

# “For Your Freedom and Ours”<sup>1</sup>

Exploring the Motives Behind the Polish and Czech  
Response to the Russian Invasion of Ukraine through  
Role Conceptions



LUNDS UNIVERSITET

Bachelor thesis

Linnea Månsson

# Abstract

In their response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, in 2022, Poland and the Czech Republic surprised the world with their decisive and strong support, being leading contributors of both humanitarian and military aid. This paper is a qualitative case study using content analysis method and the theoretical framework of role theory. The aim is to investigate what underlying motives are behind the Polish and Czech responses. By analysing both countries' foreign policies and identifying what underlying roles they perceive themselves to have, underlying motives can be discovered. The findings suggest Poland as being a regional leader and Atlantic partner, while the Czech Republic perceives itself as being European partner. Additional findings show the Czech ambition to return to the "Havel foreign policy", stepping into the role of moral leader.

*Key words:* Czech Republic, Poland, role conceptions, role theory, Ukraine, European Union, United States.

Words: 9918

<sup>1</sup> Quote by Zbigniew Rau, Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs, based on "For our Freedom and Yours", one of the unofficial mottos of Poland dating back to 1831.

# Table of Contents

<b>Abstract.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Table of Contents .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1. Introduction .....</b>	<b>3</b>
1.1 Introduction and Motivation .....	3
1.2 Research Question .....	4
1.3 Scope and Delimitations .....	4
1.4 Structure of Paper .....	5
<b>2. Background.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3. Theoretical Section.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>4. Literature Review.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>5. Methodology .....</b>	<b>10</b>
5.1 Research Design .....	10
5.2 Methods and Material .....	11
5.3. Operationalisation .....	12
5.3.1 Leader.....	12
5.3.2 Partner .....	13
5.3.3 Independent .....	13
5.4 Validity, Intersubjectivity and Reliability.....	14
<b>6. Empirical Findings.....</b>	<b>15</b>
6.1 Poland .....	15
6.1.1 Polish Foreign Policy Strategy 2017-2021.....	15
6.1.2 National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland 2020.....	16
6.1.3 Declaration of Foreign Policy 2016.....	17
6.1.4 Declaration of Foreign Policy 2019.....	18
6.2 Czech Republic .....	20
6.2.1 Concept of the Czech Republic’s Foreign Policy 2015.....	20
6.2.2 Security Strategy of the Czech Republic 2015.....	21
6.2.3 Policy Statement 2014.....	21
6.2.4 Policy Statement 2018.....	22
6.2.5 Policy Statement 2022.....	23
<b>7. Analysis .....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>8. Conclusion.....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>References .....</b>	<b>30</b>
Primary sources.....	30
Secondary sources .....	31

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Introduction and Motivation

Europe is currently facing the most severe armed conflict since the second world war. The Polish response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine on February 24<sup>th</sup> of 2022, has been one of the most decisive and strong in terms of military and humanitarian support. Poland's efforts are what enabled the decision of the United States and Germany to send battle tanks to Ukraine (Francis 2023). Besides Poland, the Czech Republic has surprised the world with their decision to become the first NATO country to send tanks to Ukraine (Sullivan 2022).

Central European countries have shown strong support towards Ukraine, but the war reveals internal divisions regarding identity, role, and sense of belonging (Natrass 2022). Poland together with Hungary is described as the “black sheep” of Europe, showing evidence of democratic backsliding and facing struggles with the rule of law (Freedom House 2023, 12). The Czech Republic, on the other hand, has for the past years caught the world's attention, leaving it to speculations about which path the Czechs will take. The populist party leader Andrej Babiš who won the election in 2017, has openly criticised the EU and there were indications the Czech Republic would experience similar development as Poland and Hungary. However, the newly elected President Petr Pavel is described as “the truth's victory over populism” and he is predicted to once again make the Czech Republic a reliable partner to the EU and NATO (Tůma 2023).

This arises the question of why Poland, like Hungary, a country described as “the black sheep” experiencing Euroscepticism and democratic backsliding, decided to instead of joining Hungary, take a leading position together with the Czech Republic in their response to the ongoing war. This paper aims to analyse the foreign policies of Poland and the Czech Republic to establish which role conceptions are held by the decisionmakers, and thus discover the motives behind their actions.

## 1.2 Research Question

The object of this paper is to examine the role conceptions of two countries, namely Poland and the Czech Republic. Role conception builds on the international relations theory *role theory* and refers to the perception the country, and in this case, the decision-makers, have of themselves. In other words, what role do they believe their own country plays in the world? This paper will analyse the foreign policies of Poland and the Czech Republic in the period before February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022, which states the first day of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The material will mostly be gathered from the years 2015-2022, this is to establish which role conceptions were held by the decision-makers *before* the war.

This paper assumes there are differences between Poland and the Czech Republic and that these differences result in a similar response towards the conflict. Thus, the aim is to detect these different role conceptions, and further, the different motives. Having established the aim of this paper, the following research question is formulated:

*What role conceptions do Poland and the Czech Republic have? Can the role conceptions explain their response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine?*

## 1.3 Scope and Delimitations

This section will explain the scope of this paper, i.e., what this paper aims to cover, and what it does not. The time frame is set to 2015-2022, covering the years right before the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The material, however, covers the time between early 2014 until a month before the invasion in 2022. The reasons behind this decision regarding empirical material will be found in section 5.2.

The objective of this paper is to discover the role conceptions, meaning the two countries' perception of themselves in relation to other countries. The roles other countries believe they have, or expect them to have, are therefore not relevant to this paper. To discover the role conceptions, the subject of this study is Poland's and the Czech Republic's stated foreign policies since it is the decisionmaker's perception of their role that is of interest.

A final statement regarding the scope of this paper revolves around the discrepancy between what is stated in words in the various policy documents, and the actual foreign policy actions. Since the aim is to discover the underlying conceptions *behind* the policy the actual performance of the state is not relevant.

## 1.4 Structure of Paper

The first section of this paper offered an introduction and brief contextualisation by presenting the counterintuitive element of the Polish and the Czech responses to the conflict and thus the motivation and relevance for this paper leading to the research question stated in section 1.2.

The following section presents their response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine and gives a brief historical overview of recent political developments. In the theoretical section *role theory* will be introduced, and concepts will be explained. Thereafter previous literature will be reviewed, followed by a methodological section and operationalisation.

Subsequently, the empirical material will be presented in two parts. First, the Polish policy containing four policy documents and declarations, followed by the Czech policy documents containing five documents and declarations. The empirical findings will be analysed in section 7, where role conceptions and potential motives behind their actions will be discussed. The last section will summarise and conclude the findings, as well as suggest further research.

## 2. Background

This section offers an introduction to the leading positions of Poland and the Czech Republic in their responses towards the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Poland has since the start of the conflict taken the lead in the international response and is in strong favour of sending military equipment. They were instrumental in persuading Germany to send tanks and in addition, setting the standard for humanitarian aid by welcoming more refugees than any other EU country (Francis 2023). Poland will also become the first NATO member to send fighter jets (Dickinson 2023). Throughout the past year, the ties between Poland and Ukraine have grown stronger. The Polish and the Ukrainian presidents are being publicly shown together reinforcing the Polish commitment (Tharoor 2023), a commitment not weakening. Polish support is stable, and with the decision to send planes, increasing.

