Regardless of the role that is attributed largely to the traditional attitude of Switzerland on bilateral relations and the trend of still continuing the support of the conduct of international design policies, one still cannot ignore the importance of the part played by the participation of both countries in international organizations. In the face of the current progressive opacity and complexity of the global situation, which not only makes it impossible to carry out the policy of isolationism, but also significantly reduces the effects of bilateral policy, an increase in the role of this plane has become increasingly evident in many contexts Polish-Swiss relations.

**Keywords:** Switzerland, Polish community, international relationships

In the years 1945–1989 both Poland and Switzerland encountered some intrinsic limitations associated with such participation. In the case of Poland they were as if a natural consequence of belonging to the Eastern bloc and the need to carry out ideological scenario dictated by Moscow, which defines the conditions, objectives and directions of Polish policies in the institutionalized international relations. These conditions justified

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* Marek Żejmo*
the Polish participation in the alternative to Western economic organizations and political-military Eastern Bloc (Comecon and Warsaw Pact), but allowed the participation in the United Nations and its specialized agencies to the extent to which it was consistent with the ideological dimension policy of the Soviet Union.

However, the limitations of Switzerland in this area traditionally were situated in its policy of neutrality. The unsuccessful experiment of moving away from the strict neutrality in the interwar period and the relative lack of arguments that would call into question the policy\(^1\) determined the credibility and maintain its traditional elements after World War II. However, taking into consideration the fact that the Helvetian state could not ignore into the European integration process and the importance of multilateral agreements, there were sought the areas in which it would be possible to conduct an active foreign policy and involvement only in these international initiatives that did not threaten the political independence of Switzerland. These objectives are reflected in the developed in 1954 by Max Pettitpierr and the head of department policy, Rudolph Bindschedler, the concept of the so-called “Super-neutrality”. It has been applied in all areas of foreign policy of Switzerland (Petitpierre, 1980, p. 35). This concept, called later Bindschedler doctrine, laid down the conditions of participation of the Confederation in the international organizations. Firstly, the Swiss government has identified the importance of multilateral “political” organizations from those that were “technically” relevant. The participation in political organizations were found to be inconsistent with the policy of “super-neutrality” but the participation in technical organizations was portrayed as not violating the neutral status of Switzerland (Morris, 2011, p. 108). Secondly, Switzerland has committed to participate in the economic and customs unions. Thirdly, it refused to impose economic sanctions on other countries (Ganser, Kreis, 2007, p. 235).

In this respect the Confederation, however, has not acceded to the UN as an organization of political importance, even in the 40’s it contracted its share in many of its specialized agencies, such as WHO, FAO, UNESCO, despite many controversies, the Swiss are still willing to consider their neutrality as a key factor for survival during World War II.
and UNICEF, which meet the criterion “is technical.” Nonetheless, while the prospect of participation in the United Nations could create a platform of discussion on the possibilities and conditions of acceptance some of the UN structures (especially the members of the UN have quickly become the other neutral countries such as Sweden or Finland) for neutral Switzerland, there was not any doubt about the absenteeism in the North Atlantic Alliance, which would definitely require a departure from the rules of neutrality. Meanwhile, the ban on entering the customs and economic unions from the beginning excluded Switzerland’s engagement in economic integration of Europe, expressed in the progress of the European Coal and Steel Community and the EEC. Not only the difficulty of reconciling their sovereignty with the intentions of the future politicization of these organizations, but also the ideological arguments and built strongly distanced skeptical Switzerland’s position. In many Helvetian scientific and business communities it was believed that European integration is a kind of centralized technocracy and camouflaged version of socialism, aggressive and threatening economic freedom (Porębski, 2007, p. 35). Swiss economic rapprochement with Europe was for the first possible only in so far as it came into play with clear commercial interests. As has been suggested earlier, declaring their only economic participation in the Marshall Plan, Switzerland became a member of the Organization for European Economic Co-operation (1948), from which emerged then the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (1961), which works to facilitate cooperation in international trade and inter-capital flow and to stimulate economic development. Along with the UK, the Confederation participated in the creation of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), joining in 1963 the Council of Europe and then in 1974 signing the European Convention on Human Rights. Rejecting the multilateral provisions of the Charter of Havana in terms of the constitution of the World Trade Organisation in 1966, Switzerland joined the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). At the beginning of the

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2 Participation of Switzerland in the Council of Europe was considered to be non-threatening political independence rapprochement of the Confederation of between EFTA and the EEC (Florkowska-Frančić, 2009, p. 31).
70s it also participated in the institutionalization of the CSCE in 1975 by signing the Final Act of the Conference.

