

**POSITION OF THE UNION OF ENTREPRENEURS AND EMPLOYERS
ON THE EUROPEAN UNION**

In public discourse, marginal voices have arisen concerning the so-called Polexit, the withdrawal of Poland from the European Union. We know that this is not the intention of the government, nor is there any political force of any significance that would promote such an action. Nevertheless – although presently it merely is a margin of margin – we feel compelled to comment on this matter.

Regardless of how unfairly we are being treated by the current leadership of the European Union, there is no other place for Poland than within European structures. Any and all actions aimed at Poland's withdrawal from Europe are actions hostile towards Poland and are contrary to the Polish *raison d'état*.

It is determined not only by Poland's geopolitical location, but also by its economy. What for the United Kingdom, if it ever comes to its divorce with the European Union, will only be a severe flu. It would, however, have fatal consequences for our economy which has become so closely interwoven with the European Union that an only a complete madman could attempt to ruin it.

In 2016, Polish exports amounted to PLN 803 billion 478 million, of which PLN 641 billion 310 million were exports to member countries of the European Union. A similarly high share of trade with EU countries took place in the case of imports: it totaled over PLN 786 billion, of which almost PLN 482 billion were imports from EU countries. By far the largest trading partner of Poland is Germany, where we export goods for over EUR 50 billion.

Poland is the 8th largest exporter of goods within the EU market – from January until October 2017, we exported goods to EU countries worth EUR 134.5 billion. As far as imports within the European Union are concerned, Poland is also 8th – in the given period, we bought goods and services from our EU trade partners worth over EUR 118 billion.

In the first quarter of 2017, the share of exports to EU countries in total Polish exports amounted to 79.5%, whereas in the case of imports, the share amounted to 60.8%.

Amongst the 10 largest sales markets for Polish exporters, only two are non-EU markets.

In the 2014-2020 financial perspective, we negotiated about EUR 106 billion, while premiums amount to approximately EUR 40 billion, which in turn gives net income of over EUR 60 billion.

We repeat with full certainty: all calls to withdraw from the EU are actions against the Polish *raison d'état*. The consequence thereof is the threat of entering the Russian sphere of influence and the inevitable economic collapse.

Be it out of ignorance or ill will, the “option” to withdraw politically from the EU and remain in the European Economic Area is also promoted. As part of the consequences of such a step, we would

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have to pay billions of euros for access to the common European market, comply with all EU regulations, while not being able to participate to any extent whatsoever in lawmaking and decision-making processes in the EU.

The European Union, especially under the current unelected leadership, is not quite the perfect creation. However, we are a full member of this community and we have the right to strive to change the current status quo. Nothing is eternal. We believe in the repentance of some of the countries and the return to the roots and ideas of the Founding Fathers of the EU – Europe of nations with the free movement of people, services, capital and goods. A Europe that will be able to compete with the whole world and become a global leader thanks to freedom and common sense, from which others will draw an example and inspiration.

Poland should start being a more player on the EU political forum. One ought not to take offence or pout – one has to go out on the field and play full game. Instead of sulking and raging on Twitter, one needs to start playing real politics. The immediate appointment of an experienced diplomat as the ambassador in Brussels is the necessary first step. The government must also allocate adequate resources to lobbying for Polish interests in the EU. Brussels is not just another theater for national politics – it is the grand theater of European politics, where decisions are made that will affect our children's and their children's future.

This year, a number of important decisions in the EU regarding our economic and political interests will be made. Poland will not be isolated provided it now shows with the new leadership that it can cooperate with institutions and other countries in the EU. Hungary may be our ally in the media, but the Visegrád Group alliance does not seem stable nor of much importance. No matter whether we approve of it or not, real European politics take place in Berlin and Paris, and if we want to play our rightful role in Europe, we must ourselves start to pursue real politics towards as well as with them.

Union of Entrepreneurs and Employers

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