of Eastern Europe were a former Soviet communist state in which it was reported through Tusk's interview with the European Consilium that the anti-Communist himself felt responsible for helping other former communist countries to undergo a more democratic transition. His anti-communist view he gained through his teenage experience until

now that the communists can create riots, coupled with his friendly, optimistic, energetic, high-intellectualized personality, Tusk seeks efforts to unite Europe by embracing non-EU countries. Personality, personal experience, and perceptions of Tusk are in line with concepts and variables to explain the behavior of policy makers through the level of individual analysis. Finally, at the time he was elected President of the European Council in 2014, he said that what is today's optimism, energy, engagement, faith and all that my specialization.

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