Outlined above international institutional commitment of Switzerland remained more or less to the fall of the Iron Curtain. Without going into any agreements with political connotations, the State took in some sense a special position, which – if not a few strands binding them with economic communities – could be seen as a globally isolated\(^3\). Persisting in the era of the Cold War international system involvement of Poland and Switzerland also did not favor any significant directions for a common foreign policy, in addition to co-operation in Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission in Korea (1953), an international mobilization on the Rapacki’s Plan or CSCE. In the later decades of the Cold War, due to the Swiss-American rapprochement and the US efforts to inhibition of communism supported by Switzerland (reduction of sales of the Helvetian arms to Eastern Bloc countries), the ways between the two countries spread even more in the potential plane multilateral agreements.

The aforementioned natural limitations of Polish and Swiss participation in international organizations is largely determined by the fact that in some places the status of the two countries in this area in 1989 was quite similar, especially with regard to NATO and the European Union. Among other major organizations, both countries did not belong also to the World Bank and Switzerland to the International Monetary Fund. Apart from the already considered in the previous section question of NATO and the EU in 1991, Poland joined the Council of Europe but five years later acquired the membership of the OECD, becoming in this way, an international partner of Switzerland. Around this same time, the two countries joined the World Bank, and then the World Trade Organization, which was established 1995. In 1992 the Confederation joined the International Monetary Fund, in which the Polish membership was restored only six years earlier. And although Switzerland has consistently remained outside the EU and NATO structures (joining only under certain conditions to

\(^3\) On the other hand, Switzerland had a specific place in the system of international involvement, it was showed in the fact that many of these supranational organizations (such as, inter alia, the United Nations specialized agencies) had its headquarters in Geneva. Many agreements even on international level were signed in neutral Switzerland.
the Partnership for Peace), a list of common international planes rightful participation, expanded when the Helvetii, after more than half a century of absence obtained the membership in the UN.

A radical change in the international situation after 1989 in terms of “definition” was much more challenging for Switzerland than for Poland. It necessitated the Helvetian state to implement a specific compromise on the approach to their own neutrality. The need to strengthen the relationship to a deeper international cooperation blurred traditional distinctions between ‘political’ and ‘technical’ organizations. However, the progressive change in the approach to the neutrality still faced strong Helvetian politic barrier in the reactivity trend. As a result, Switzerland excluded membership in both major European organizations – the North Atlantic Alliance and the European Union. However, institutional absence did not mean in the case of Switzerland the lack of support for Europe’s prosperity and security projects. And although it could create some barriers to a fully-fledged Polish-Swiss cooperation within the EU and NATO, not necessarily associated with the lack of a greater capacity to enter into relations with the Poland. Going through deepening bilateral Swiss-EU agreements there were several opportunities that opened for Polish-Swiss cooperation at EU level (which was mentioned in the previous section) and to participate in a broad dialogue that the Union maintains global contexts\(^4\). It needs to be stressed that still the significant limitation is that this kind of cooperation can be realized only in the field of static bilateral agreements, excluding all relationships related to its effects on the functioning and development of the EU. Switzerland does not have voting rights in the EU and its representatives do not participate in the EU decision-making, in which Poland is enabled. It significantly removes a serious realm of potential links between the two countries, reducing the contribution of Switzerland in multilateral dialogue and action.

