

RESEARCH

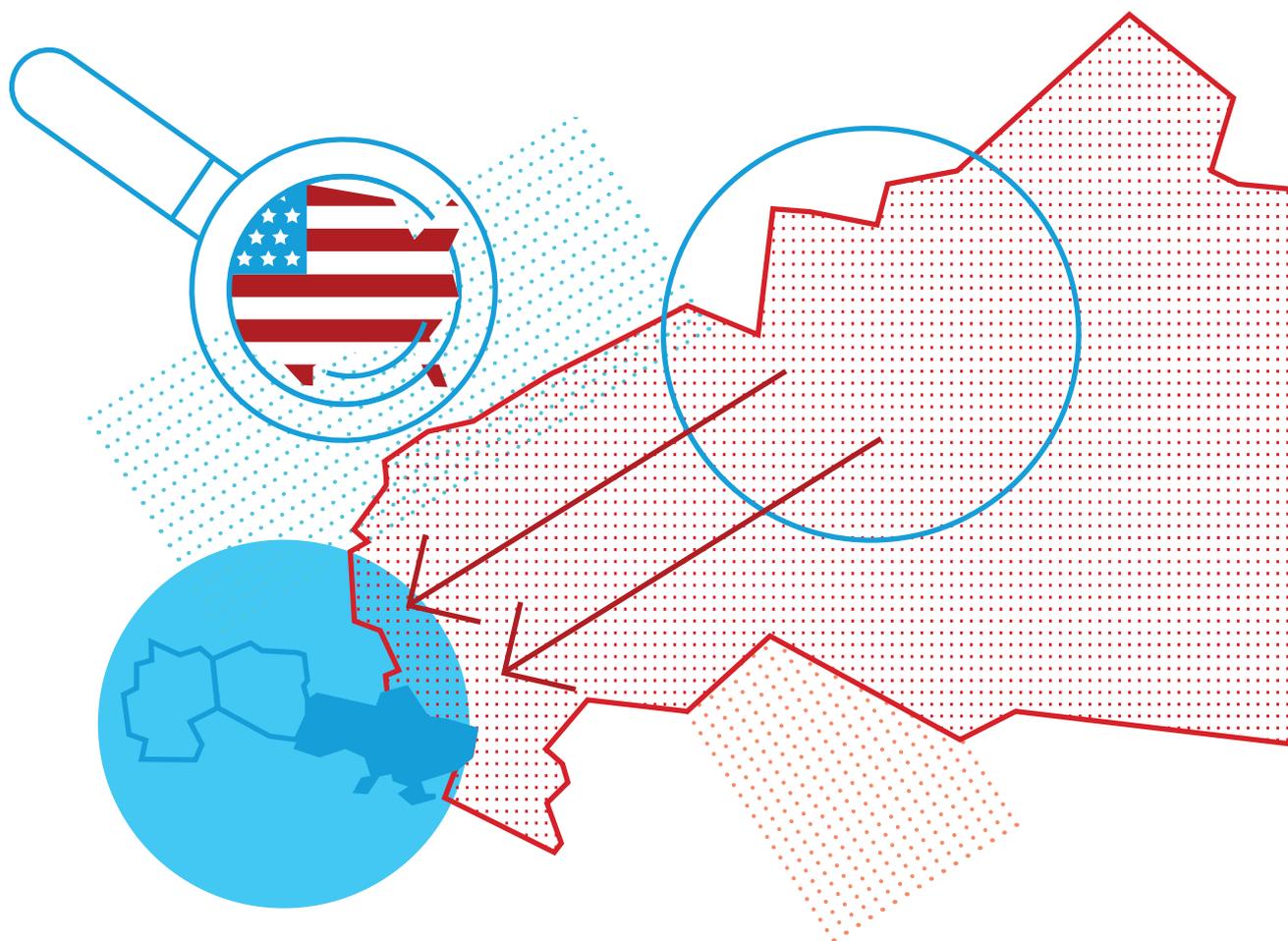
REPORTS

RECOMMENDATIONS

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# TRANSATLANTIC COOPERATION IN THE CONTEXT OF RUSSIAN AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE POLISH AND GERMAN OPINIONS

RESEARCH REPORT



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## Main conclusions and recommendations:



- ▶ The research confirms the divergence in the perception of the importance of cooperation with the US among Poles and Germans. The differences, resulting from a variety of historical, cultural and political factors, are a recognised phenomenon (at least in the expert community). Polish and German politicians and opinion makers should come to terms with the divergence of opinions about the United States, instead of using them to fuel tensions between Poland and Germany. Even if the position of Poland as an US partner and ally in Europe has been enhanced due to the Russian aggression in the Ukraine, Germany will remain the key US partner in Europe, notwithstanding the fact that Germans are not as pro-American as are Poles.
- ▶ The survey indicates a convergence of Polish and German opinions on the desirability of cooperation with France. This recognition of France as an important partner for Poland and Germany could be conducive to a renewal of the cooperation within the Weimar Triangle format. While security and defense cooperation is the obvious starting point for the revived Triangle, it should lead to a greater intensity of meetings, sectoral cooperation and socio-cultural exchange on a larger scale.
- ▶ Worth noting are the relatively low values that the German public attaches to cooperation with Central European countries such as Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic. If even the unenthusiastic attitude towards Hungary and Poland can currently be explained by the long-standing dispute over the rule of law and democratic backsliding in the two countries or the increasing anti-German rhetoric coming from the Polish ruling coalition, the low ratings of the cooperation with the Czech Republic show that the German public may have a deeper and more general problem with appreciation of the cooperation with Central Europeans. Notwithstanding the asymmetry of political or economic importance of Germany vis-a-vis its Eastern neighbours, it is worth strengthening efforts on all sides to make the cooperation with countries of Central Europe more visible to the German public.
- ▶ Despite the fact that the Polish society is characterised by deep political polarisation, the survey indicates the convergence of the views of the electorates of the main opposing political parties (Law and Justice and Civic Platform) on the cooperation with the USA, Great Britain and Ukraine or their virtually similar rejection of cooperation with Russia. This is an important signal for politicians of both the pro-government and opposition parties, on the opportunities to building cross-party bridges on key foreign policy directions, in the context of challenges related to unprovoked Russian aggression against Ukraine and threats against countries supporting Ukraine.

- ▶ On the contrary, Polish views on cooperation with Germany and Hungary are subject to political polarization. Pro-government voters are less keen on close cooperation with Germany and relatively less critical of cooperation with Hungary. Nevertheless, on average Poles continue to support cooperation with Germany and tend to be skeptical as regards Poland's relations with pro-Putin Hungary.
- ▶ In terms of views on international cooperation within the electorates of Polish and German political parties, there are clear outliers in both countries, namely AfD in Germany and Konfederacja in Poland. It is worth closely following the support for these two parties as an indicator of a possible disruption of the pro-Ukrainian and pro-atlanticist consensus in Polish and German politics.
- ▶ Poles tend to be more appreciative than Germans of the US support to Ukraine and somewhat less appreciative of the European assistance to this country. Nevertheless, majorities in both countries appreciate both US and European assistance and only small minorities think it is too big.
- ▶ Even though more Germans than Poles consider US policy towards Russia as too anti-Russian, this is clearly a minority group in both countries. The Polish stereotype of pro-Russian Germans has as little foundation in post 24th Feb reality as the German stereotype of Russophobic Poles. Opinion makers and politicians in both countries should take note of these facts.
- ▶ Both Polish and German societies trust that the US will provide their countries with meaningful military assistance in case of a Russian attack. Remarkably, clear majorities in Poland and Germany also believe that in case of a Russian attack, their countries would receive effective military support from other European NATO countries. These facts bode well for Polish and German dialogue on security and defense issues, also when it comes to strengthening defense and security policy of the European Union and the upgrading of Europe's defensive capacity as long as such policies are perceived as complementary, and not as an alternative, to transatlantic military cooperation.
- ▶ Germans have less positive views of the US global influence than the Poles. The latter tend to view it as benevolent while a large part of the German public sees it as neither good nor bad. This divergence, once again, should be viewed as an opportunity for a substantive dialog between Poles and Germans, and not a pretext for mutual recriminations.
- ▶ The divisions in German public opinion are not the same as in Poland, where opinions tend to be correlated with political affiliations. Differences between the „old” and „new” Länder are still visible in the German society. In particular, the attitudes towards Russia are still shaped by the experience of living under a different economic and political system, belonging to a common bloc, with intense, often personal people-to-people contacts. Importantly, East and West Germans were exposed to different narratives concerning Germany's difficult 20th century history. This division poses a challenge to German decision-makers when making political decisions, including such sensitive ones as military aid to Ukraine.

