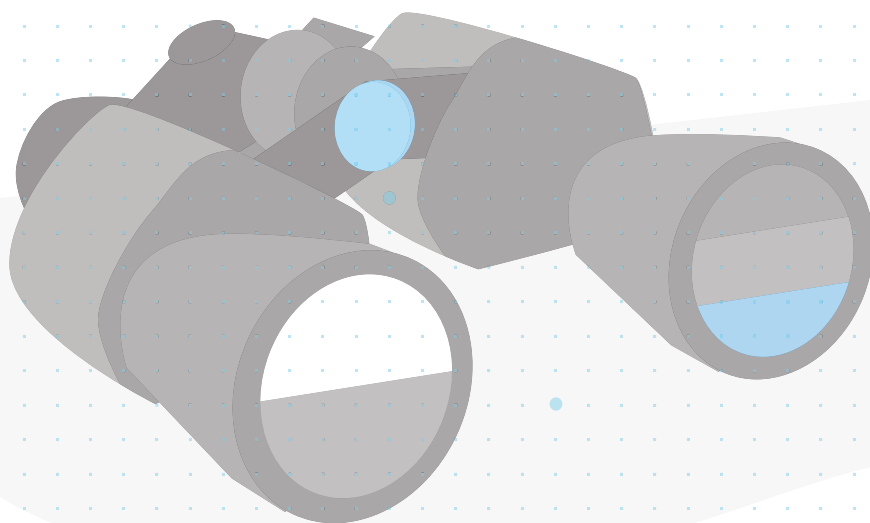


# COMMON DIRECTION, DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

## POLISH AND GERMAN VIEWS ON THEIR MUTUAL RELATIONS, EUROPE AND THE WORLD ORDER

POLISH-GERMAN BAROMETER 2019  
KEY CONCLUSIONS

Agnieszka Łada



# Common Direction, Different Perspectives

## Polish and German views on their mutual relations, Europe and the world order

### Polish-German Barometer 2019

#### Key conclusions

- Poles and Germans hold similar views of the current state of Polish-German relations: 59% of Poles and 60% of Germans agree that these relations are good, whereas 23% of Poles and 27% of Germans think they are poor. Recently, these opinions have been changing significantly. Over the last year, the percentage of positive opinions held by Poles has fallen by five percentage points, while the percentage of positive opinions among Germans has increased by as many as 29 percentage points.
- Both Poles and Germans want their governments to focus on cooperation with the neighbouring country rather than on the assertion of national interests. This is the first time that a higher percentage of Germans (61%) than Poles (51%) support the cooperative approach, while less than one-third of the respondents in both countries prefer to focus on national interests.
- Both Poles and Germans perceive the Second World War as having a lasting impact on their mutual relations. However, the percentage of the respondents claiming that this impact is strong has been steadily falling: in Poland, from 43% in 2008 to 32% today, and in Germany, from 34% in 2008 to 22% today. Just 14% of Poles and 19% of Germans believe that the war has no impact on the mutual relations between the two countries.
- Almost half of the Polish respondents believe that the suffering and sacrifice that Poles have experienced throughout their history have not been recognised by the international public (46%), whereas in Germany such opinions on Polish suffering are shared by just one in five respondents (21%). Most Germans (62%) hold the view that the suffering of Poles has been sufficiently recognised on the international level.
- Poles are divided in their assessment as to whether the Polish contribution to the fall of communism and to the democratic transformations in Central and Eastern Europe has been sufficiently recognised by international public

opinion. The largest group – 41% of the respondents – remain sceptical, while 35% believe there has been adequate recognition.

- Germans find it difficult to assess the impact of Poland and the Polish people on bringing down communism and on the democratic transformations in Central and Eastern Europe. The largest group of the Germans surveyed (42%) do see such an impact (among them, 13% consider it to be great), one-third see Poland's impact as neither great nor small (36%) and 10% express an opinion that the impact has been little or none at all.
- Poles are more frequently (75%) than Germans (63%) convinced that the accession of Poland and other countries of the region to NATO has contributed to increasing security in Europe. Opinions on the effects of Poland and other countries of the region joining the European Union are similarly distributed – 76% of Poles believe that the accession has contributed to Europe's economic development and political stability, while 64% of Germans share this view.
- Polish and German assessments of the contributions of key international actors to the stability of international order are similar when it comes to the European Union, Russia and China, but they differ significantly in the case of the United States. The same is true regarding their attitudes towards world leaders – Poles have a significantly better opinion of Donald Trump (47% hold a positive opinion) than Germans (only 15%). On the other hand, Germans have the most esteem for Emmanuel Macron (68%), followed by Angela Merkel (61%), while Poles prefer the German chancellor (48%) to the French President (39%). Vladimir Putin is viewed negatively by two-thirds of both Poles and Germans and receives positive opinions from only 18% of Poles and 29% of Germans.
- Among the Polish respondents, there are clear differences between the responses of supporters of the Law and Justice party and those favouring the European Coalition. Age and the region of residence are also significant variables for both Poles and German as regards to some – but not all – issues.

The survey was conducted using the method of face-to-face interviews in respondents' homes – in Poland, on a representative sample of one thousand adult residents aged fifteen or more by KANTAR PUBLIC between 8–13 March 2019; in Germany, on a representative sample of one thousand residents aged fourteen or more by IPSOS between 4–10 March 2019.

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Agnieszka Łada, Wspólny kierunek, różne perspektywy. Polskie i niemieckie spojrzenia na wzajemne relacje, Europę oraz porządek światowy. Barometr Polska-Niemcy 2019 (pl)

Agnieszka Łada, Gemeinsame Richtung, verschiedene Perspektiven. Deutsche und polnische Ansichten zu den gegenseitigen, europäischen und globalen Beziehungen. Deutsch-Polnisches Barometer 2019 (de) [LINK](#)



**The “German-Polish Barometer“** is a project that regularly collects and publishes data on the opinions of Poles and Germans about Polish-German relations and current challenges. The Institute of Public Affairs has been conducting this research since 2000 in cooperation with the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung’s office in Poland. In 2013 and 2016, the study was also conducted in cooperation with the Bertelsmann Stiftung. The

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