Referring to the North Atlantic Alliance, Switzerland since the mid-90s has been a partner of NATO’s Partnership for Peace program, acting on this

\(^4\) For example, Switzerland was in 2012 admitted to ASEM – informal political dialogue, economic and cultural life of the European Union and Asian countries Associated ASEAN and other countries of the region (including Japan, Mongolia, India, Republic of Korea) (ASEM, n.d.).
plane only to the extent of strictly defined framework of its new security policy. Reminding briefly, the decision to participate in the PfP was in the Swiss case, the effect of the continuing process of opening up to the active participation in solving the problems of international security (rewording Helvetian foreign policy towards highlighting the role of co-operation, as well as the Switzerland’s need to engage in international efforts for peace, security, democracy and human rights). This has created a framework for deepening relations with Poland as a partner in the Partnership for Peace, and later a member of NATO. Soldiers of both countries have been members of the armed forces to support NATO’s actions in favor of stability, peace and security in the conflict regions of the world. One of the first operations of this kind of joint participation was legitimized by the UN mandate, NATO’s operation of the International Peacekeeping Forces (KFOR) in 1999 in Kosovo. Its aim was to prevent renewed hostility, implement security, and support international humanitarian efforts. Since 2004, contingents of soldiers and observers from both countries also participated in the operation of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan, whose aim was to assist in bringing stability and peace. It is worth noting that in the case of Switzerland, which sent 31 soldiers, it was the first of the country’s military involvement in international politics since the Congress of Vienna (Swiss Armed Forces, n.d.).

At the same time, after Switzerland’s gaining the membership in the United Nations (2002) and the consent of the Swiss armed troops to participate in peacekeeping missions, the scope of opportunity for both countries’ joint participation in UN peacekeeping operations clearly broadened. Compared to the Polish, Switzerland’s contribution was not high, but steady and appreciated, especially in the field of the international expertise on humanitarian law. It also differed in terms of pressure the Swiss put on the reduction their role to the observers who are consistent unblended in controversial points in the internal policies of the recipient

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5 Partnership for security, NATO’s Public Diplomacy, Brussels 2005, pp. 20–23. However, due to a lack in the legislation allowing for the participation of armed troops in peacekeeping missions Switzerland at the time, the participation of the Swiss 220-person company Swisscoy was limited to the tasks without military connotation.
countries. Among the joint UN-mandated missions include, in particular MONUSCO, the aim of which is to stabilize the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo and UNMISS, aimed at strengthening peace and security and to create conditions for the development of the newly formed South Sudan.

Interestingly, the involvement of Switzerland in peacekeeping missions was not limited only to NATO and the UN, but also touched the initiatives in the field of security policy, adopted by the European Union. Swiss soldiers participated in two EU missions: in Macedonia (European Union Police Mission, EUPM) and the Aceh Monitoring Mission in Indonesia (Möckli, Misteli, 2007). At the end of 2004, also they joined forces with ten EU countries (including Poland), in the context of military operations in Bosnia (European Union Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina, EUFOR) (Schwok, 2009, p. 98). EUFOR replaced the NATO forces retreating, taking the objective of ensuring the safety of civilians in Bosnia and Herzegovina and defense of the country’s borders.

It should be noted, however, that despite the participation of Switzerland in their efforts to global security, which produced a number of absentee in the past, the opportunity to establish a broader Polish-Swiss cooperation (for example, joint exercises, exchange of military experience), and ties in this area are still clearly limited. Although Switzerland is a deeper incorporated in the political debate over the most important issues of NATO security in Europe and in the world\(^6\), it still does not belong to NATO, excluding any participation in defense alliances. This is the result of a strong commitment to neutrality and distance to the need to determine definitively their political sympathies, which require such alliances. Switzerland’s foreign security policy still has the greatest emphasis on the preservation of impartiality, which in certain circumstances could cast a shadow on relations with Poland, especially in situations of Poland’s involvement in military operations outside the auspices of the United Nations, as it was during the US war in Iraq.

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\(^6\) For example, within the annual NATO conference devoted to the problems of non-proliferation and disarmament of weapons of mass destruction, or as part of the NATO summit as a member of the OSCE.
Apart from the problems of the EU and the North Atlantic Alliance, we can talk about the growing importance and developing situations for Polish-Swiss cooperation on the level of other international organizations in the political, economic as well as scientific-intellectual fields.