## Introduction



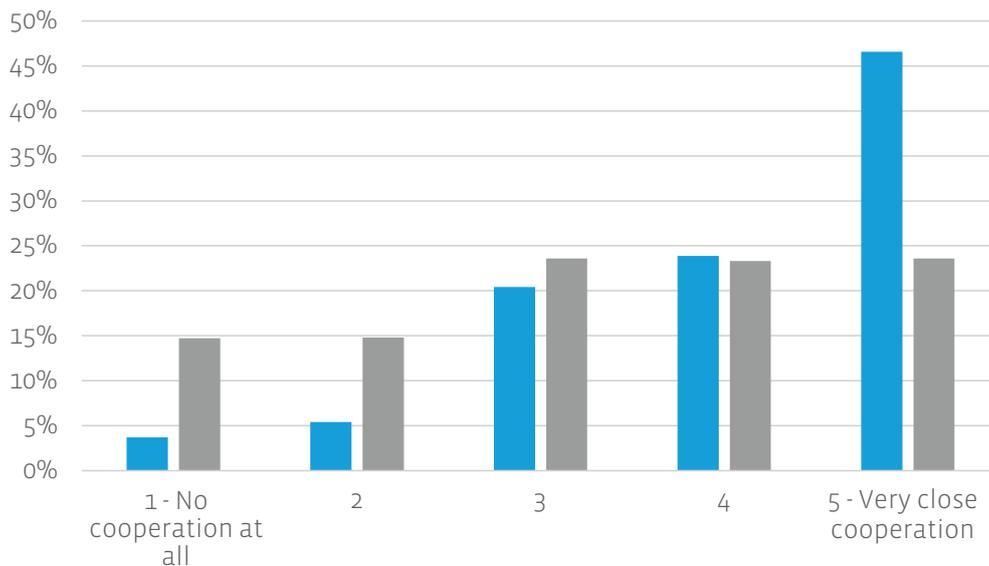
Perceptions of the US role in the global and European security system have often divided Polish and German elites and public opinion. The Russian aggression against Ukraine and the the U.S. support to Ukraine renewed the debate in both countries on the U.S. role in European security. As we know from previous surveys, the societies of Poland and Germany evaluated the Russian aggression very similarly and had similar expectations about how their own governments should react to the situation. In the current survey, we wanted to see if a similar convergence of Polish and German opinions applies to the role and policies of our main transatlantic partner, the United States. The survey also compares the opinions on the US and European response to the war and looks at the trust that Polish and German publics have in solidarity of other NATO members in case of a Russian attack.

This report is based on a survey designed by experts of the Institute of Public Affairs, with the support of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation. The polling was conducted by the 4P Group between 10 and 22 November 2022, using the CAWI method (via an online panel) on a representative sample of one thousand Polish and one thousand German residents aged between eighteen and seventy-five. Both nationwide samples of respondents are representative in terms of gender, age and place of residence.

## Polish and German opinions on cooperation with the US and other countries.



The United States is a country with which 70% of Poles want to cooperate, including 47% who postulate very close cooperation. Significantly, the demand for the closest possible cooperation with the US is shared by supporters of the largest party in power (Law and Justice - 61%) and the largest opposition grouping (Civic Platform - 59%). Support for very close transatlantic cooperation is similarly high among coalition partners of PiS (Solidarna Polska) and KO (Nowoczesna, Zieloni and Inicjatywa Polska). On the other hand, support for very close cooperation with the U.S. is relatively weakest among Confederation supporters (38%), but even here the total percentage of supporters of cooperation reaches above 50%. Among supporters of the Confederation, there is also the relatively highest percentage of those who oppose cooperation with the US (16%). For supporters of the main political forces in Poland, the percentage of strong opponents of cooperation is very small, within the statistical error. It can therefore be concluded that close cooperation enjoys strong public support regardless of the deep political differences dividing Polish society.



**Graph 1**  
In your opinion, should Poland/Germany cooperate closely with the following countries? - the United States

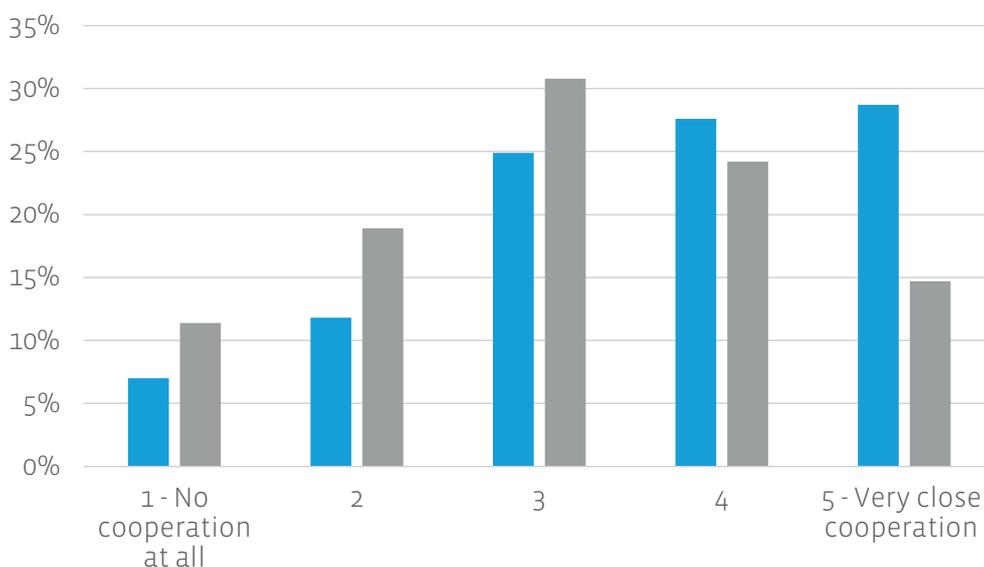
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Source: Institute of Public Affairs

Among German respondents, a total of 47% expressed support for cooperation with the US, with 24% in favor of very close cooperation. And the same percentage of Germans have a rather neutral attitude toward cooperation with the United States, a similar figure for Polish respondents thinking the same way about Poland's cooperation with the US (20%). Greater differences are evident in the opinion of not supporting cooperation, with 15% of the German public not wishing for any cooperation with the US. This more ambivalent attitude of Germans toward the U.S. is already known from earlier surveys and, as we can see, persists despite the role the U.S. plays for Europe's security in the situation of Russia's aggression against Ukraine. In the German political arena, there are no significant differences between the supporters of the parties that make up the governing coalition (SPD, Greens, FDP) and the largest opposition party (CDU/CSU). Among supporters of these four parties, support for trans-Atlantic cooperation dominates. The lowest support for cooperation with the U.S. is found among AfD voters, among whom almost half do not wish to cooperate with America - 46%, as do 38% of Die Linke supporters. Among German public opinion, the support for cooperation with the U.S. is broken down by age group - there is more support for contacts with the U.S. among those between the ages of 60 and 64 (65%), with lower support among 25-29-year-olds of 32%.

A clear majority of the Polish public also supports Poland's cooperation with Germany, although this support is less pronounced than regarding the United States. Thus, 28% of respondents support very close and a further 27% support close cooperation with our western neighbor. There are also more opponents of cooperation with Germany than opponents of cooperation with the U.S., but the percentage of strong opponents is still very small at only 7%.

Unlike in the case of assessing cooperation with the US, opinions on cooperation with Germany are clearly differentiated by the political orientation. Support for very close cooperation with Germany is declared by nearly half of Civic Platform supporters (48%), but only 24% of Law and Justice party supporters. A total of 47% of Law and Justice supporters and as many as 79% of Civic Platform supporters are in favour of cooperation with Germany. More than one in four Law and Justice party supporters do not wish for cooperation with Germany, including one in ten - no cooperation at all. We see a similar distribution of responses among supporters of all parties close to the current government and the Confederation, whose supporters most often reject Poland's cooperation with Germany (33%). However, it should be noted that in the electorates of all parties, including Law and Justice and the Confederation, the percentage of supporters of cooperation with Germany is higher than the percentage of opponents of such cooperation.



**Graph 2**  
In your opinion, should Poland/Germany cooperate closely with the following countries?  
- Germany/Poland

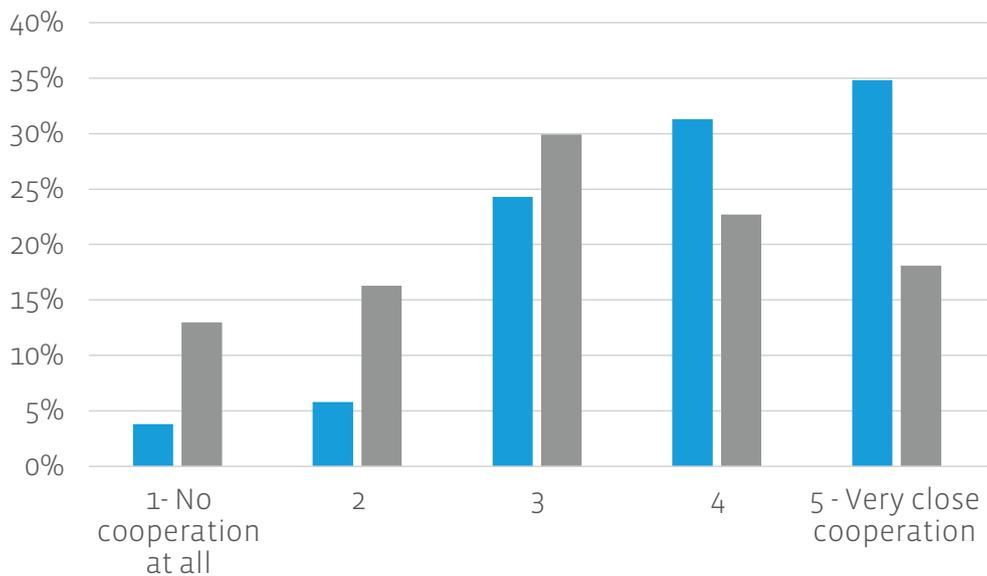
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Source: Institute of Public Affairs

The survey showed a strong asymmetry of support for cooperation with the neighboring country among public opinion in both countries. While Poles are in favor of continued strong cooperation, far more Germans adopt a neutral or negative attitude to cooperation with Poland (61% in total). 39% of Germans are in favour of a partnership with Poland, with only 15% considering very close cooperation between the two countries desirable. At the same time, more reluctant attitudes towards cooperation with Poland were recorded in the western states - in Schleswig-Holstein and Hamburg 42%, in Rhineland-Westphalia 35%, while in the eastern states the percentage of reluctance was 16% in Berlin and 18% in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, respectively. Among the electorates of the parties represented in the Bundestag, support for cooperation with Poland, neutral or negative attitudes are evenly distributed. Only noteworthy is the AfD electorate, which is 14% opposed to any cooperation with Poland, where among CDU or Green voters such an opinion is held by 7% of voters of both parties.