The Czech Republic was initially one of the most outspoken supporters of Ukraine and the first country to send attack helicopters, tanks, rocket launchers and other military equipment. On the second day of the conflict, the Czech Republic stopped granting visas to Russians. The Czech Prime Minister Petr Fiala together with the Polish and Slovenian Prime Ministers became the first leaders to visit Ukraine in order to show their support. In an interview, the Czech US Ambassador stated that they want to be a leading voice and set the standard for other countries (Liu 2023). Like Poland, the Czech Republic has welcomed about half a million refugees from Ukraine, a number which raised the population by 6% (UNHCR 2023). The Czech government have recently reaffirmed their continuing support to Ukraine, although stating that future support will primarily be in the form of maintenance of already sent equipment (Mills 2023, 34-35).

Poland and the Czech Republic (former Czechoslovakia) were both part of the communist bloc and under the influence of the Soviet Union. After the Soviet Union's dissolution in 1991, both countries turned to the West. Czech writer Milan Kundera (1984) writes that Central Europe was the kidnapped West and after the events of 1989-1991, they could return home. Following the dissolution, both Poland and the Czech Republic went through a process of democratisation and European integration, thus adopting a new identity (Tabosa 2020, 5). Both countries joined NATO in 1999 and later the European Union in 2004.

The development of Poland's foreign policy during the last decade encompasses a drastic shift in strategy. Tomasz Pawluszko (2022) analyses the two most recent strategies, 2012-2016 respectively 2017-2021. The former was implemented by the liberal government and the latter by the conservative government currently in office. The policy implemented from 2012-2016 focused on cooperation with the

EU and NATO. European cooperation was viewed as the most important element of Polish security (Pawluszko 2022, 243). When the conservative party took over in 2015, they offered an alternative way for Poland and the policy shifted to focus on geopolitics. Emphasis was placed on military cooperation. The new government of 2015 further criticised the membership in the EU and declared it unfavourable to Polish interests as it was depicted as a project belonging to the past (Kuzniar 2021, 463). Freedom House (2023) presents a gloomy picture regarding the state of democracy, and for the past year, Poland has been in an open twist with the EU that dates to 2015 regarding the rule of law (Rankin 2023).

The Czech Republic first was placed on the map internationally through former president Vaclav Havel's humanitarian activism. The notion to "stand up to evil wherever and whenever it is being committed" is part of the Czech conscience (Zantovsky 2015, 49) and he played a major role in the country's entry into NATO and the EU (Zantovsky 2015, 57). The Czech security until 2010 revolved around integrating further with the EU and NATO with active participation in peacekeeping missions. 2010 signalled a shift in Czech security perception as emphasis moved from the state to the individual and the international community. Affected by the crisis in Ukraine in 2014, worsening conditions in Syria and the following migration wave of 2014-2015, terrorism and migration were seen as primary security threats. Although terrorism is not a major threat to the citizens of the Czech Republic and the people immigrating primarily come from other EU countries or Ukraine, the growing importance of comprehensive security approaches launched a consistent adoption of security perceptions produced by the EU and NATO (Kříž 2021, 39-40). The Czech relationship with the EU has at times been complicated. The Czech EU policy is characterised as reactive and not very proactive, and EU topics are highly politicised and interlinked with national politics, making the line between the EU level and the national level blurry (Kovář and Sychra 2018, 60-61). The political elite's critical approach towards the EU affects public sentiments, only 33% of the Czech citizens view their membership as something positive (Havelka et al. 2020).



### 3. Theoretical Section

This paper utilises role theory to approach the research question stated in section 1.2, in this section concepts and definitions will be introduced as well as the relevance of role theory in foreign policy analysis.

Role theory was originally developed within sociology and social psychology when studying patterns of behaviour in a specific situation or position (Biddle and Thomas 1966, 6). K.J. Holsti (1970) introduced role theory to foreign policy analysis by categorising role conceptions detected in 71 states (Holsti 1970, 256-265). It concluded that foreign policy is influenced by national self-images held by policymakers and explains foreign policy behaviour. Furthermore, it explains specific differences in foreign policy (Aggestam 2006, 13).

Roles are defined as attitudes, expectations and beliefs held by individuals, shaped through interaction with others. Roles or a set of roles are applied to states and organisations to study foreign policy behaviour. Role conception relates to the individual's own perception of their position in relation to others, it is the social identity of an actor and the perceptions of others and is therefore closely linked to other actor's roles (Harnisch 2011, 8). When studying role conceptions, it is the beholder's definition that is studied. Role conception defines the beholder's duty, obligation and perceived responsibility in foreign policy and discloses the motives and reasons behind their foreign policy actions (Aggestam 2006, 19-20). In order to approximate the motives behind the foreign policy actions of Poland and the Czech Republic, role conceptions, and especially conceptions in relation to the EU, is the object of study. This paper does not aim to analyse the reverse relationship, i.e., the EU's role conceptions and expectations, with reference to the scope of this paper.

Role theory suggests that national roles are not something solely evolved from the state's position within the international structure and the distribution of power (Aggestam 2006, 13). This is highly relevant for the analysis conducted in this paper as it rejects the notion that the foreign policy decisions of Poland and the Czech Republic rest solely on geopolitical factors, instrumental capacities or the distribution of power, proving the relevance of this paper, and of using role theory instead of traditional realistic or liberalistic IR theories. Instead, the focus is the conceptions of the own state, and further what is perceived as appropriate foreign policy behaviour by the policymakers. The assumption made here is thus that the foreign policy of both states can be explained by analysing the policymakers' national role conceptions.

## 4. Literature Review

Beneš and Harnisch (2015) studied how the national role conception throughout history influence the Czech-EU relationship, and more specifically shape institutional preferences. Findings show that universal humanistic values have been an integrated part of the Czech role conception since the early 1900s (Beneš and Harnisch 2015, 156). Throughout the 1900-s the Czech role conception has moved back and forth towards internalising others' expectations and emphasising their own identity. The study shows the importance of the conception of the Czech Republic as historically exceptional and a victim of great powers (Ibid, 156–157). The ambivalent relationship with the EU can therefore be explained through their historical suspicion and rejection of great powers, deeper integration into the EU is seen as a threat to the historic “self”. The growing influence of the EU and Brussels as an emerging “power centre” and anti-great power sentiment brings new insights to the Euroscepticism present in the Czech Republic (Ibid, 159).

Longhurst and Zaborowski (2003) argue that since the late 1990s Poland has been the US's most important ally in the east and Poland is thus experiencing “Atlanticism”. The historical experience of fighting for its survival has influenced the Polish need for security through military and territorial defence. US presence means security, demonstrating the importance for Poland to keep its position as US protégé (Longhurst and Zaborowski 2003, 1010). They argue that however, the protégé status depends largely on Polish success with exercising regional leadership, if they fail the US will turn their attention elsewhere (Ibid, 1028). Osica (2004) argues that Polish “Atlanticism” stood at a crossroads before becoming a member of the EU in 2004 and that the membership will play a part in determining if Poland will continue to focus its foreign policy towards the US (Osica 2004, 321). Frank (2011) shows the emergence of the role “European Partner” in the Polish national role conception. Due to its close ties with the US Poland has experienced alienation from Western European states and introduces the term “Europeanising Atlanticism” to describe this shift in Polish role conception (Frank 2011, 136).

# 5. Methodology

## 5.1 Research Design

This paper aims to discover what role conceptions, and further what motives, are behind the responses of Poland and the Czech Republic towards the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The research design of this paper is a *qualitative case study*. It is a fitting research design since the depth of the analysis is important to this paper. What is gained in depth might be lost in width, since the results of this study might not be generalisable (Esaiasson et al. 2017, 155). However, the results will offer new insight into how role theory can be utilised and further argue for the importance of moving away from traditional realistic and liberalistic theories. What is therefore lost in external validity will be gained in internal validity.