1. The political dimension. The most important role, in addition to the United Nations, plays the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission and the OSCE. Both institutions have a long tradition, which reflects the Polish-Swiss relations in the international arena. Since the 50s of last century, Poland and Switzerland have still connected to work together to build peace on the Korean peninsula. Annual consultations of the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission (NNSC), which includes Sweden, too, have taken a continuation of the Cold War efforts to maintain stability in the region, legitimized by the need for the international community, interested in security, arms control and human rights (Birchmeier, Burdelski, Jendraszczak, 2008). It also has a longer history of involvement of both countries in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, which took over the traditions of the CSCE, actively co-created in the 70s both Poland and Switzerland. The mobilization between the two countries in the OSCE is particularly evident in moments of taking up the presidency of the organization. In this respect, obviously important for Polish-Swiss relations was the last time in 2014, when Switzerland gained the status of steering the organization (Permanent Representation…, 2014a)\(^8\). The factor that in a fundamental degree aggravated Polish-Swiss cooperation on these plane multilateral relations was without a doubt the outbreak

\(^7\) In the 90s, Switzerland leads the work of the OSCE in 1996, Poland in turn two years later…

\(^8\) Switzerland took over the presidency of the OSCE, the promotional message of the Permanent Representation of Poland to the Office of the United Nations and International Organisations in Vienna of the 16 January 2014. The Swiss presidency priorities were related to, inter alia, to further strive for reconciliation in the Western Balkans, building confidence in the area of arms control, the fight against global threats and how to deal effectively with the risk of natural disasters and the further development of the organization, taking into account the negative effects of the economic crisis and the emerging multipolar international order.
of the Ukrainian crisis. The process of smoothening the conflict involved OSCE directed by Switzerland – with the inevitable support of Poland – since the first clashes on the Maidan (Permanent Representation…, 2014b). In addition to the participation of both countries in peacekeeping of the blue helmets, Poland and Switzerland have the opportunity to cooperate in the framework of relevant UN intergovernmental cooperation platforms. For example, in May 2010, the two countries were selected to the Human Rights Council of the United Nations for the term 2010–2013 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2010)⁹.

2. The economic dimension. A central role is played here by two particular areas of institutionalized multilateral relations – the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). By joining the OECD, Poland was granted the opportunity to experience a wide use of multi-dimensional Swiss economic issues and the interoperability between multilateral economic relations. However, it seems more important that the IMF, with Poland and Switzerland – alongside Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Serbia, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan – belongs to the same Constituent Assembly¹⁰. Last Polish-Swiss relations at the level of the IMF clearly tightened because of measures aimed at reforming the fund in terms of strengthening the role of developing countries and taking into account the global trend of the growing importance of emerging economies. As a result of this idea, the decision was made to allow Poland to take over the executive management Constituent Swiss supreme until now resting in the hands of Switzerland. Up to this point the permanent representative of Poland sat in the deputy chair (Eidgenössisches Finanzdepartement, 2014, p. 2). April 20, 2012 Poland and Switzerland signed an agreement on this by imposing a two-year rotation of Polish-Swiss

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⁹ The Council is essentially monitoring for human rights and fundamental freedoms in the world.

¹⁰ The Constituent Assembly is a component of the IMF, the regional group, which represents one director, participating in the general board of directors of the IMF and having a direct impact on the decisions of the organization.
on the new Executive Director Constituent Assembly, while providing for the future the introduction of a similar rule for the position of Executive Director of the World Bank's Constituent Assembly (Polish National Bank, 2012). These issues are undoubtedly bringing together the two countries, reinforcing the importance of Polish-Swiss relations within the Bretton Woods institutions.