It is interesting to compare the attitude of the Polish public to cooperation with Poland's two important partners in Europe, the UK and France. The majority of Poles support cooperation with each of these countries, but support for cooperation with the UK (66%)

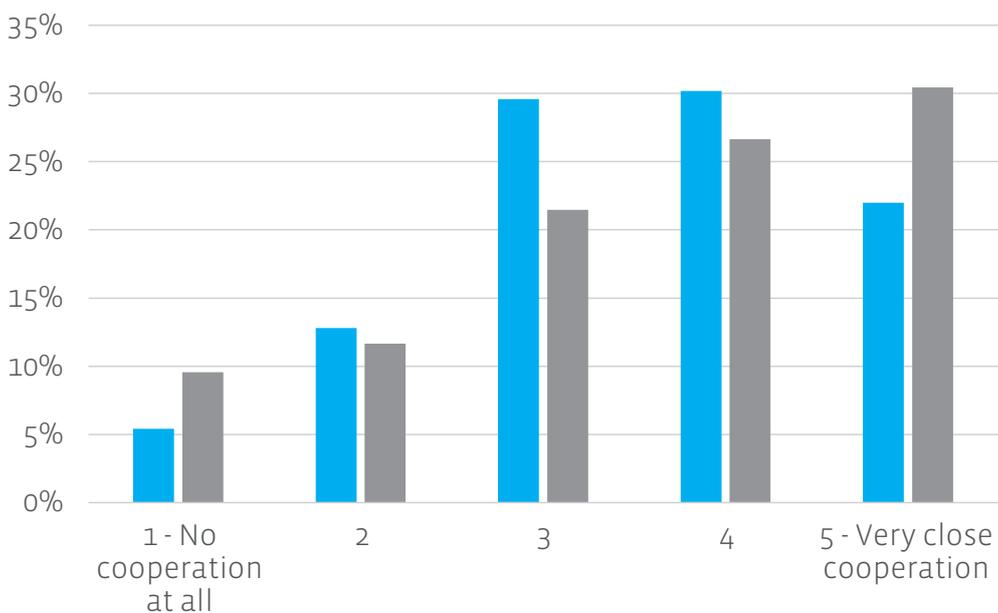
is noticeably stronger than support for cooperation with France (57%). As with the U.S., cooperation with the United Kingdom enjoys very high support from both ruling party supporters and opposition sympathizers. The situation is different in the case of cooperation with France, which is supported by a clear majority of opposition party supporters, while the opinions of ruling party supporters are quite divided, although even in this group there are more supporters than opponents of such cooperation. However, even among opposition voters, close cooperation with the UK enjoys stronger support than close cooperation with France, likely due to more decisive British military support for Ukraine, which is fighting Russian aggression.



**Graph 3**  
In your opinion, should Poland/Germany cooperate closely with the following countries? - Great Britain

PL DE

Source: Institute of Public Affairs



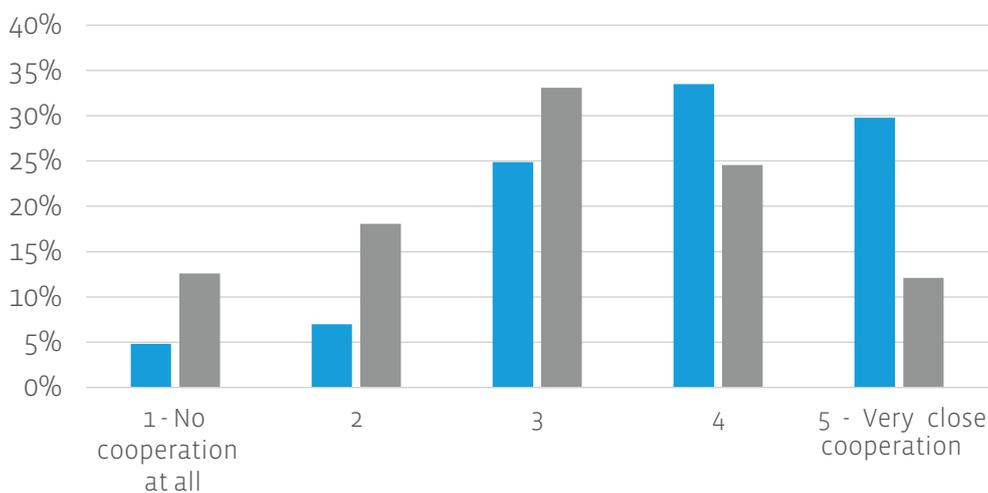
**Graph 4**  
In your opinion, should Poland/Germany cooperate closely with the following countries? - France

PL DE

Source: Institute of Public Affairs

With regard to the UK and France, among German respondent's support is distributed inversely to Poland, in favor of its immediate neighbor. 58% of Germans favored cooperation with France, while 41% favored cooperation with the UK. Such a distribution is not surprising given the long-standing close political cooperation and extensive social, cultural, or economic contacts between France and Germany. The proportion of those with neutral or negative attitudes toward the UK is also higher - 30% and 29%, respectively. One can speculate that the higher neutral attitude toward cooperation with the UK may be influenced by the fact that the country left the European Union three years ago.

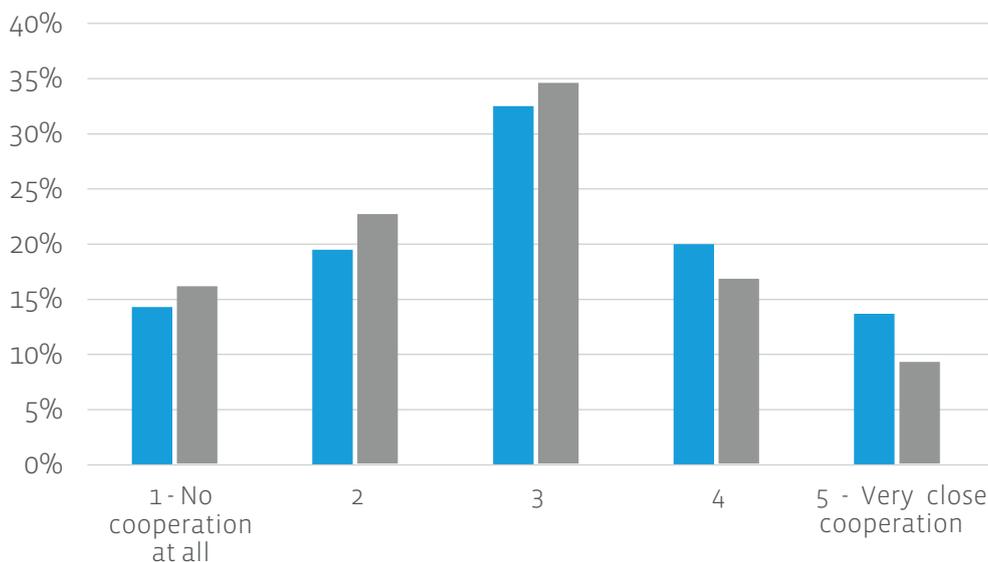
Similarly interesting is the comparison of opinions on Poland's cooperation with two Central European countries, namely the Czech Republic and Hungary. As we can see, support for very close cooperation with the Czech Republic is expressed by more than twice as many respondents as for Hungary (30% to 14%), and overall, cooperation with the Czech Republic is supported by 64% of Polish women and men, and with Hungary by only 34%. It can be said that Prime Minister Orbán's ostentatious support for President Putin's policies has shaken Hungary's image in Poland. Support for cooperation with the Czech Republic is cross-party in Poland, that is, it is equally strong among supporters of the ruling parties and the main opposition forces. The situation is completely different as regards the cooperation with Hungary - half of the ruling Law and Justice party voters support it, while half of Civic Platform supporters oppose such cooperation. One in three Law and Justice supporters cannot assess whether Poland should cooperate with Hungary, which is even more striking because for many years the party has been very clearly oriented toward cooperation with Prime Minister Orbán's government, and even after the outbreak of war its politicians avoided open criticism of its Hungarian ally.



**Graph 5**  
In your opinion, should Poland/Germany cooperate closely with the following countries?  
- Czechia

PL DE

Source: Institute of Public Affairs



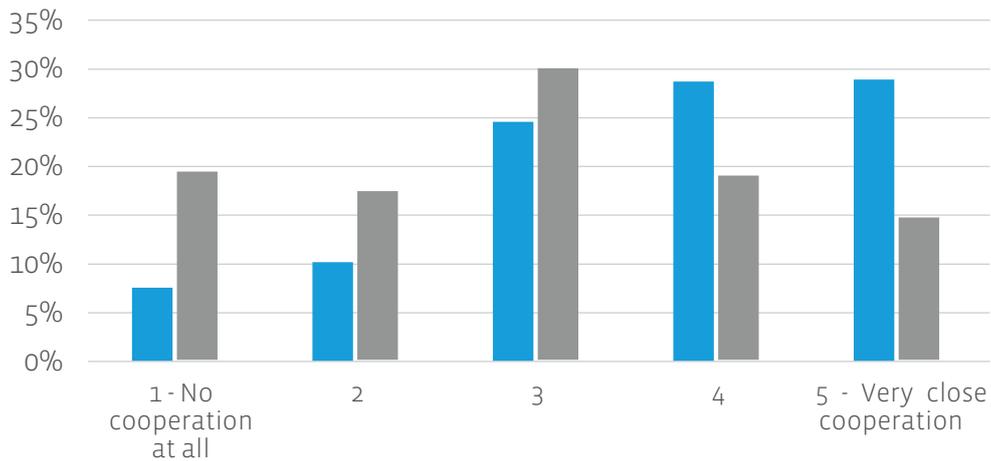
**Graph 6**  
In your opinion, should Poland/Germany cooperate closely with the following countries?  
- Hungary

PL DE

Source: Institute of Public Affairs

Regarding the Czech Republic and Hungary, the German public is very similarly neutral at 33% and 35%, respectively, and this result is similar to the Germans' neutral attitude toward Poland at 31%. However, 37% of respondents expect deeper cooperation with the Czech Republic, while only 26% expect cooperation with Hungary. The lower support for cooperation with Hungary can be attributed to the prolonged dismantling of the rule of law and the Orban government's support for Russia in the face of the war in Ukraine. German publics relatively weak support for cooperation with the Czech Republic at 29% is also similar to its lack of support for cooperation with Poland at 30%. Support for the Czech Republic does not differ substantially among the various electorates, while the issue of cooperation with Hungary distinguishes the AfD from the other parties in the ruling coalition. AfD supporters favor very close cooperation with Hungary at almost 19%, with about 7% support from CDU, SPD and Green voters, with 10% support among FDP supporters.