The cases were chosen in regard to a similar outcome. They are chosen by the *method of agreement* (Teorell and Svensson 2007, 226). By comparing Poland and the Czech Republic the hope is to explain why they took leading positions, despite having different political contexts as starting points, and furthermore bring clarity to why their responses arouse curiosity in the international context. To avoid the uncertainty that would come with only studying one case, thus not being able to degree the results, two or more units of analysis are needed (Esaiasson et al. 2017, 109). This paper aims to analyse what different motives, i.e., variables, led to the same result, i.e., their responses. The motives are found through the role conceptions, the hypothesis and reason for choosing Poland and the Czech Republic is that different role conceptions resulted in similar responses.

This paper is *explanatory* since it uses role theory to explain the outcome. An explanatory case study demands comparable variables (i.e., explanations or outcomes), a counterfactual alternative outcome and a theoretical connection (Teorell and Svensson 2007, 236-237). These requirements will be met by using role theory and the values prescribed to the role conceptions in section 5.3 which are comparable variables. This paper also has *descriptive* ambitions as it aims to describe the most significant changes in foreign policy. It is *theory consuming* as it is the case that is important and the theory is mainly a tool to reach explanatory value (Esaiasson et al. 2017, 42). The composition of roles used in this theory is inspired by previous research, however, the theoretical framework and the composition of role conceptions are designed for this specific paper, giving it *theory-developing* characteristics (Esaiasson et al. 2017, 43).

## 5.2 Methods and Material

The method for this paper is *content analysis*. It is appropriate since the theoretical framework will offer a few hypotheses (role conceptions) that will be used to interpret the material, meaning that the theoretical framework is built on Aggestam (2018), with inspiration from Holsti (1970), Thumerelle and Le Prestre (1997) and Chaban and Elgström (2021), provides the notion of "if A is found that indicates that B is true" (Teorell and Svensson 2007, 99). It is a fitting method since the answer is assumed to be hidden in the words, the aim is to find what the text indicates (Esaiasson et al. 2017, 211-212).

The material used in the empirical analysis is primary sources. Foundational foreign policy documents regarding defence and security for both countries have been chosen for analysis. In the case of Poland, this is their Foreign Policy Strategy of 2017-2021 and their National Security Strategy of 2020. For the Czech Republic this is their Foreign Policy Strategy of 2015 and Security Strategy of 2015, these four documents are until this day the latest versions. Although they do not cover the same time span, it is not considered a validity problem as other complementary policy sources such as declarations both written and in speech will be analysed. In total, the years from 2014-2022 for the Czech Republic, and 2016-2021 for Poland will be covered. Since it is not usual for foreign policies to contain major shifts from one year to another under the same government, and since comprehensive foreign policy documents are not created annually for many states, the gathered material is sufficient.

## 5.3. Operationalisation

This section outlines how the values of the variables will be assigned, thereby establishing a way to measure the role conceptions. Taking inspiration from Aggestam (2018), three major role conceptions have been established, each containing two sub-roles. The decision to use the roles inspired by Aggestam (2018) is based on previous research presented in section 4, stating the relevance of using *leader* and *partner*, while *independent* is a tool to detect deviations from *partner* conceptions.

### 5.3.1 Leader

#### a) Regional Leader

This role conception relates to the notion of having specific obligations, responsibilities and commitments towards other nations and regions, notably concerning those with whom it shares a common identity, or other ideological commonalities (Holsti 1970, 261). Generally, this role represents how policymakers understand and relate to authority, influence and power (Aggestam 2018, 92). It is important to note that power and leadership are connected concepts but not synonymous, actors with leading roles are not necessarily powerful, and powerful actors do not have to be in leading positions (Chaban and Elgström 2021, 50). The operationalisation of the regional leader role will in this paper focus on the concept of having a leading position, or the ambition to achieve that, not necessarily exerting power or influence. A regional leader should launch initiatives and offer guidance, lead negotiations and achieve common goals in an international setting (Chaban and Elgström 2021, 50-52).

#### b) Increasing or maintaining national power

This role conception emphasises power and influence. It differs from regional leader as it strives to either maintain or increase the national power, and the obligations the state must meet in order to do so. It can contain ideas of respect, rank, prestige and competitiveness (Thumerelle and Le Prestre 1997, 145). The role of regional leader and increasing or maintaining national power share similar characteristics and can both be part of a state's national role conception since taking a leading role can be a way of increasing or maintaining national power. However, in this paper, it is useful to make the distinction in order to nuance the role conceptions expressed by the actors, and to not mistake a leading position as necessarily a will to gain power, and vice versa.

### 5.3.2 Partner

The role conception of partner is operationalised as the engagement to cooperate with other states or international organisations and deepen the relationship between them. It emphasises support, partnership, and can be expressed as a trust between two actors, a forming of a shared identity, “we” instead of “us” and “them” (Aggestam 2018, 92). The role conception of “faithful ally” developed by Holsti (1970, 267) expresses similar characteristics and will be incorporated into the partner role conception. Holsti makes a distinction between ally, or partner, that is built on one gaining protection and support from the other, but not expressing support back, in comparison to a partnership containing mutual support between both actors (Holsti 1970, 267). In this study, the role conception partner will therefore be used when an actor is expressing support for others’ policies. If NATO, USA or the EU is mentioned only as a guarantee of security, this will not be counted as an expression of partner role. This distinction is made to discover where Poland and the Czech Republic, not only find a source for protection but also offer support back.

#### a) European or b) Atlantic Partner

Euro-Atlantic cooperation or European cooperation is highly prioritised by both, and the distinction between European and Atlantic partner is made to disclose differences between Poland and the Czech Republic regarding their foreign policy. It is interesting to this paper since both countries have experiences of Europeanisation and Euroscepticism (Harnisch and Beneš, 2015).

### 5.3.3 Independent

#### a) Self-determination and national interests

This role conception emphasises the government’s commitment to making foreign policy decisions according to their own national interests, rather than in favour of the goals of other nations. This role is categorised by the emphasis on self-determination, sovereignty and the possibility of *not* choosing a side in international questions and conflicts (Holsti 1970, 268, see also Aggestam 2018). In a global context, this role can be perceived as a commitment to non-alignment or neutrality however, in a European context where many states are members of the European Union, and/or NATO, the independent role conception can be detected through expressed determination to maintain political uniqueness, protecting the national political model, or safeguard from internationalisation of policy.

## b) Protect culture and national identity

The role concept of independent can be further categorised if the expressed motivation is to preserve, protect and safeguard the national identity or the culture. As part of having a specific culture, history and identity, there can be a need for meeting certain obligations connected to that specific identity (Thumerelle and Le Prestre 1997, 145) It is closely connected to self-determination and national interests, but in the case of this role conception, the former is expressed in order to preserve the latter. The role conception of partner that expresses a “we” instead of “them” and a shared identity, will in this role conception be interpreted as unwanted.

## 5.4 Validity, Intersubjectivity and Reliability

An important aspect of this paper is the dimension of interpretation. This paper aims to detect which role conceptions are held by the decision-makers in Poland and the Czech Republic during the years prior to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Their own *perceptions* are hidden behind their statements, i.e., the meaning behind their words. It is the role of the interpreter to understand the meaning behind the statements (Teorell and Svensson 2007, 103). In other words, it is my job to interpret what the meaning is. In order to achieve high validity, meaning that what is intended to be measured is measured (Esaiasson et al, 2017, 58), the empirical section contains direct quotes and traceable interpretations. This also serves a purpose regarding intersubjectivity, meaning the study should aim to be independent of the researcher. Someone else should with the same tools be able to draw the same conclusions (Esaiasson et al. 2017, 25). With the chosen method there are inherent problems with both intersubjectivity and further reliability since another researcher might interpret the material differently. To mitigate this, clear definitions of the role conceptions and other conceptual definitions are provided.