3. Scientific and intellectual dimension. Global processes pushing the progress of the knowledge economy open more opportunities to closer Polish-Swiss relations in the area of international research, science and other intellectual initiatives. Since July 1991, Poland has been a full member of the operating since 1954 the European Organization for Nuclear Research (Conseil Européen pour la Recherche Nucléaire, CERN) which is an autonomous research unit, while working closely with the UN. In addition, CERN involves 20 countries, including Switzerland, which is one of the 12 founding members of the organization based in Geneva. Polish ties with CERN, however, go deeper into the past, because Poland was the only country of the Eastern Bloc, which since 1964 had its observer at CERN (Osmańczyk, 1982, p. 80). CERN is currently working with several Polish research institutes (including the Institute of Nuclear Physics in Cracow, or Department of Physics and Nuclear Techniques). Their representatives use extensively, located within the center of Geneva, the largest and most complex tools and equipment enabling the study of the basic components of the structure of matter. For example, researchers at the Cracow Institute of Nuclear Physics in Switzerland participated in many joint preparatory work and engineering and technical, related to the most important projects of CERN (LHC, ATLAS experiment, the design of parts for the Large Hadron Collider). In November 2012, Poland joined the European Space Agency (European Space Agency, ESA), the continental US counterpart NASA (Rząd Rzeczypospolitej, 2013). This is another important international research plane of Polish-Swiss relations, which in this case is strongly associated with economic development (access to technology, technology transfer to industry, the presence of an expanding market for wind). In terms of other
global initiatives of major scientific and intellectual issues, a few should be mentioned, e.g. the Polish and Swiss participation in the International Working Group for International Cooperation in Education, Remembrance and Research on the Holocaust\textsuperscript{11}. Poland joined it in 1999, five years after Switzerland confirmed its adherence. The platform creates a number of opportunities for the implementation of joint programs on the issue of the Holocaust and the development of the contribution of the two countries in the construction of international relations, taking into account the most important lessons for humanity and their social and intellectual effects.

Summarizing, after 1989, the importance of Polish-Swiss cooperation in international organizations has grown considerably. This was mainly due to the global shift in power in the world, which has deepened the role of global interdependence and the related need to strengthen multilateral cooperation in the joint deal with the challenges. The need to engage in these multidimensional processes, especially in the political, did not miss the countries such as Switzerland, strongly attached to the traditional elements of the policy of neutrality. These factors legitimized the previous history of Polish contacts with Switzerland in multilateral contexts (OSCE, NNSC). On the other hand, they have contributed to the constitution of the new directions of interaction (PfP, UN) and to strengthen the cooperation in the promotion of fundamental human rights and democracy. A hard to miss progress occurred on the economic and scientific, which traditionally have high consistency with Helvetian policy of neutrality. However, the lack of Switzerland’s membership in the EU and NATO still does not rule out the numerous opportunities to interact with Poland, although it is an important limiting context and specific conditions may result in some differences in the foreign policy of both countries.

Despite recently emerging issues such as migration closing of Switzerland or the cultural effects of the conflict over the Rapperswil museum,

\textsuperscript{11} The initiative was launched in May 1998 by Swedish Prime Minister Goran Persson. Its goal is to both preserve the memory of the Holocaust issues, as well as conducting systematic research about this issue and educating generations in a spirit of respect for the victims of the genocide of World War II.
this assessment is difficult to deny. In the last quarter-century Poland and Switzerland has consistently sought to use both historical heritage plane of mutual and harmonious relations, as well as numerous opportunities for promoting economic cooperation and cultural, scientific, passing both internal and specific to their own circumstances evolution\textsuperscript{12}. Regardless of the fundamental differences, referring to the question of the relation towards European integration, the direction of this evolution proved in the case of both countries consistent enough. Their effects are opening today to a number of prospects for joint deal with political, economic and cultural challenges of the globalizing reality.

However, bringing this assessment only to the last twenty-five years or historical ties between the two nations, does not reflect the full picture of the conditions and factors that have some influence on the relations between Poland and Switzerland. However, the attempt to relate to the whole communist period certain difficulty arises in a clear assessment of the Swiss-Polish relations in 1945–1989. It is hard not to see the importance of this period for the continuity of relations between Poland and the Helvetian state. Until now, there is a pretty strong conviction that these relations should be evaluated in rather negative terms. The assessment of this often affects the vital for international relations in this period bipolar system, which divided Europe and the world into two ideologically hostile camps.