The Polish public is very strongly in favor of cooperation with Ukraine (58%), with only 8% opposed to such cooperation. Nonetheless, one is struck by the significant group of respondents (25%) who declare neutrality on this issue. One can guess that the reason for such restraint is concern about the possible consequences of Poland providing strong support to the struggling Ukraine. Support for cooperation with Ukraine is cross-party in nature. There is very strong support for this cooperation from both PiS and PO supporters. In both electorates, this support reaches 70% of those surveyed. The situation is similar in the electorates of all major political forces. Only the supporters of the Confederation are divided on this issue, although nearly half of them are in favor of cooperation with Ukraine, and about a third are opposed to such cooperation.



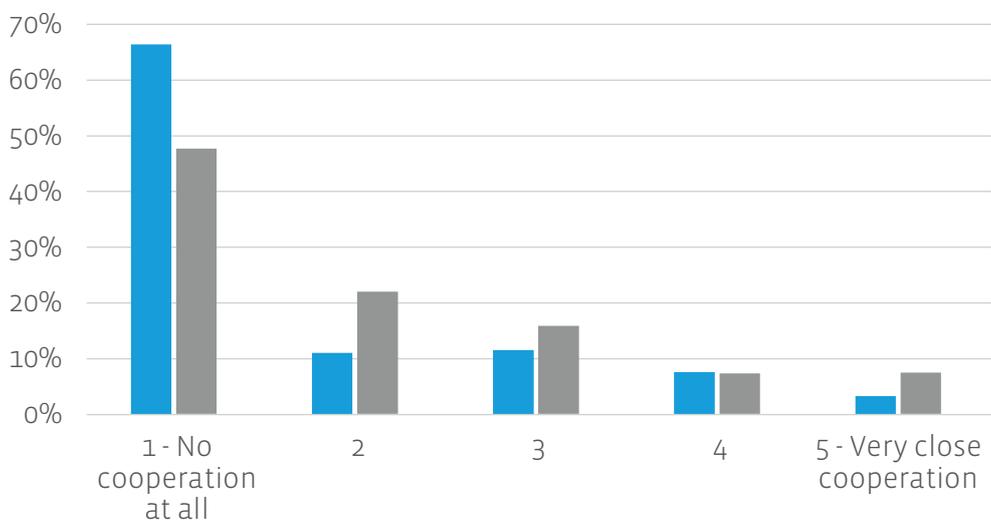
**Graph 7**  
In your opinion, should Poland/Germany cooperate closely with the following countries?  
- Ukraine

PL DE

Source: Institute of Public Affairs

As regards Germany’s cooperation with Ukraine, German public opinion is split almost evenly between supporters - 34% and opponents of cooperation - 36%. A neutral attitude was expressed by 30% of respondents. As can be seen, this is significantly lower support for cooperation with Ukraine than for Polish respondents. This is consistent [with other surveys](#), in which German respondents are in favor of financial and military support for struggling Ukraine, but their support is weaker in each of these areas compared to the Polish public. There is also little surprise in the breakdown by political party, as supporters of Alternative for Germany are the most opposed to cooperation with Ukraine, which distinguishes them significantly from supporters of all other governing parties, the CDU/CSU and die Linke.

As [previous surveys have shown](#), Russia is perceived by the Polish public as a threat both militarily and politically or economically. From the current survey, we learn that more than 80% of Poles do not wish for any cooperation with Russia, and close cooperation is advocated by only 3% of respondents (a total of 11% are in favor of cooperation). Rejection of cooperation with Russia also unites the voters of all political forces, with the strongest opposition expressed by voters of the two largest parties, namely Law and Justice and Civic Platform. The opposition of Confederation voters is relatively smallest, but even in this group, opponents of cooperation with Russia clearly dominate those who support such cooperation (57% against, 23% for).



**Graph 8**  
In your opinion, should Poland/Germany cooperate closely with the following countries?  
- Russia

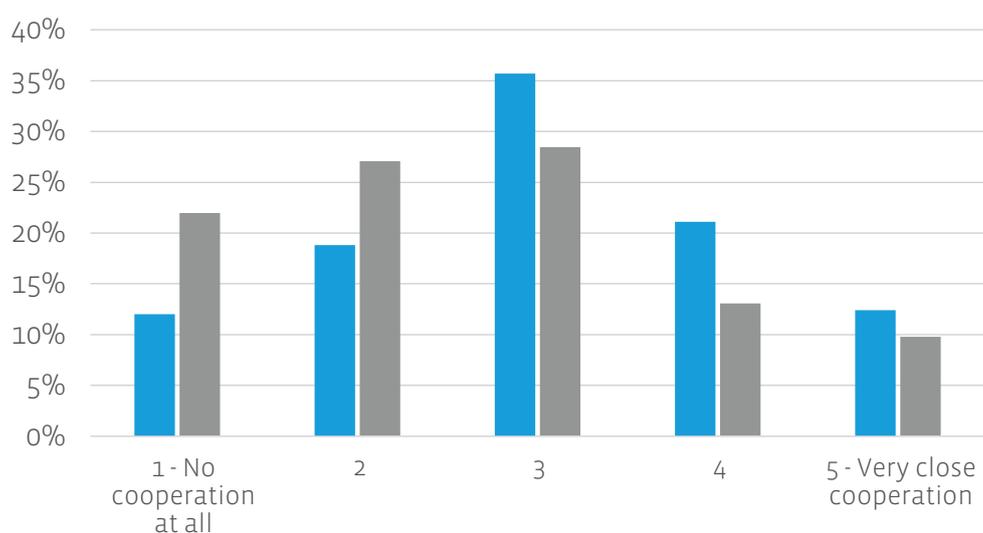
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Source: Institute of Public Affairs

German respondents were similarly negative about cooperation with Russia - 70% of them do not want further cooperation with Russia, 16% have a neutral attitude and only 14% would like further cooperation. Although the percentage of supporters of cooperation with Russia in Germany is slightly higher than in Poland, one should remember the traditionally high support for Russia in German society and elites before the outbreak of the full-scale war against Ukraine. From this perspective, this is a significant drop-in support for contacts with Russia. The differences between the AfD and the ruling coalition are also clear here - 20% of AfD supporters were in favor of very close cooperation with Russia, with an average of 5% support among voters of all parties forming the government in Berlin. 9% of die Linke voters would like to see continued very close cooperation with Putin's Russia. Worth noting once again is the regional difference - the most opposed to any cooperation with Russia is Bavaria at 59%, while the least decisive on the issue is Saxony and Saxony-Anhalt at 36%.

Unlike in the case of Russia, the Polish public has no clear assessment of cooperation with the authoritarian China. On this issue, Polish society is almost perfectly evenly divided into three groups - supporters, opponents and those who remain neutral on the issue. Supporters of both PiS and PO are internally divided on this issue in almost the same proportion as the society. Voters' assessments of the other major political forces are similarly ambiguous.

Regarding China, the German public has more clearly defined views than the Polish. 49% of German respondents do not support maintaining cooperation with this authoritarian regime, while another 28% have a neutral attitude. A similar number of Germans (28%) and Poles (31%) are in favor of continued cooperation. The least support for cooperation with China is declared by supporters of the opposition CDU/CSU, only 7% of whom believe that Germany should cooperate closely with the country, with 16% supporting such cooperation by AfD supporters. Supporters of the ruling coalition party expect such an attitude with 10-11% support.