# 6. Empirical Findings

## 6.1 Poland

### 6.1.1 Polish Foreign Policy Strategy 2017-2021

The Polish Foreign Policy Strategy (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Poland, 2017) revolves around NATO and the eastern flank, the European Union, regional policy towards eastern European states and Polish state branding. Regarding defence policy attention is given to painting a threat picture, in which Russia due to violations against international agreements concerning security, is the main threat (Ibid, 6). NATO serves as the foundation for Polish security. Equally important is the bilateral partnership with the United States and maintaining US military presence to strengthen the eastern flank (Ibid, 7). Poland seeks closer NATO-EU cooperation, strengthening the EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and the OSCE (Ibid, 6-7). Additionally, closer cooperation with regional states is a priority, Romania, the Visegrad 4 countries and the Baltic states are mentioned in this regard (Ibid, 7).

Regional security is of key importance to Polish security, the stabilisation of post-soviet states, and the promotion of pro-European and transatlantic reforms in the eastern European countries. Moreover, it is stated that expansive measures have the ambition to promote modernisation, democracy and state resilience. It is stated that Poland seeks to connect the countries from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea to the Adriatic Sea (Ibid, 9-10). the Polish initiative Three Seas Initiative launched in 2015 which focuses on connecting the countries through infrastructure, is one example of performing this duty.

The European Union is mostly discussed in terms of economic policy. Significant attention is given to “the EU crisis” and the democratic issues the union is facing. Poland aims to be an active, integrated part of the EU and to support the transparent decision-making process, the democratic mandate and strengthen the position of central European countries. Critique is aimed at the “union within a union”, meaning the Eurozone countries becoming a separate entity within the EU (Ibid 13). A union where members enjoy different rights will weaken the EU and its integrity and Poland states that they will counteract any such policies, stressing solidarity, unity and cohesion as fundamental to success (Ibid, 20-21).

“...The issue of Poland’s sovereignty is inseparable from its membership in the European Union – the most advanced and most



ambitious integration project in modern history. Poland's vision of the European Union is that of a union of sovereign states – neither a superstate, nor an amalgam of national egoisms.” (Ibid, 20-21).

The quote above signals the tension between the power of member states and the power of the EU. It is made clear that the sovereignty of Poland or other member states should not be challenged (Ibid, 21). Energy policy demonstrates the ambition to protect its sovereignty, claiming that European states should have the freedom to choose their own source of energy. Regarding economic cooperation Poland's ambition is to play a key role due to its position in Europe, connecting central and eastern Europe from the north to the south (Ibid, 19).

The final main pillar of Polish concerns the credibility and obligations of the state. In order to increase the credibility of Poland they are ready to contribute internationally through UN peacekeeping missions and humanitarian aid, (Ibid, 22). This pillar also includes the branding of the Polish state. Active diplomacy will counteract historical falsification about the holocaust and actively engage the Polish diaspora, in order to strengthen the Polish brand (Ibid, 23-24).

### 6.1.2 National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland 2020

The National Security Strategy from 2020 (National Security Bureau, 2020) replaces the previous strategy from 2014 and regarding policies aimed towards the closer region, the EU and the US like the security policy presented in the Foreign Policy Strategy 2017-2021.

“...Seek greater involvement of the European Union in activities directed at improving security in the Eastern Neighbourhood, including within the framework of the Eastern Partnership, and actively participate in them. Strive to maintain the enlargement policy within the European Union.” (Ibid, 23).

The regional obligation to connect the Eastern European countries with the EU and West is still a main priority. As well as fighting divisions among EU members and supporting the integration project and enlargement policy (Ibid, 23), the sense of a divided European Union, what previously was described as the EU crisis (section 6.1.1), is still a distinguished element of Polish policy. Extra attention is given to supporting Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova in their efforts to get closer to the EU and NATO (Ibid, 25).

“...Pursue the increase and consolidation of the military presence of NATO on its Eastern flank.” (Ibid, 23).

Another reoccurring theme is the eastern flank and the presence of both NATO and the United States. It is still a main priority to deepen US-Polish relations, to have US troops present on Polish territory, as well as bilateral partnership regarding trade, technology and energy (Ibid, 25).

### 6.1.3 Declaration of Foreign Policy 2016

The 2016 speech (Waszczykowski 2016) is introduced by presenting Poland's stand on what is described as the crisis of the European project, and it is stated that the initial optimism present in the country at the time of joining NATO and later the EU, slowly is diminishing. Waszczykowski, former minister of foreign affairs, states the following:

“...Cracks that have appeared on a structure that has been successfully built for several decades are an undesirable and dangerous phenomenon. We want to create a Union of free nations and equal states, solidary and economically competitive, enjoying authority in the world. We believe, however, that the road to this goal does not lead through a two-speed Union, tightening economic and political cooperation by the euro area countries.”

“...The European Union should return to its roots, to the four basic freedoms, freedom of movement: people, services, goods and capital.”

Waszczykowski states that Polish security rests on its membership in NATO and that the strengthening of the eastern flank is a crucial element of the credibility of the Alliance. Regarding US-Polish cooperation, he states:

“...The year 2016 is the time of transition to the implementation of the Polish American agreement on the anti-missile shield and the start of the construction of the anti-missile shield base in Redzikowo. It is also another year of increased presence of US troops in Poland, e.g. during the Anaconda military exercise. We will strive for a more permanent anchoring of elements of the American armed forces on Polish territory.”

Poland will contribute to the strengthening of the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy. The focus of the European Union should be peacekeeping and stabilisation and acquiring the civilian and military resources necessary without in any way challenging or imitating NATO. This statement is a continuation of what was stated in the Foreign Policy Strategy document (section 6.1.3) and shows that NATO is the number one military actor.

Poland's eastern policy is one of the overarching and important policies of the 2016 declaration. It is in the Polish interest that the states of Eastern Europe stabilise and have the possibility to choose their own political path according to their interests. Significant support is expressed to Ukraine:

“...We support our Ukrainian partners in the most important areas of organization of a modern state: creating a system of local governments, deregulation, fighting corruption, building an efficient state administration, but also settling difficult and painful historical issues. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs advises and assists in the preparation of draft legislation, as well as in the training of officials. “

Poland furthermore supports Moldova's defence reforms and Georgia's deepening ties with both the EU and NATO. The regional policy is based on Poland's location, connecting the Baltic Sea states with central Europe and further with Balkan, and Waszczykowski states that it is their ambition to serve as a hub between these areas and bring them closer together through cooperation, pointing out the summit of nine Central European leaders as an example. The Visegrad Group is another key feature of Polish regional foreign policy, connecting Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and the Czech Republic.

#### 6.1.4 Declaration of Foreign Policy 2019

The former minister of foreign affairs Jacek Czaputowicz introduced the 2019 foreign policy declaration (Czaputowicz 2019) by in his speech praise the European Union for the important role it plays in modernising their society, for the well-being of the citizens and the importance of the EU funds Poland receives. However, comparing the declaration of 2019 and the 2016 there is a sharpened tone towards the EU and direct critique of EU decisions and policies.