\textsuperscript{12} It should be noted that these problems cannot be clearly evaluated in a critical manner. Apart from the recent decisions of the Federal Council on the introduction of temporary employment limits for the enlarged Union countries, which were the decisions of government and central, may be slightly different from the decisions taken by the Swiss society or specific groups (for example, the authorities of the Canton / city). The federal government does not have any influence on the change of the provisions of their own society, often disagreeing with them,, as happened in the case of a referendum on the restriction of immigration. The same happens in the case of the provisions of the local authorities on the most important Polish cultural institutions within the Helvetic state which also do not necessarily reflect the ratio of the federal authorities to these problems. These are the factors that significantly weaken the negative effects of the impact of these conditions on the generalized relations between the two countries, excluding the context of the EU’s discourse. From this point of view, the case of the Polish Museum in Rapperswil could be a bond, for example, by sensitizing the federal government and the nondisclosure of their willingness to help and mediation.
Therefore, after 1989 the analysis of the Polish People's Republic period was skipped, considered as an alien stage imposed on Poland and thus invalid and contested. These analyzes also often focus on the time of the “Solidarity” movement and the 80s of last century, when relations between Poland and Switzerland were indeed clearly unfriendly, and Polish power portrayed as a highly authoritarian, opposing the Swiss democracy and humanitarianism filled Helvetian society. This resulted in creating a pretty one-sided picture of the relationship, not taking into account the importance of bilateral, valuable contacts that took place before 1980 and which were an important element of the multidimensional policies of both countries. Therefore, it is difficult not to agree with the fact that what was built in this period (especially uphold the traditions of trade, cultural relations and international cooperation in the area of security) was a very important starting point for fruitful continuation of Polish-Swiss relations after 1989. In other words, the mutual foreign policy after the fall of the Iron Curtain was not immersed in the economic, cultural and political vacuum, significantly departing from, the highly romanticized sometimes, “Solidarity” discourse.

One should also raise the issue of the negative image of Switzerland, which is the result of international accusations of opportunistic use of military neutrality for collaboration with the Germans. The stigma of the war has not been completely removed so far from the perception of the state of the Helvetian world. This thread returning in Western Europe was widely commented upon in American political thought for most whole of the twentieth century. However, the political barrier that created the Cold War system could effectively isolate Poland and other Eastern Bloc countries from the negative effects of this discourse for the image of Switzerland. As a result, Polish-Swiss relations after 1945 could be substantially devoid of pejorative assessments of Switzerland, which eliminated the potentially broader perspective critical approach of the Polish power to the Helvetian state, strongly weakening the importance of this element in the bilateral discourse.

Overall, the post-war relations with Switzerland conducted within the Polish foreign policy determined the number of important factors, such as the neutrality of Switzerland, the economic needs of both countries and compromise the Polish authorities. Although Switzerland in terms
of political solutions ideologically belonged to the West, its unique policy of neutrality put it in the place generally inaccessible to the Western Bloc countries. Swiss neutrality and political distancing both blocks of the Cold War enabled it to cope effectively with the limitations in its relations with the socialist countries, which from the beginning were treated as important and unavoidable partners in economic cooperation. Durable neutrality, rejecting (at least officially) political prejudices and distances gave the Helvetian state a greater degree of freedom in the use of bringing to the country all the post-war possibilities to its superior, form the economic point of view, strategic raw materials. The Swiss from the beginning saw Poland as an important supplier of coal, minerals and food. Similarly, for the Polish economy – despite the nationalization and implementation of the centralized paradigm – economic cooperation with wealthy Switzerland was an important opportunity in rebuilding the destroyed economy after the war. Popular government permission to pay compensation for nationalized prewar Swiss assets and complete fulfillment of these obligations by Poland, should be considered as one of the most important factors in maintaining the continuity of the relationship after the war between the two countries.

On the other hand, the concept of an active and impartial participation of neutral Switzerland in negotiation and mediation in the arena of international relations also allowed entering relations with Poland to the international arena. The deepening of the 50\(^{s}\) and 60\(^{s}\) conflict between the East and West led to the involvement of both countries in a number of initiatives in the field of security cooperation. Undoubtedly, the Swiss authorities underestimated the Polish ideas for the disarmament plans and projects in Central Europe as well as the establishment of common conference for security and cooperation in Europe. The mutual cooperation and dialogue at this level was positively commented upon. Even if some aspects of Polish politics could impress a clearly negative stigma on mutual relations (anti-Semitic policies and removal of Jews from Poland, Polish military intervention in Czechoslovakia in 1968, the brutal reaction of people's power to labor strikes in 1976, or the imposition of martial law in 1981, year, then the banning of “Solidarity”). Yet, the maintaining of its policy by Switzerland of permanent neutrality effectively prevented authorities from the official condemnation of the Confederation by the
people's power, regardless of the feelings and reactions of their own society. It is particularly noted that the traditions of Polish-Swiss cooperation at the international level formed during this period have managed to survive to this day, a specific remnant of the Cold War era. Both the idea of the CSCE, as well as the negotiations undertaken at the annual consultations of the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission, the arena still integrating Polish-Swiss joint efforts within the multilateral cooperation.