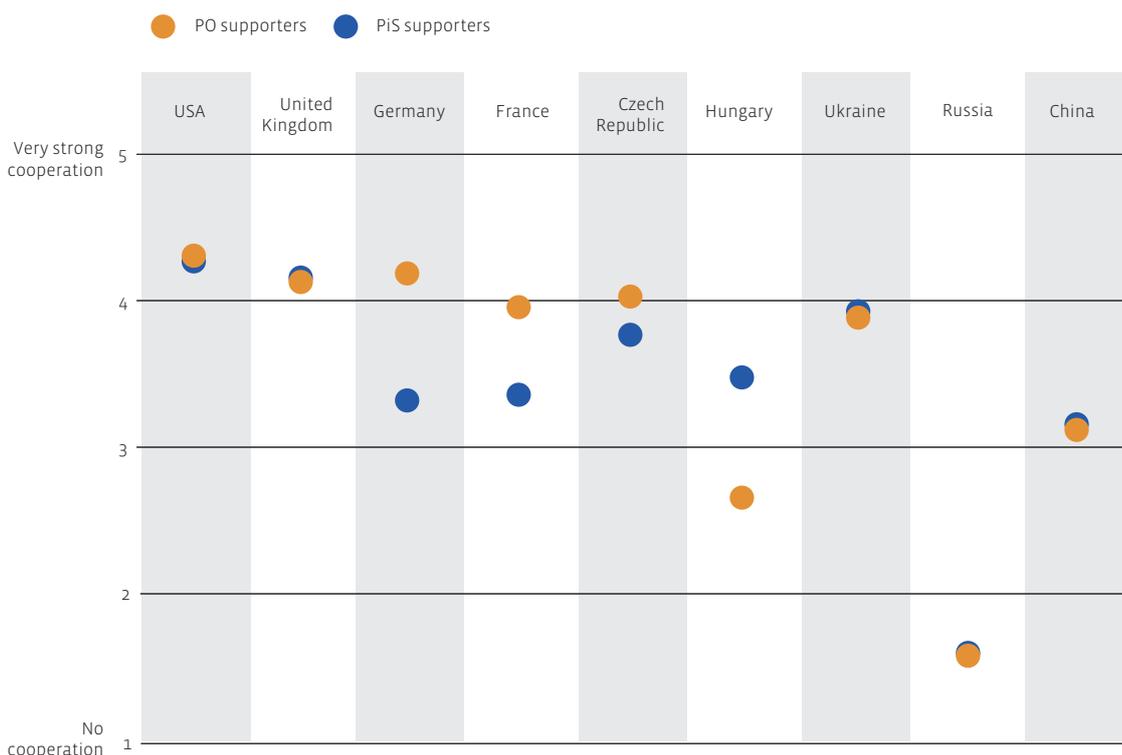


**Graph 9**  
In your opinion, should Poland/Germany cooperate closely with the following countries? - China

PL DE

Source: Institute of Public Affairs

Opinions about Poland’s cooperation with other countries are often, but not always, related to respondents’ support for various political forces in Poland. As we have seen, cooperation or rejection of cooperation is the antecedent of cross-party agreement in the case of some countries. As the chart below shows, based on an analysis of the average support for Poland’s cooperation with various countries, there is no difference in the opinions of supporters of the government and the opposition with respect to the United States, but also the United Kingdom and Ukraine. Supporters of both PiS and PO clearly reject cooperation with countries that are undemocratic and hostile to Western democracies, that is, Russia, but also China. There is relatively little difference in attitudes toward cooperation with the Czech Republic. Here, PO voters are more enthusiastic, but Law and Justice voters also generally support this cooperation, although with markedly less enthusiasm. Hungary turns out to be Poland’s most controversial partner. Cooperation with Orban’s pro-Putin regime is clearly rejected by supporters of the opposition PO, while it is accepted, albeit without much enthusiasm, by supporters of PiS (who also support cooperation with the Czech Republic more strongly than with Hungary!). On the other hand, there are clear differences in the two electorates’ attitudes toward cooperation with the most important EU countries. Nevertheless, PiS supporters tend to accept cooperation with Germany and France, but at a rather low level. Supporters of the opposition PO strongly support cooperation with Germany, weaker with France. Even though this country militarily supports Ukraine in its fight against Russian occupiers, a number of President Macron’s speeches, which were perceived as conciliatory toward Putin, have not won France supporters on either the government or opposition side.



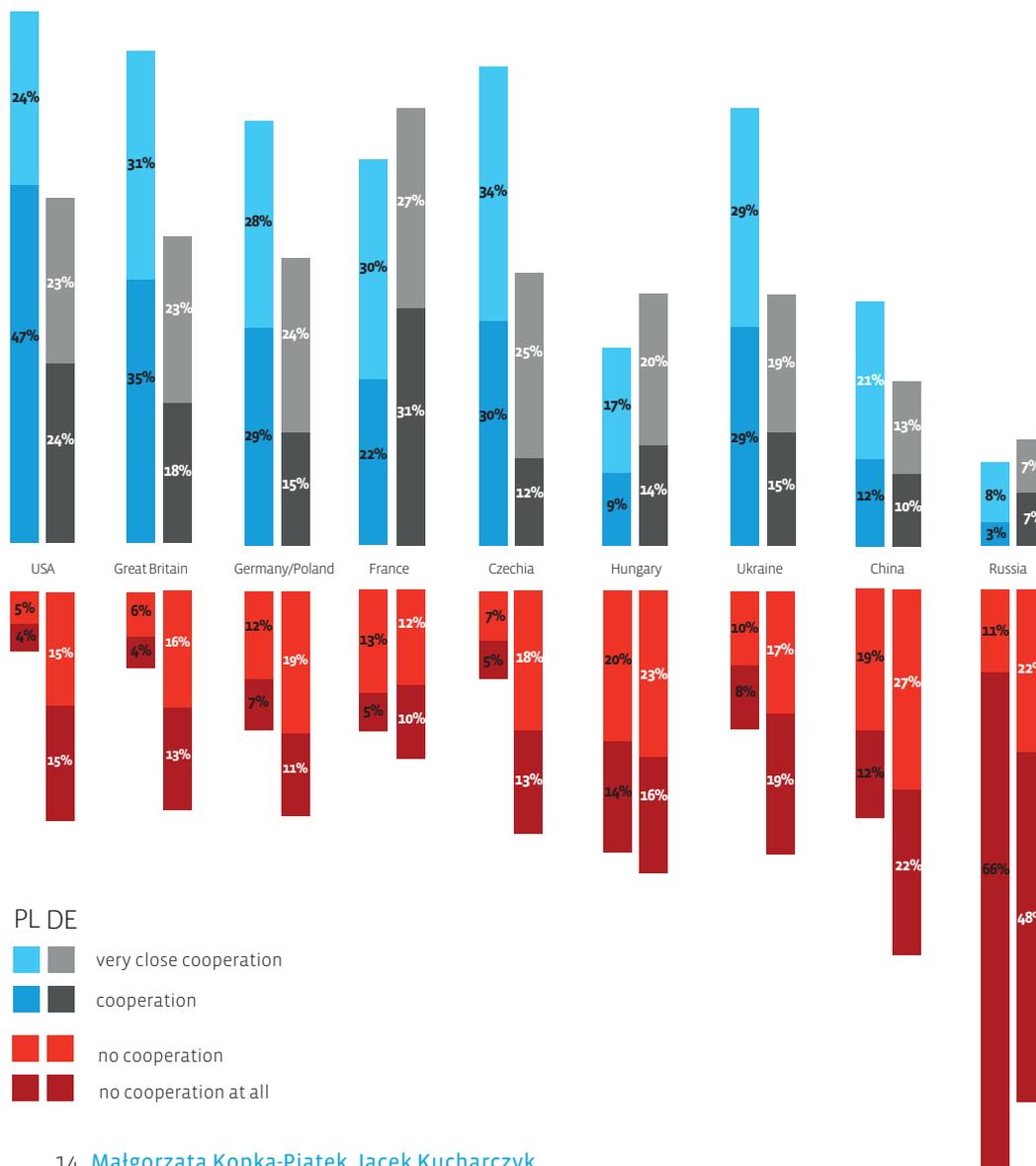
Graph 10: Differences in the assessments of the electorates of the main political parties in Poland on cooperation with other countries.

Source: Institute of Public Affairs

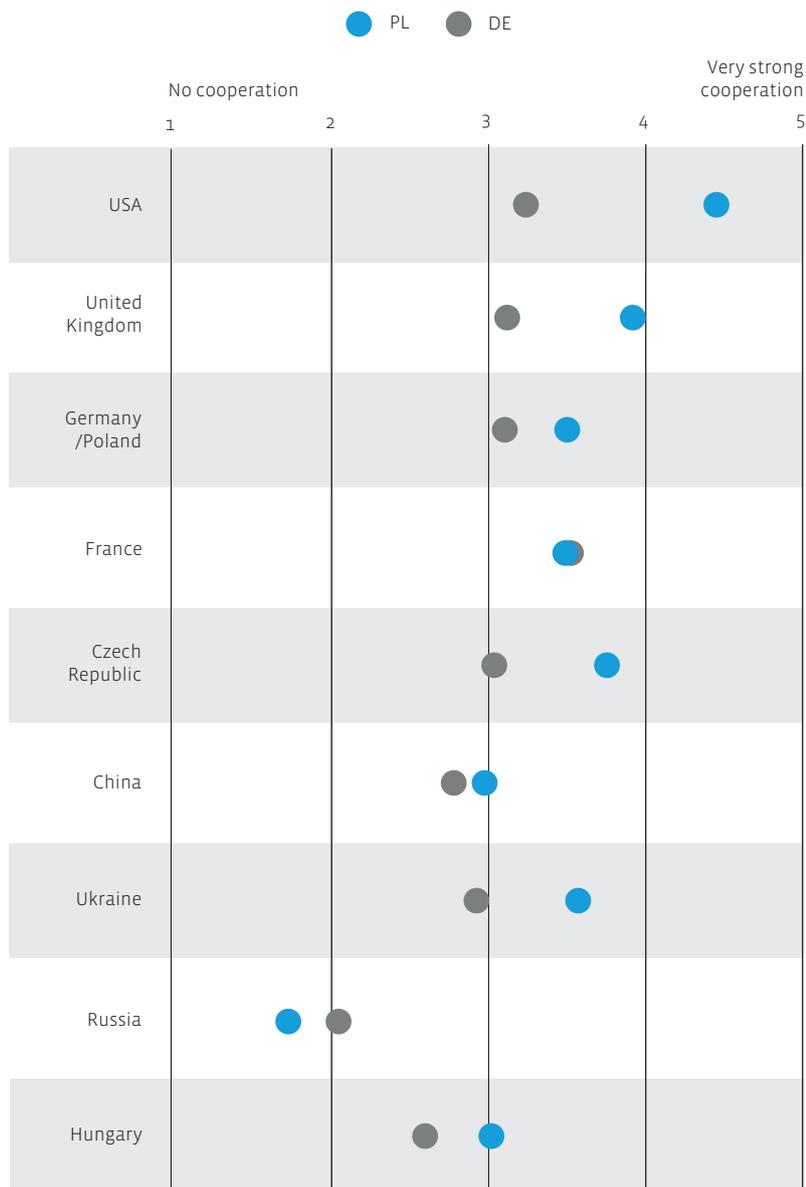
The political scene in Germany does not manifest as much visible polarization as in Poland. In terms of cooperation or non-cooperation with individual countries, the views of both the supporters of the ruling parties (SPD, FDP, Greens) and the largest opposition party (CDU/CSU) are highly convergent. Almost a rule of thumb is the different attitude of AfD voters in favor of less involvement in transatlantic relations or support for Ukraine, in favor of stronger support for contacts with Russia or pro-Putin Hungary.