“...Poland will work to rebuild citizens' trust in the EU institutions. Our overriding aim must be to restore the EU's full and unquestionable legitimacy, to win back voters' trust in the European institutions, and to restore their ability to solve people's real problems.”

Regarding Polish defence the strengthening of the eastern flank and stronger military presence by NATO are reoccurring themes as well as deeper military cooperation with the US. US-Polish cooperation is expressed as a main pillar of Poland's security and defence. Czaputowicz states that Poland has an aspiration to be the “core of the NATO and US presence in the region”, and expresses support for US policies:

“...Like other members of the North Atlantic Alliance, we believe that the US decision to suspend its obligations arising from the treaty on the complete elimination of intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles (the so-called INF treaty) was a legitimate response to Russia’s prolonged violation of the treaty.”

The European Union is only mentioned once regarding defence policy. The EU’s Common Security and Defence Policy is not mentioned. Additionally, other international security organisations like the OSCE were left out in favour of highlighting NATO and the US.

Regional cooperation such as the V4, and economic cooperation like the Three Seas Initiative show Poland’s active regional policy and ambition to connect the central European countries. Czaputowicz declares their continuing support for the Eastern European countries and the Balkan countries’ integration into the European Union. Poland wants to connect the East and the West, and regarding European integration, he states:

“...In the regional dimension, Poland is a leader in implementing European Neighbourhood Instrument programmes. According to the budgetary criterion, the Poland-Belarus-Ukraine 2014-2020 programme is the largest cross-border programme in the European Union.”

## 6.2 Czech Republic

### 6.2.1 Concept of the Czech Republic's Foreign Policy 2015

The Foreign Policy Strategy of 2015 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic 2015) mainly revolves around its membership in the European Union, NATO, the UN and the OSCE. It is stated that the EU is the base of their foreign policy and the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) is mentioned as a strategic interest to the Czech Republic (Ibid, 3). The primary instrument for the safety of the Czech Republic is NATO. NATO and the EU are portrayed as equally important and intrinsic parts of the defence (Ibid, 5).

“...The Czech Republic will also continue to enhance its military capabilities in line with the North Atlantic Alliance's defence planning, as well as within the framework of the European Union.” (Ibid 2015, 5).

The quote above states their own ambition to meet their obligations towards NATO and the EU, additionally, it demonstrates how closely connected both the EU and NATO are regarding security. The CFSP, EU enlargement process and European Neighbourhood Policy are mentioned among a few key policies (Ibid, 5-6). Regarding the regional dimension, the Czech Republic declares the most important regions as central, south-eastern and eastern Europe, as well as the United States. They regard the US to be the primary guarantor of security and intend to continue their cooperation within a wide range of areas as well as be a supporter of EU-US cooperation in global matters (Ibid, 13).

The policy towards south-eastern and eastern European countries is support for building close ties with the EU. The Czech Republic separates Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia from countries like Belarus, Armenia and Azerbaijan, stressing that the EU should have different approaches to them depending on the progress they made while making the expectations on them clearer (Ibid, 15-16). Regarding other non-EU countries, their foreign policy is principally organised through the EU's CFSP policy (Ibid, 16).

The Czech Republic's economic foreign policy is primarily based on its EU membership. Several EU policies which are vital to the Czech economy and competitiveness are mentioned (Ibid, 7). Further, considerable statements are made in favour of EU development programmes and UN cooperation.

“...The Czech Republic will continue to work towards meeting its EU commitments so that the European Union comes closer to its collective target of 0.7% of gross national income spending on development co-operation, while ensuring the effective use of resources.” (Ibid, 8).

Substantial attention is given to the overarching goal to support, promote and safeguard human dignity and human rights as well as their intention to support marginalised groups, religious minorities and women's rights (Ibid 10).

“...Czech foreign policy is based on the principles of universality and the indivisibility of human rights, within the scope of which civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights are crucial for a dignified existence; the denial of such rights violates human dignity and may invite international instability.” (Ibid, 9).

## 6.2.2 Security Strategy of the Czech Republic 2015

The Security Strategy of the Czech Republic (Government of the Czech Republic 2015) repeats some of the statements made in the Concept of Foreign Policy (section 6.2.1) and further deepens other aspects.

As stated previously the security relies on their membership in NATO and the EU, and they are both important actors. They support the strengthening of NATO and the development of their own defence capabilities (Ibid, 15). They further support the development of EU defence and security capabilities, permanent EU military prospects, and closer EU-NATO and EU-US cooperation in order to strengthen the overall security of the region (Ibid, 16). Another important tool is the Visegrad group, and additional emphasis is placed on the Czech Republic's commitment within the EU to fight terrorism and increase the security of the EU's external borders (Ibid, 18-19).

## 6.2.3 Policy Statement 2014

The Policy Statement of 2014 (Government of the Czech Republic 2014) is the declared policy for the mandate period and highlights the top priorities. The government of 2014 was a coalition between the social democrats, Christian democrats the populist party ANO. Czech defence cornerstones are their NATO membership and the EU's CSDP policy (Ibid, 51).

“...The Parties note that it is in the national interest of the Czech Republic to be an active member of the EU, geared towards the

successful continuation of the process of European integration. We are keen to contribute to the further development of the EU, in which we shall respect the social-market and cultural diversity of Europe. This fundamental shift in the Czech Republic's stance towards EU membership shall be accompanied by the continuity of Czech foreign policy and compliance with all international promises and commitments made by the Czech Republic." (Ibid 51).

The quote above states a shift in the Czech outlook on their membership and ambition to deepen the relationship between the Czech Republic and the Union. The government furthermore declares that it will inform the public about EU policies and topics (Ibid, 52).

#### 6.2.4 Policy Statement 2018

The Policy Statement of 2018 (Government of the Czech Republic 2018), led by the ANO party with the social democrats as junior coalition partners, contains a slightly different approach. Together with NATO and the EU, they want to increase the efforts to stop illegal migration. In order to achieve that they will promote stronger and more effective defence cooperation amongst the EU members, prepare battlegroups for deployment and expand the Czech defence industry (Ibid, 20).

"...NATO membership is crucial to safeguard the defence of our country; there is no alternative. However, the security guarantees of collective defence are not to be taken for granted. As we are keen to be a dependable partner for our allies, we will credibly build up our own defence capacities and make active contributions to collective Alliance defence." (Ibid, 21).

While continuing with the previous policy of being a reliable NATO member and honouring their obligations as such, more emphasis is placed on their own ability to defend the Czech Republic. Although their presence in NATO, UN and EU missions will remain, NATO is described as especially important in fighting terrorism and illegal immigration.

"...EU reform is a precondition if we are to restore the trust of the Union's citizens in the European project. The Czech Government will actively engage in the debates on this reform. The European Union must do less, but much better." (Ibid, 26).

While stating the importance of Czech EU membership it is presented as facing challenges. The Czech Republic warns about discrimination and divisions among

member states, especially countries outside of the eurozone. European funds should further not be used as a tool to pressure those disagreeing with certain policies (Ibid, 26). Compared to the policy statement of 2014, it demonstrates the government's approach to state sovereignty as part of the EU. The migration issue is mentioned as something concerning the individual members, and the policies should be a task for each member to form.

“...The individual EU Member States should definitely be left to decide on refugees (resettlement) on their own. The same applies to decisions on what immigrant structure to accept from the perspective of their economic needs and requirements.” (Ibid, 27).

In combating the migration crisis extra effort will be invested in humanitarian aid and development cooperation. Through the UN aid and assistance will be targeted to mitigate the migration crisis. The only solutions the Czech Republic will consider, are of the nature of aid in the country of origin (Ibid, 27-28).