Against the background of what happened in the years 1945–1980, the decadent decade of the Polish People's Republic in the Polish-Swiss relations falls to the least favorable, as it designates the beginning of the “Solidarity” movement in Poland, and even – in a broader sense – the workers’ protests of 1976. As benevolent earlier economic and cultural relations at the level of the state institutions, have substantially loosened. On the one hand, as a result of suppression of the democratic tensions in the country by the Polish authorities, which also touched the political effects of Swiss citizens, outlined a deep chasm and mistrust between the communist authorities and Switzerland. On the other hand, the broader perception of society and the importance of the new social movements, entering as a powerful actor on the stage of interstate relations, led to a number of positive ratings of Polish society, which has taken the fight against undemocratic regime. This third stage in the relationship prior to 1989 was characterized to a certain extent by the importance of the communist government degradation and the shift of emphasis on movements and social activities. Thus there is the determination of a common perception of all Swiss-Polish relations in the twentieth century.

Nevertheless, taking into account the last decade of the Polish People's Republic, mostly “frozen” in bilateral relations, though, there should emphasized the importance of a positive and a fruit-bearing contribution in the form of a huge effort of Polish society in the process of dismantling the structures of the communist regime. This contribution was particularly appreciated in democratic values tied to Switzerland and absorbed by the Swiss Polish community, revealing to the intensification of the efforts to promote the idea of a free Poland in Europe. The symbolism of these traditions is reflected today in the sensitive area of Polish initiatives, supported
by Switzerland, oriented to democracy and the actions aimed at activating of the civil society in the countries of Eastern Europe.

After 1989, contrary to popular expectations, Polish-Swiss relations have not been significantly developed, although gradually deepened. The 90s of the last century, in a sense reflected the ongoing process of restoration of bilateral interstate relations, clearly broken in the previous decade. The structure and direction of the links in this period can be carefully compared to those of the Gierek era, although, of course, in changed contexts and rules of their organization. Both countries were facing at this time the need to define their place in the new Europe, following different paths. However, in spite of being outside Switzerland, European integration, after the Polish accession to the EU there could be observed the dynamic process of Polish-Swiss closer cooperation and progressive heterogenization of the directions of this cooperation. This was largely due to the implementation of the two-sided variant of the Swiss-EU relations, which in the case of relations with the Polish revealed considerable scope for efficiency. Undoubtedly, the turning point was a Swiss aid program, in support of European cohesion policy and granting Poland the most beneficiary status of all new EU members. This fund, in addition to the specific benefits and mobilization in terms of balancing social and economic differences, generated at the same time a number of opportunities to further deepening of the Polish-Swiss relations, promoting the establishment of bilateral cooperation in many new areas. Basically, this also required dynamically changing realities of the first decades of the twenty-first century, raising the need to reform and adapt to many areas new solutions to deal with the consequences of change. The validity of the space between the two countries in mutual foreign policy increased clearly, both on the economic and political fields, including the international space of multilateral relations. The economic exchange has significantly deepened, as it was determined by a favorable perception of Polish and Swiss economy, especially in the economic crisis. On the other hand, despite the Swiss objections to the participation of Polish troops in the wars in the Middle East, the two countries began to see clearly themselves as partners in the dialogue of the safety policy, which the Swiss decided – for various
international platforms – to support through mediation and action for peace and democracy in the world.

However, perhaps it is difficult to assess that a small Helvetian country is for Poland today one of the major partners in Europe and the world. It is – at least in the last decade – a participant in the European and world game difficult to neglect. The fundamental advantage that makes the Swiss player a rather benevolent partner, rather than reluctant Polish competitor actually is, in addition to the contribution of the traditional approach to the neutrality of the Confederacy, the whole story of friendly relations between the two countries without major controversy in the form of territorial disputes. Moreover, it includes the history of the national grievances, resentments and mutual claims. In this way, there emerges a place that can be easily filled now with a real sense of community and the ease with which the two countries can see a common perspective in the future, even in the context of the observed trend of Switzerland to distance from the European integration.

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