**Graph 11**  
 In your opinion, should Poland/Germany cooperate closely with the following countries? Answers PL and DE for all countries together



Source: Institute of Public Affairs



**Graph 12**  
Polish and German views on cooperation with other countries (average results on 1-5 scale)

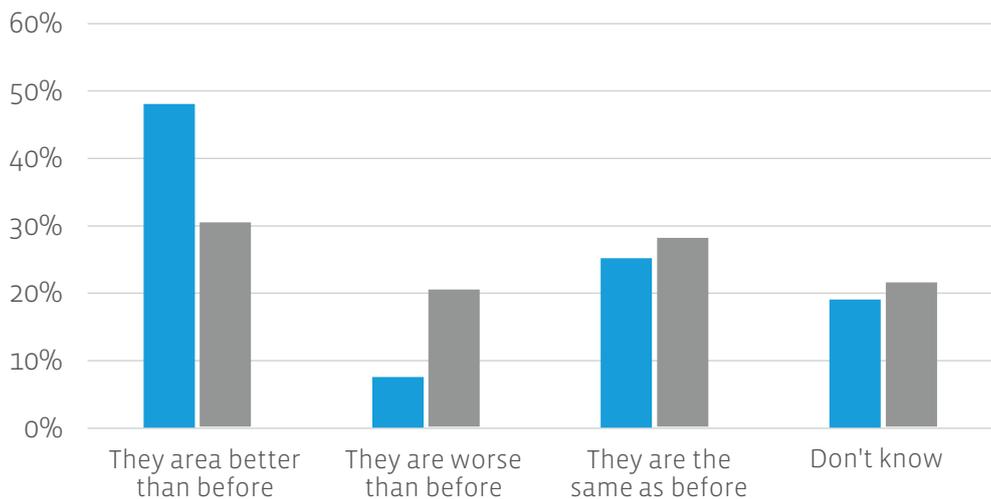
PL DE

Source: Institute of Public Affairs

## Assessments of Polish-American and German-American relations after the Russian aggression against Ukraine



Nearly half of Polish respondents (48%) believe that after the outbreak of the Russian-Ukrainian war, Poland's relations with the US improved. For one in four respondents (25%), these relations have not changed, while the smallest group of respondents (8%) said they had worsened. The belief that relations have improved dominates among voters of all major political groups but is strongest among supporters of the ruling Law and Justice party. PO supporters are more likely than other electorates to believe that relations have remained unchanged. In general, political sympathies make little difference in the assessment of the state of Polish-American relations after the outbreak of the war.



**Graph 13**  
How would you assess the state of relations between Poland/Germany and USA after the Russian aggression against Ukraine?

PL DE

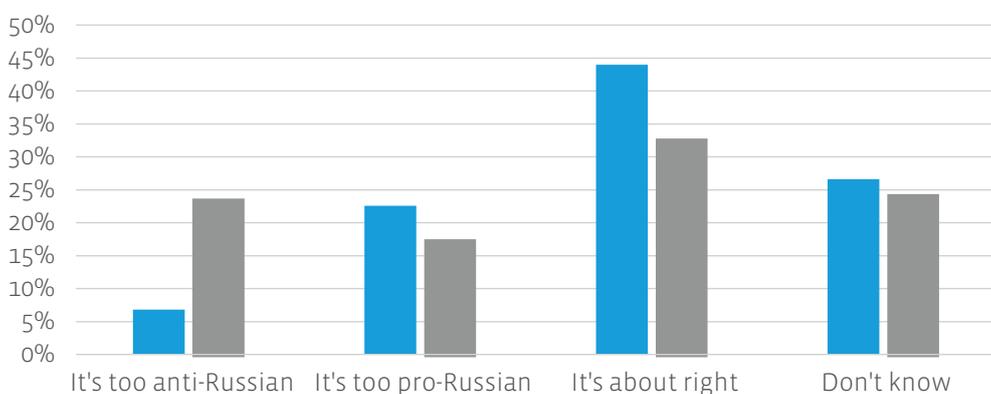
Source: Institute of Public Affairs

According to German respondents, the state of German American relations after February 24, 2022 is not so clear-cut, although nearly a third (30%) of respondents believe that relations have improved recently and almost as many (28%) believe that they have remained unchanged. In contrast, 20% thought German-US relations had deteriorated - a much worse assessment than for Polish-US relations.

## Assessments of US policy toward Russia



Polish evaluations of U.S. policy toward Russia after that country's aggression against Ukraine are quite divided. The largest group of respondents (44%) assesses that the policy was appropriate, but almost one in four respondents (23%) assesses the policy as too submissive. The smallest group, only 7% of respondents, think the US policy is too aggressive. As in the previous question, attention is drawn to the large percentage of respondents who were unable or unwilling to express such assessments. In conclusion, it can be said that a clear majority of the Polish respondents would like to see the current US course toward Russia preserved or strengthened. Opponents of U.S. policy are very few.



**Graph 14**  
How would you assess the US policy towards Russia after the Russian aggression on Ukraine?

PL DE

Source: Institute of Public Affairs

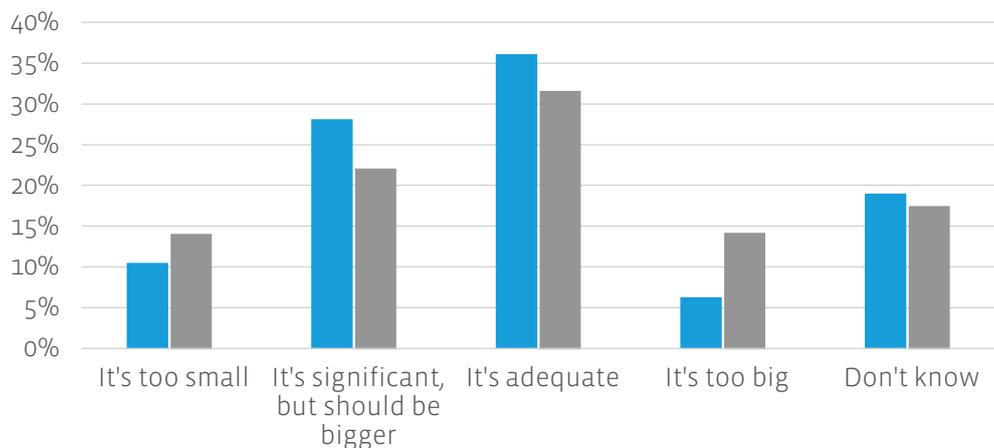
In view of the German public, the US attitude towards the Russian government is not clear. Most respondents (33%) considered U.S. policy appropriate, but almost one in four Germans (24%) think U.S. policy is too anti-Russian, while 18% considered it too submissive toward Russia. 25% have no opinion on the issue or were unable to give an assessment. The political divide is also rather unsurprising - as many as 45% of AfD voters considered U.S. policy to be anti-Russian, far surpassing even die Linke voters, who are traditionally skeptical of the U.S. (29%).

## Assessments of American and European support for Ukraine



The Polish public has a positive assessment of U.S. support for Ukraine, but a significant proportion of respondents would like to see even more of this support. A total of 54% of respondents (36%+28%) rate this supports as adequate or significant. A total of 39% of respondents would like more support (11%+28%). A very small percentage of respondents (7%) believe that this support is too much, but almost one in five cannot answer this question.

The German public's assessment of American support for Ukraine is generally positive. 32% of respondents considered current support adequate and 22% would expect it to increase. In addition, 14% rated current US aid to Ukraine as too little.



**Graph 15**  
How would you assess the US support for Ukraine after the Russian aggression against Ukraine?

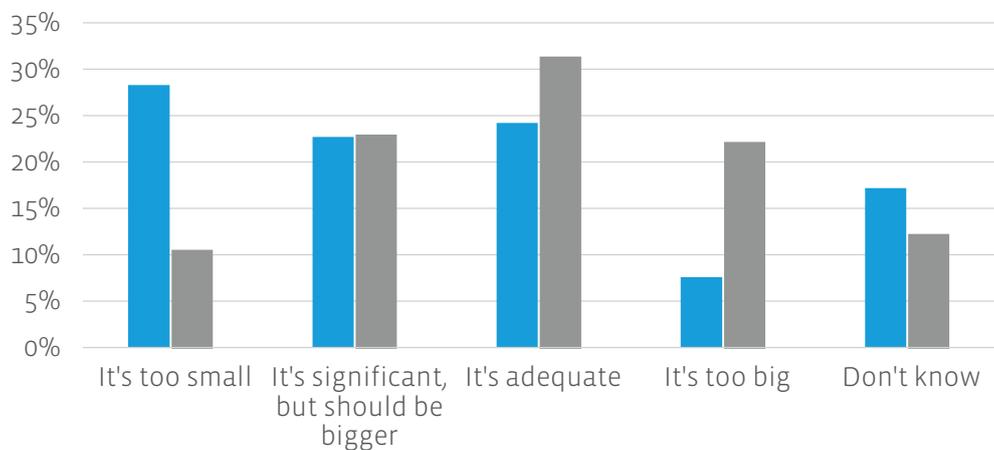
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Source: Institute of Public Affairs

Compared to assessments of U.S. assistance to embattled Ukraine, Polish assessments of the aid the European Union is providing to the country are less positive. The largest group of respondents (28%) believes the aid is too little, while a slightly smaller group (24%) believes the aid is adequate. However, a total of 47% of respondents (24% + 23%) assess EU aid as significant or adequate, while 51% of Polish women and men (28% + 23%) would like more help.