### 6.2.5 Policy Statement 2022

The Policy Statement of 2022 (Government of the Czech Republic 2022) reverses some of the declarations made in 2018. The new government, a coalition of the Civic Democratic Party, Christian Democrats and TOP 09, states that the foreign policy priority for the following years will focus on establishing their position within NATO and the European Union. With the upcoming presidency of the Council of the EU, they state that they are ready to protect the fundamental values of the union (Ibid, 27). The policy declaration resembles the declaration of 2014, highlighting the ambition to develop close cooperation with neighbour countries, EU members and the US (Ibid, 27).

“...The promotion of democracy, human rights and civil society is the morally right thing, but it is also advantageous for our State. In the past, our human rights and transformation policy has managed to secure our place at the heart of European politics. We will renew the tradition of “Havel’s” foreign policy, including support for development and transformation cooperation.” (Ibid, 27).

They express new commitments to humanitarian values which states a significant shift from the declaration of 2018. A second shift can be found in their approach to the EU. The topics concerning migration policy and self-determination are not mentioned in the Declaration of 2022. Instead, new efforts will be made to raise



public awareness of the European Union and create engagement in the future of the membership and the EU in general (Ibid, 28-29).

“... We will work to ensure that NATO continues to maintain, in addition to its military capacity, the political cohesion and ability to unite the West against external threats. We will further develop and strengthen the transatlantic link. The European Union’s ambitions in the field of defence must not be in competition with the North Atlantic Alliance, but rather in accord.” (Ibid, 31).

A third significant shift includes the EU’s role in defence policy. As the quote above states, more emphasis is put on NATO as the main pillar of the Czech Defence. Continuing to meet the obligation towards NATO the spending on defence will be brought to 2% by 2025 (Ibid, 31-32). The EU as an incorporated part of the Czech defence is not mentioned, and neither is the Common Security and Defence Policy.

## 7. Analysis

In this section, the empirical findings presented in the previous section will be analysed by assigning Poland and the Czech Republic role conceptions (section 5.3) and further disclosing the potential motives behind their response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

The findings suggest that Poland and the Czech Republic have multiple roles. Both countries regard NATO as the main safety actor, and the Czech Republic explicitly expresses views of the US as a safety guarantor (section 6.2.1) The role of *partner* demands an expression of a deeper level of cooperation and support for each other's policies (section 5.3), the Czech Republic can therefore be regarded as an *ally* to the United States. Although strong commitment is expressed towards NATO, this is counterbalanced by their strong commitment towards the EU and EU policies. Poland on the other hand expresses support towards US policies outside of the framework of NATO. A consistent element is the priority of US military presence in Poland and bilateral partnership. Cooperation regarding anti-missile defence bases (section 6.1.3) shows the strong support of US policies expressed by Poland. Three years later during the declaration of 2019 (section 6.1.4) Poland expresses direct support for the US decision to withdraw from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty. The consistent support discloses Poland as a *partner* and furthermore *Atlantic partner*.

However, this does not propose that there is no partner relationship between Poland and the EU or other European states. As a member of the European Union Poland is closely linked with other European states through cooperation, agreements and common policies. There is tension, however, between the EU and the sovereignty of the state. In the declaration of 2016, it is described as “cracks on the structure”, and that the EU should “return to its roots” (section 6.1.3)., meaning focus primarily on main responsibilities without excessive intervention. The example of energy politics (section 6.1.1) demonstrates the will to protect self-determination, thus the role conception of *Independent* can be detected. In this regard, Poland expresses a will to protect national interests. A trend that can be detected is the consolidation of NATO as the main actor concerning security and defence. The declaration of 2016 (section 6.1.3) and the Foreign Policy Strategy 2017-2021 (section 6.1.1) include commitments on strengthening the EU's CSDP, and the OSCE principles. In the declaration of 2019 (section 6.1.4) and the Security Strategy of 2020 (section 6.1.2) they are not mentioned. Instead, more attention is given to NATO, and NATO-EU cooperation, thus reflecting the role of *Atlantic partner* as a prominent feature of Polish foreign policy.

The differences between Poland and the Czech Republic in regard to Atlantic or European partner are shown in the Concept of the Czech Republic's Foreign Policy from 2015 (section 6.2.1). Both NATO and the EU are presented as incorporated parts of Czech security. The strongest support, and thus confirmation of their role as *European partner* is the support for the EU's own ambitions to strengthen military and defence capabilities (section 6.2.2). The Policy Statement of 2014 (section 6.2.3) communicates reinforced efforts in developing the EU, to be an active member and raise public engagement about the EU. A shift is mentioned in the statement, signalling the wish to improve relations between the EU and the Czech Republic. Comparing Poland and the Czech Republic, the EU has greater consideration in several areas of Czech foreign policy, while in the Polish statements, it is usually regarded in terms of economic cooperation and European integration. The role of *European partner* can also be found in the Czech emphasis on the OSCE as a primary tool for European security, as well as EU policies (section 6.2.1), thus placing the significance inside of Europe.

The Czech policy statement of 2018 (section 6.2.4) signals a shift towards the EU. More **importance is paid to** developing their own defence capabilities, and from the EU they expect measures to mitigate the migration crisis. It is stated that the EU has lost the trust of the union's citizens, and the role conception of *independent* can be detected. Like the Polish statement regarding energy policy (section 6.1.1), the Czech Republic asserts the importance of self-determination. This role is however short-lived as the Policy Statement of 2022 reasserts the country's commitment to establish its position within the EU (section 6.2.5). Together with the new efforts to raise public awareness about the EU, this suggests it is their national interest to reinforce their role as *European partner*. Although with less European emphasis regarding defence since the CSDP or the OSCE are not mentioned. The detected trend coincides with studies of EU satisfaction amongst Czech citizens. The Czech Republic experienced low numbers of satisfaction with the EU between 2010-2012 and 2015-2018 (Havelka et al. 2020, 5), pronouncing the fluctuating perception of its position towards the EU.

Regional central and eastern European policy is an important feature of Polish foreign policy. Poland perceives itself of being a *regional leader*. The role connotes having special responsibilities and commitments to other regions, especially those with close cultural and historical ties (section 5.3.1). Poland expresses its obligation of supporting developments and reforms in Eastern Europe. Poland explicitly expresses itself as having a special position connecting parts of Europe, taking a leading role with incentives like the Three Seas Initiative and within the EU's Eastern Neighbourhood framework (sections 6.1.1 and 6.1.2). Regarding the distinction between *regional leader* and *increasing national power* Poland

primarily expresses the ambition, due to its experience of democratic transformation, to offer guidance and lead other countries through the same process (Waszczykowski 2016). However, it does not exclude the possibility that by being a *regional leader* the national power and ability to exercise influence might increase. Poland states that they want to increase the position of central Europe within the EU (section 6.1.1). While being a statement of *increasing national power* it is likewise a feature of *regional leader*. The statement is essentially an objective to strengthen all of central Europe, taking responsibility to support the region's position. Additionally, the word leader is explicitly used when declaring the Polish policy towards its eastern neighbours during the declaration of 2019 (section 6.1.4).

The role conception of *increasing national power* can be detected in the Polish nation's branding policy. Significant attention is given to what they call active historical diplomacy. Historical falsification regarding the Holocaust is mentioned as a major issue for the reputation of Poland (section 6.1.1). In the declaration of 2016, the purpose of active diplomacy is stated, namely, to show the importance of Poland in the history of Europe and Christianity, and to defend the values of the Latin civilisation (Waszczykowski 2016). The dimension of *increasing or maintaining national power* can be detected through the ambition to improve the Polish reputation and gain soft power. Likewise, the Czech Republic declares in the Policy Statement of 2022 (section 6.2.5) their goal to return to the tradition of "Havel's" foreign policy, signifying a deepened humanitarian approach at the core of their foreign policy. Since the Czech Republic is a country aware of its limitations, it is a tool to gain soft power. The role conception of *increasing or maintaining national power* can thus be detected here as well.

This paper aims to find potential motives behind their response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine since this is one of the main benefits of applying role theory to foreign policy analysis (section 3). Having established Poland as both *regional leader* and *Atlantic partner*, certain obligations towards Ukraine as being part of the eastern European neighbourhood exist. Significant attention is given to Ukraine in all four Polish policy materials analysed in this paper, and as a *regional leader*, Poland is an involved actor in the cooperation between the EU and Ukraine, as well as bilateral cooperation. As part of being *regional leader* the cultural and historical connection between Poland and Ukraine has significance for the Polish response. This paper analyses the role conceptions *before* the Russian invasion, showing that Poland had certain obligations and responsibilities towards Ukraine even before the invasion of 2022.

The role of *Atlantic partner* also has explanatory value since Poland and the US have close military cooperation. The analysed policy declarations show that Russia

is a main threat (section 6.1.1), therefore Poland has strongly prioritised efforts to prepare for conflicts surrounding the eastern borders. The Polish response shows their commitment to protecting these borders, being NATO's eastern borders and thus important borders for the United States as well. An important feature of being an *Atlantic partner* is showing reliability and support for US interests. The Polish response shows them as reliable partners to the United States for the security of Europe.

The findings present the Czech Republic as a *European partner*, although with slight trends of decreasing importance of the EU regarding defence and security. Drawing attention to themselves during the first year of the conflict as major providers of humanitarian aid and the first country to send military equipment (section 2), they established their position within the EU as reliable and active. For the Czech Republic, the upcoming presidency of the Council of the European Union (section 6.2.5) possibly played a part in their response. The findings show the Czech need to re-establish its position within the EU after the previous government's scepticism, confirming the importance of defending European values and being a main contributor to Ukraine.

Moreover, the finding of the role of *increasing or maintaining national power* established a new moral leading role for the Czech Republic internationally. By supporting Ukraine with military equipment and humanitarian aid they show their solidarity towards the eastern countries and the rest of Europe. The Czech Republic has welcomed a significant number of Ukrainian refugees compared to other central and eastern European countries (section 2) which also illustrates their commitment to humanitarian values, stepping into the role as a moral power and integrating into the European core. Comparing Poland's and the Czech Republic's responses to the conflict, the Czech Republic stated they will focus primarily on maintaining the equipment already sent (section 2), while Poland shows continuing strong and intensified support throughout 2022 and the first months of 2023, illustrating the obligations of being a *regional leader*.

## 8. Conclusion

This paper aimed to discover the motives behind Poland's and the Czech Republic's response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, by establishing their role conceptions. The findings show that Poland perceives itself as being a *regional leader* as well as *Atlantic partner* while the Czech Republic perceives itself the conceptions of *European partner* and aspires to become a moral leader in the form of *increasing or maintaining national power*. Elements of this role conception could also be detected in the foreign policy of Poland, strengthening its ambition to become a *regional leader*. The findings also suggest motives behind their strong support for Ukraine and have explanatory value covering areas outside of traditional realistic or liberalistic international relations theories. The role conception of *protect culture and national identity* could not be detected. The conception of *independent* discovered in both the case of Poland and the Czech Republic showed that self-determination needed to be reaffirmed in cases of energy and migration policy, not culture or identity.

The purpose of using exclusive categories like *European partner* and *Atlantic partner* is not to state that one is solely a partner towards the EU or the US, it is merely to distinguish nuances in the foreign policy. Due to their spatial position, Poland and the Czech Republic have close European and transatlantic ties and commitments to central and Eastern Europe. The purpose of this paper was to detect what role conceptions were held by the political elite, not the conceptions of the public, or other states, studies of what the citizens perceive the role to be could therefore show other results.

By analysing other countries, further research could contribute to understanding national role conceptions. This framework could be used to analyse the foreign policy of the Baltic states who show remarkably strong support for Ukraine since the beginning of the conflict (Kiel Institute 2023). To further understand the differences in role conceptions, a comparative study of Poland and Hungary, or all the Central European states could bring insight into how the countries perceive themselves, as well as disclosing potential motives behind different foreign policy actions. Further research could analyse central European states' role conceptions, or expectations toward other actors than the EU since this has not been done in great length.

# References

## Primary sources

- Czaputowicz, Jacek. 2019. Minister Jacek Czaputowicz on Polish diplomacy priorities in 2019. <https://www.gov.pl/web/diplomacy/minister-jacek-czaputowicz-on-polish-diplomacy-priorities-in-2019> (Accessed: 22.05.23).
- Government of the Czech Republic. 2014. Policy Statement of the Government of the Czech Republic. [Electronic] <https://www.vlada.cz/en/media-centrum/dulezite-dokumenty/policy-statement-of-the-government-of-the-czech-republic-116171/> (Accessed: 22.05.23).
- Government of the Czech Republic. 2015. Security Strategy of the Czech Republic: 2015. [Electronic] [https://www.army.cz/images/id\\_8001\\_9000/8503/Security\\_Strategy\\_2015.pdf](https://www.army.cz/images/id_8001_9000/8503/Security_Strategy_2015.pdf) (Accessed: 22.05.23).
- Government of the Czech Republic. 2018. Policy Statement of the Government of the Czech Republic. [Electronic] <https://www.vlada.cz/en/jednani-vlady/policy-statement-of-the-government-of-the-czech-republic-168237/> (Accessed: 22.05.23).
- Government of the Czech Republic. 2022. Policy Statement of the Government of the Czech Republic. [Electronic] <https://www.vlada.cz/en/jednani-vlady/policy-statement/policy-statement-of-the-government-193762/> (Accessed: 22.05.23).
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic. 2015. Concept of the Czech Republic's Foreign Policy. [Electronic] <https://www.mzv.cz/file/14172/ForeignPolicyII.doc> (Accessed: 22.05.23).
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Poland. 2017. Polish Foreign Policy Strategy: 2017-2021. [Electronic] <https://www.gov.pl/attachment/869184c0-bd6f-4a20-b8af-a5c8190350a1> (Accessed: 22.05.23).
- National Security Bureau. 2020. National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland. [Electronic] <https://en.bbn.gov.pl/en/about-bbn/publications/publications/769,National-Security-Strategy-of-the-Republic-of-Poland.html> (Accessed: 22.05.23).
- Waszczykowski, Witold. 2016. Information to the Sejm about the tasks of foreign policy in 2016. [https://www.euractiv.pl/section/polityka-zagraniczna-ue/press\\_release/minister-witold-waszczykowski-o-priorytetach-polskiej-dyplomacji-w-2017-roku/](https://www.euractiv.pl/section/polityka-zagraniczna-ue/press_release/minister-witold-waszczykowski-o-priorytetach-polskiej-dyplomacji-w-2017-roku/) (Accessed: 22.05.23).