It can be presumed that in assessing American and EU aid to Ukraine, the Polish public is primarily concerned with military aid, and the lower ratings of EU aid are related to the publicly expressed doubts of some important European politicians about the scope of the supply of military equipment to Ukraine. Less attention is being paid to other types of aid, including financial support, in which the EU is leading the way. In both questions, attention is drawn to the negligible percentage of respondents (7-8%) who believe that EU aid to Ukraine is too big.

It is worth noting here that the differences in positive assessments of American and European aid are not as large as one might expect following the opinions of Polish politicians and experts, who generally praise the U.S., while rebuking EU countries and the EU itself for aid that is insufficient in their view. The Polish public appreciates the existing American and European assistance to the struggling Ukraine, while at the same time expecting more help than has been provided so far. Several European and U.S. experts and commentators take a similar stance on the issue, as well as - hugely importantly - President Zelenski and other Ukrainian officials.



**Graph 16**  
How would you assess the EU support for Ukraine after the Russian aggression against Ukraine?

PL DE

Source: Institute of Public Affairs

The German public is largely positive about the support provided to Ukraine by the European Union. 32% of respondents rated the EU's support as adequate (the same rating was given to U.S. support for Ukraine), while 23% would expect it to increase. In contrast, more than one in five Germans (22%) believe that the EU's support was too much. There are significant differences among the electorates of different German parties as to whether the EU gives too much support to Ukraine. Such a view is supported by just less than 9% of Green and Socialist voters, while 18% of CDU and FDP voters and believe that EU aid is too much, showing considerable differences across the German political spectrum and even within the ruling coalition itself. As is the the case with other issues, the AfD electorate is an outlier with 45% AfD voters who think that the EU gives too much help to Ukraine. These differences present German policymakers with the challenge of reconciling the expectations of their own voters with the political imperatives of supporting the country fighting off an unprovoked aggression of a more powerful neighbour.

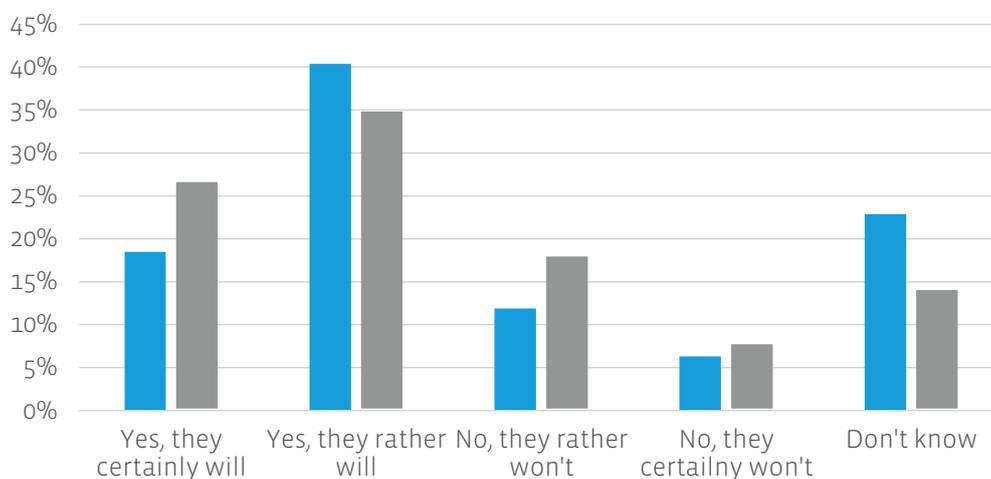
## Expected military assistance from the US and European NATO countries in the event of Russian aggression against Poland and Germany



[Earlier surveys](#) have shown that in both Poland and Germany the Russian aggression against Ukraine has evoked a high sense of threat from Russia to both our countries, hence the importance of the question whether the U.S. and European NATO member states would provide military assistance to Poland and Germany in the event of Russian aggression.

Nearly 60% of Polish respondents are convinced that the United States would provide Poland with quick and effective military assistance. Within this group of respondents, one-third believe that such assistance will certainly be provided, and two-thirds believe that it will almost certainly be provided. Considering that one-fifth of respondents could not answer this question, it can be said that there is a margin of uncertainty in Polish society about such assistance. At the same time, those convinced that Poland will not receive such assistance is relatively small. A total of 18% of respondents think so, with only 6% of respondents strongly rejecting such a scenario.

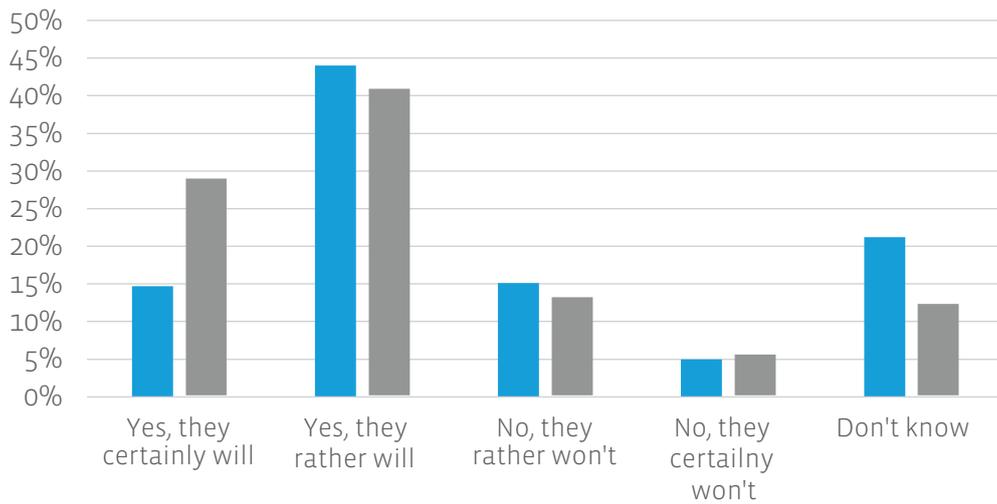
Interestingly, in the Polish public, the belief that Poland can also count on help from European NATO member states is similar to the expected help from the US. European aid is hoped for by 59% of those surveyed, while 20% believe that Poland will not get such aid. The difference is that in the case of aid from the US, there are a few percentage points more people who are convinced of such help. This is surprising, since some politicians in the ruling coalition have spoken negatively about the readiness of other Europeans, especially the Germans and the French, to help Poland.



**Graph 17**  
Do you think the US will provide fast and effective military help to Poland/Germany in case of Russian aggression against our country?

PL DE

Source: Institute of Public Affairs



**Graph 18**  
Do you think other European NATO members will provide fast and effective military help to Poland/Germany in case of Russian aggression against our country?

PL DE

Source: Institute of Public Affairs

The sense of security guarantees among the German public is equally strong as in Poland, although it should be remembered that Russia's threats of further potential attacks, Germany less often is mentioned as a potential target, so the sense of threat of such an attack may also be lower than in the Baltic states or Poland, which are frontline countries, and which have historically been victims of Russian assaults. As many as 61% of those surveyed in Germany count on US military assistance in the face of a potential Russian attack on Germany. Only 8% do not expect such assistance. These results are very similar to the feelings of the Polish public toward security guarantees from the US.

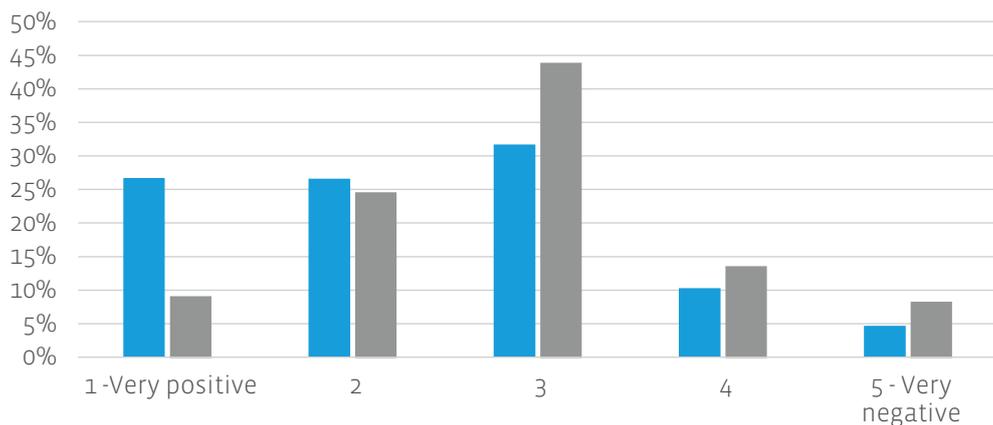
The German belief in support by other European NATO countries is even stronger than the Polish. As many as 71% of Germans believe that in the event of an attack from Russia, their European partners will provide them with military assistance. Only 5% do not believe in such possible assistance. The 12% of AfD supporters do not believe in military assistance from other Europeans, compared to 1% among CDU, SPD, or Green voters. Such strong faith in European allies is an expression of a sense of belonging to the European family and a feeling that Russia threatens not only Germany, but a number of other European countries, which are, as it were, condemned to cooperate defensively in their own interests as well. Slightly less confidence in the US may also come from the experience of the Trump era, very negatively viewed by German elites and the public, and whose return to power cannot be ruled out.

## Assessment of the US global influence on democracy, security, and the economy



The majority of Polish men and women (54%) positively assess the US influence on the state of democracy and human rights in the world, although a significant group of respondents assess this influence as neutral (neither good nor bad). Those who negatively assess the US' global influence in this area are relatively few (15%, including 5% who are strongly negative). Given the various high-profile initiatives of the current U.S. administration in the field of democracy promotion, particularly the World Democracy Summit, these ratings are not particularly impressive.

In the eyes of the German public, the assessment of the US as a global actor comes out less positive than among Polish respondents. In the area of democracy and human rights, as many as 44% assess the influence of the US ambiguously and 22% negatively. A third of Germans (34%) value the U.S. contribution to promoting democratic values around the world as positive. The relatively more negative views of the US among the AfD (31%) and die Linke (25%) voters are not surprising in this context.



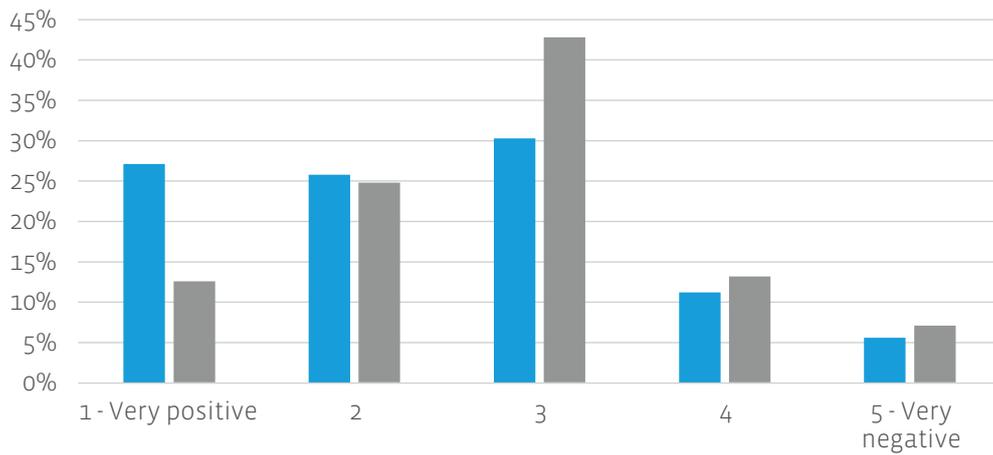
**Graph 20**  
How would you assess the global influence of the US in the field of democracy and human rights

PL DE

Source: Institute of Public Affairs

Assessments of the US's global impact on global security and international order are almost identical to those of its impact on the state of democracy and human rights. Here, too, positive assessments prevail, but at the same time a large part of the public has a neutral assessment, and a minority has a negative assessment.

Very similar is the assessment of Germans on the impact of the U.S. on security and international order, with 43% rating the U.S. role as ambiguous, 38% as positive and 20% as negative. Political divisions are evident in this category as well, with the AfD and die Linke rating it negatively.



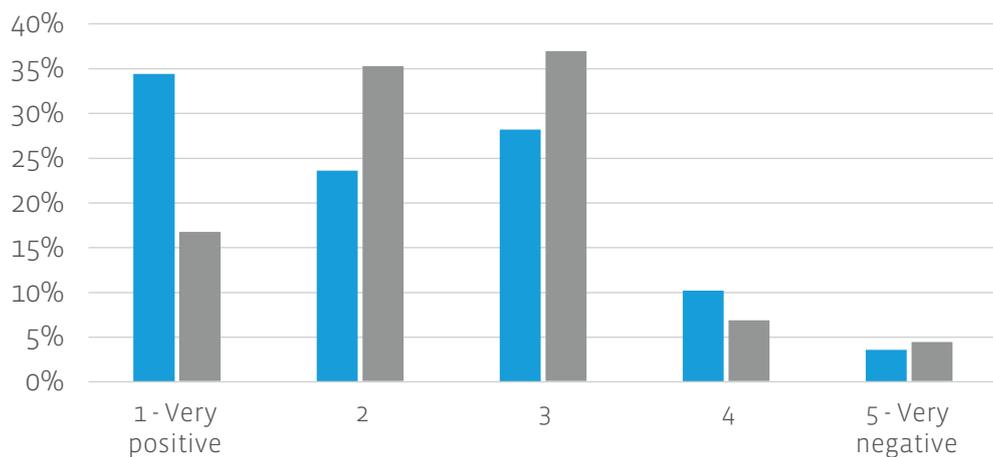
**Graph 21**  
How would you access the global role of the US in the field of security and international order

PL DE

Source: Institute of Public Affairs

The ratings of the US' global influence on technological progress and economic development are relatively the best. As many as 59% of respondents rate this influence as positive, including 35% who rate it as strongly positive. There are fewer neutral and negative ratings than in other areas.

The German public is most positive about the US contribution to technological progress and economic development. 52% view the US as a positive global actor in this area, with only 11% rating the importance of the US negatively.



**Graph 22**  
How would you access the global role of the US in the field of technology and economy

PL DE

Source: Institute of Public Affairs

Summing up this part of the survey, we can say that Polish society has a positive assessment of the global influence of the United States. However, it should be noted that in each of the dimensions studied, a significant group of respondents assesses this influence neutrally, and therefore perceives both favorable and unfavorable effects of the global influence of the superpower from across the Atlantic.

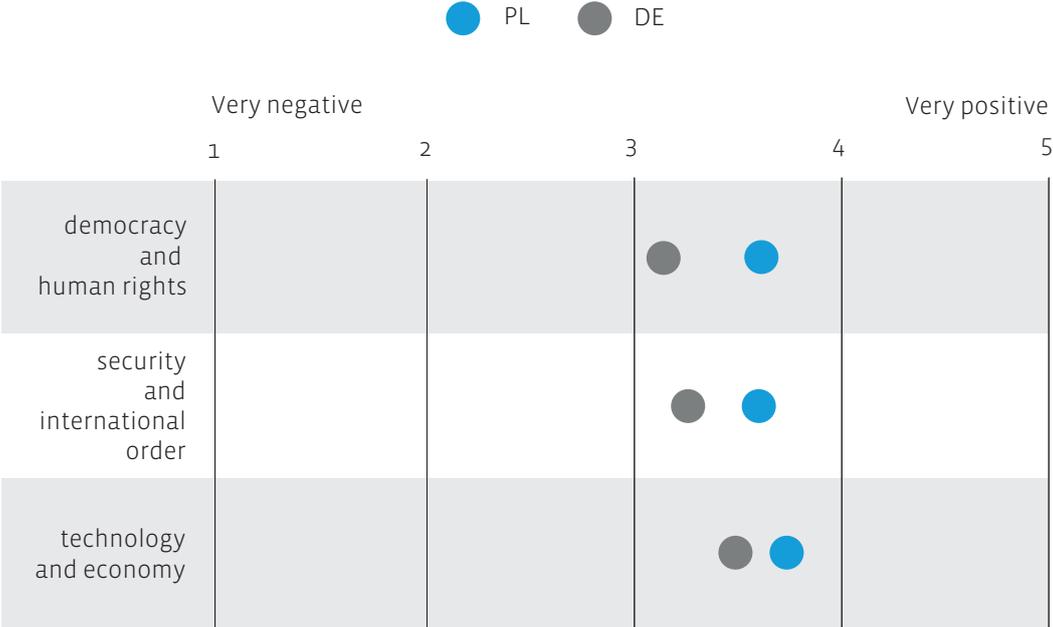
Opinions on the global impact of the US on democracy, security and economic development are correlated with the gender and age of respondents. Men and those over 50 are clearly more likely to believe that US influence in these areas is strongly positive. However, this correlation is not symmetrical, that is, women and those younger than 50 do not necessarily have negative opinions on these issues but are more likely to choose neutral answers.

In contrast, there are no significant differences when it comes to the perception of the global role of the US by supporters of the main political forces in Poland. Interestingly, in all three dimensions, the most positive opinions are expressed by supporters of the Law and Justice party and the Civic Platform, but the supporters of other parties also have a majority of positive opinions here. Only supporters of the Confederation stand out from this picture of political consensus - their opinions are very moderately positive, close to neutral.

The overall German assessment of the United States in the three areas surveyed does not come out significantly more negative when compared to the assessment by the Polish public, considered one of the most pro-American in the world.

Among German women surveyed, negative and neutral assessments predominate for the first two areas, with more positive assessments from male respondents. Male respondents were more negative about the U.S. influence on technology and economic development. The youngest 18-24 age group gave the least positive ratings in the areas of security and the economy.

In the political divide, the greater distance of AfD and die Linke party voters is apparent, but none of the other parties have a strong and large pro-American group among their voters. Hence, in all areas surveyed and almost equally in the electorate, the US receives a neutral rating, considering support but also criticism.



**Graph 23**  
How would you assess the global role of the US in the field of

Source: Institute of Public Affairs

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Małgorzata Kopka-Piątek is senior analyst and head of the European and Migration Policy Programme at the Institute of Public Affairs. In her research she focus on European Union and its foreign policy, German-Polish cooperation, and gender in politics. Małgorzata Kopka-Piątek is a co-founder and the president of the board of FemGlobal. Women in international politics, the very first association of Polish female experts, academics, journalists dealing with international relations.

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Dr Kucharczyk has authored and edited articles, reports, policy briefs and books on European integration, democratic governance, populism and migration policy. He is an initiator and co-author of the Polish-German Barometer, a cyclical study of public opinion in Poland and Germany, assessing the mutual perceptions of both societies.

Jacek Kucharczyk has been a co-founder and board member of a number of international NGOs, including Prague Civil Society Center.

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