## Secondary sources

- Aggestam, Lisbeth. 2006. Role theory and European foreign policy: A framework of analysis. In Elgström, O and Smith, M (ed.). *The European Union's Roles in International Politics: Concepts and Analysis*. London: Routledge, 11-29.
- Aggestam, Lisbeth. 2018. Role identity and the Europeanisation of foreign policy. In Tonra, Ben and Christiansen, Thomas (ed.). *Rethinking European Union foreign policy*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 81–98.
- Beneš, Vít and Harnisch, Sebastian. 2015. Role Theory in symbolic interactionism: Czech Republic, Germany and the EU. *Cooperation and Conflict*. 50(1): 146-165. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/45084287>
- Biddle, Bruce. J and Thomas, Edwin. J. 1996. The Nature and History of Role Theory. In B.J Biddle and E.J Thomas (ed.). *Role Theory Concepts and Research*. New York: John Wiley.
- Chaban, Natalia and Elgström, Ole. 2021. *The Ukraine Crisis and the EU Foreign Policy Roles*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Dickinson, Peter. 2023. Poland defies Putin with landmark decision to give Ukraine fighter jets. *Atlantic Council*. [Blog]. March 16. <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/poland-defies-putin-with-landmark-decision-to-give-ukraine-fighter-jets/> (Accessed: 22.05.23).
- Esaiasson, Peter; Gilijam, Mikael; Oscarsson, Henrik; Towns, Ann E. and Wägnerud, Lena (ed.). 2012. *Metodpraktikan: konsten att studera samhälle, individ och marknad*. 5th edition. Stockholm: Norstedts juridik.
- Francis, Diane. 2023. Poland is leading Europe's response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. *Atlantic Council*. [Blog]. January 28. <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/poland-is-leading-europes-response-to-the-russian-invasion-of-ukraine/> (Accessed: 22.05.23).
- Frank, Cornelia. 2011. Comparing Germany's and Poland's ESDPs: Roles, path dependencies, learning, and socialization. In Harnisch, S., Frank, C. and Maull, Hanns W (ed.). *Role Theory in International Relations*. London: Routledge, 131-146.
- Freedom House. 2023. *Freedom in the world 2023: Making 50 Years in the Struggle for Democracy*. Washington DC: Freedom House. [https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/2023-03/FIW\\_2023\\_50Years\\_DigitalPDF.pdf](https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/2023-03/FIW_2023_50Years_DigitalPDF.pdf) (Accessed: 22.05.23).
- Harnisch, Sebastian. 2011. Role Theory: Operationalization of key concepts. In Harnisch, S., Frank, C. and Maull, Hanns W (ed.). *Role Theory in International Relations*. London: Routledge, 7-15.
- Havelka, Vít; Hořejš, Nikola; Buchtík, Martin; Boudal, Jiří; Prokeš, Vojtěch and Rybáček, Kryštof. 2020. Czechs and the EU Brand: How do Czechs feel about the EU and what could change their mind? Prague: EUROPEUM <https://www.europeum.org/en/articles/detail/3258/czechs-and-the-eu-brand-how-do-czechs-feel-about-the-eu-and-what-could-change-their-mind> (Accessed: 22.05.23).



- Holsti, K.J. 1970. National Role Conceptions in the Study of Foreign Policy. *International Studies Quarterly*. 14(3): 233-309. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3013584>
- Kiel Institute. 2023. Ukraine Support Tracker. <https://www.ifw-kiel.de/topics/war-against-ukraine/ukraine-support-tracker/> (Accessed: 22.05.23).
- Kovář, Jan and Sychra, Zdeněk. 2018. The European Dimension of the Czech Foreign Policy: Ambivalent Position of the Reluctant European. In Kizeková, Alicia (ed.). *Czech Foreign Policy in 2017. Analysis*. Prague: Institute of International Relations, 41-70.
- Křiž, Zdeněk. 2021. The security perception and security policy of the Czech Republic, 1993-2018. *Defence & Security Analysis*. 37(1): 38-52. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14751798.2020.1831231>
- Kundera, Milan. 1984. The tragedy of Central Europe. *The New York Review of Books*. 31(7): 33-38. [https://is.muni.cz/el/1423/jaro2016/MEB404/um/Kundera\\_1984.pdf](https://is.muni.cz/el/1423/jaro2016/MEB404/um/Kundera_1984.pdf) (Accessed: 22.05.23).
- Kuzniar, Roman. 2021. The Rise and Fall of Post-Communist Poland's Foreign Policy. *Israel Journal of Foreign Affairs*. 15(3): 459-472. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23739770.2021.1999580>
- Liu, Natalie. 2023. Czech Republic Cites Early Work to Rebuild Ukraine. *Voice of America*. February 24. <https://www.voanews.com/a/czech-republic-cites-early-work-to-rebuild-ukraine-/6977886.html> (Accessed: 22.05.23).
- Longhurst, Kerry and Zaborowski, Marcin. 2003. America's Protégé in the East? The Emergence of Poland as a Regional Leader. *International Affairs*. 79(5): 1009-1028. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3568950>
- Mills, Claire. 2023. Military assistance to Ukraine since the Russian Invasion. London: House of Commons. <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-9477/CBP-9477.pdf> (Accessed: 22.05.23).
- Natras, William. 2022. Ukraine is tearing the Czech Republic apart. *The Post by Unherd*. November 1. <https://unherd.com/the-post/ukraine-is-tearing-the-czech-republic-apart/> (Accessed: 22.05.23).
- Osica, Olaf. 2004. Poland: A New European Atlanticist at a Crossroads?. *European Security*. 13(4): 301-322. DOI: 10.1080/09662830490499984
- Pawlusko, Tomasz. 2022. The Foreign Policy of Poland and the Problem of Political Rationale. *Teoria Polityki*. 2022(6): 237-255. <https://doi.org/10.4467/25440845TP.22.011.16307>
- Rankin, Jennifer. 2023. European Commission takes Poland to court over 'legal Polexit'. *The Guardian*. February 15. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/feb/15/european-commission-takes-poland-to-court-over-legal-polexit> (Accessed: 22.05.23).
- Sullivan, Rory. 2022. Czech Republic becomes first Nato country to send tanks to Ukraine. *Independent*. April 6. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/czech-republic-nato-tanks-ukraine-b2052261.html> (Accessed: 22.05.23).

- Tabosa, Clarissa. 2020. Constructing Foreign Policy vis-à-vis the Migration Crisis: The Czech and Slovak Cases. *Czech Journal of International Relations*. 55(2): 5-23. <https://doi.org/10.32422/mv.1687>
- Teorell, Jan and Svensson, Torsten. 2007. *Att fråga och att svara: Samhällsvetenskaplig metod*. Stockholm: Liber.
- Tharoor, Ishaan. 2023. How Poland became the new ‘center of gravity’ in Europe. *The Washington Post*. April 7. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2023/04/07/poland-center-gravity-heart-europe-nato-history/> (Accessed: 22.05.23).
- Thumerelle, Charles and Le Prestre, Philippe G. 1997. France: Strait jacket of New Freedom. In Le Prestre, Philippe G (ed.). *Role Quests in the Post-Cold War Era: Foreign Policies in Transition*. Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 131-160.
- Tůma, Petr. 2023. Czech president-elect turns the page on populism. *Foreign Policy*. February 1. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2023/02/01/czech-president-elections-petr-pavel-populism/> (Accessed: 22.05.23).
- UNHCR. 2023. *Operational Data Portal: Ukraine Refugee Situation*. <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine> (Accessed: 22.05.23).
- Zantovsky, Michael. 2015. In search of allies: Vaclav Havel and the Expansion of NATO. *World Affairs*. 177(4): 47-58. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/43556670>