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MAJOR CHANGES IN THE FOREIGN TRADE OF POLAND RESULTING FROM ITS ACCESSION TO THE EU

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Abstract. Accession to the EU meant for Poland (similarly to all the other New Member States) a significant change of the previously binding principles and conditions of trade exchange in all the relations. The study is an attempt to verify the hypothesis that these changes had a significant impact on the development of trade flows in the years 2004-2010 compared to the pre-accession period. The analysis of the available statistical data shows that to the greatest extent transformations related to reciprocal trade of examined countries, in particular trade in processed agricultural products. In addition, the analysis also shows that in the analysed period the share of intra-industry trade index in the trade flows of Poland with EU-15 and EU-10 countries increased, although it still remains on a relatively low level.

Keywords: New EU Member States, foreign trade of Poland, foreign trade of EU-10 countries, intra-industry trade of Poland, EU candidate countries, enlargement of the EU.

Jel classification: F13; F14; F15.

1. Introduction

Since the beginning of the transition process, close cooperation and a membership in the EU was a strategic objective of Poland, as well as of many countries in Central Eastern Europe. It required extensive adjustments in social, economic and political spheres.

Those efforts were successful and on 1st of May 2004 and 1st of January 2007 ten of those countries have been accepted in the EU structures enjoying their full rights. The accession meant that the new countries faced the necessity of adopting basic principles of the common trade policy of the EU. It led to a substantial change of rules and conditions previously governing their trade in all relations.

The following study is an attempt to verify the hypothesis (based on the analysis of statistical data for the years 2000-2003 and 2004-2007 and 2004-2010)[1], that the new conditions of trade had a significant impact on the dynamics and structure of

[1] In order to ensure comparability of data, a whole group of New Member States (including Bulgaria and Romania) was treated together throughout the period 2000-2010.

foreign trade of Poland, especially in relation with the EU-15 countries and with the new Member States (EU-10). An important consequence of the accession and the resulting transformation is the improvement of the competitiveness of Polish companies on the single European market. It is reflected in the changes of intra-industry trade indices. The study also includes the analysis of the causes and the effects of changes of these streams calculated on the basis of Grubel–Lloyd index.

2. The new conditions of trade resulting from the accession to the EU

The EU accession meant for Poland and for the other new Member States a substantial change of hitherto rules and conditions of trade with all partners.

This resulted mainly from the adoption of the entire *acquis communautaire* in areas: “free movement of goods” and “customs union”.

The most important changes included (Czarny, Śledziewska 2009; Kaliszuk, Synowiec 2001; Kaliszuk 2006; Kawecka-Wyrzykowska 2004; Latoszek 2003; Płowiec 2002):

- joining the new countries (EU-10) to the EU single market,
- adoption by the newly acceding countries of all the rules and instruments of the EC's common trade policy towards third countries.

2.1. Trade with the EU countries

One of the basic pillars of the single market of the European Union is the free movement of industrial goods and agricultural products. In the course of negotiations on the area of ”Free movement of goods”, the new Member States have committed to adopt the entire EU law in this area (Tendera-Właszczuk 2005).

In the case of Poland and other new Member States, the accession to the EU resulted in the change of rules and conditions of trade, both with the EU-15 countries, as well as in their reciprocal trade. The scope and depth of these changes were, however, different with respect to industrial goods and to agricultural products.

Trade in industrial goods with the EU-15 countries was almost completely liberalized by the 1st of January 1999, under the provisions of the Europe Agreements. The situation was similar for trade with the EU-10, as before the accession, CEFTA countries, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia have concluded a free trade area agreement (Kaliszuk *et al.* 2005) The most important change in 2004 was the elimination of border controls (physical barriers) and the occurring technical and fiscal barriers in access to the single market.

In the case of the agricultural trade between the newly acceding countries and other countries of the European Union, the customs and non-tariff barriers were completely abolished. This fact should be emphasized, since before the accession, trade of this group of goods between CEFTA countries and the EU-15 was only partially liberalised. Many agricultural preferences were available only under quotas. Goods not covered by preferences were subject to MFN customs duty (Ibidem). On the other hand, in the framework of CEFTA, trade in these goods was subject to selective and limited liberalization (Molendowski 2007a). To conclude, after 1st of May 2004, agricultural trade was subject to greater changes than trade in industrial goods (Molendowski 2009).

2.2. Trade with third countries

The acceding countries have adopted all the instruments and principles of the common trade policy (Ambroziak, Kawecka-Wyrzykowska 2004; WTO 2004) governing the relations between the EU-15 and third countries. This led to significant changes of trade conditions with those countries, due to the fact that the Communities applied an extensive system of preferences (unilateral or reciprocal) for different group of countries (Miklaszewski 2005). In comparison to the pre-accession, the number of countries benefiting from preferential market access to the new Member States increased. Reduced GSP (Michałowska-Gorywoda 2006) rate was granted to CIS countries, some countries of South America and Central America, Asia, Africa and the Balkan states (WTO 2004).

As a result of the adoption of the Common Customs Tariff for most of the industrial goods, with effect from 1st of May 2004, there was a reduction in tariff rates (tariffs increased only for a relatively small group of products). The largest tariff reduction occurred in imports from countries that have free trade agreements with the EU-15, and had previously been subject to MFN duties (Tunisia, Morocco, Mexico, South Africa and Macedonia). Quite substantial tariff reductions have taken place in relation with developing countries that have previously been subject to MFN rates, and have benefited in the EU-15 countries from the tariff preferences under the ACP or GSP system.

The Communities use an extensive system of protection in imports of agricultural products from third countries. High tariffs are applied for processed agricultural products covered by the common agricultural policy. Lower rates are applied in case of imported goods not produced in the EU area i.e. coffee, tea or spices. Parallel to the extensive system of protection for agricultural commodities, there is a system of tariff preferences, which enables the import of goods into the EU internal market on more favorable terms compared to MFN, but up to the amount specified by quotas. Moreover, countries covered by the GSP system benefit from reduced rates and the ACP countries benefit from duty-free access for processed agricultural products or preferential rates on unprocessed products.

3. The dynamics of foreign trade of Poland in the period after accession

The first years after accession proved to be much more successful than the Eurosceptics anticipated. In the period before accession they alarmed that the new members will pay extra for EU membership, and their markets will be flooded with more competitive EU goods. After the first years of membership, it can be stated that such views and concerns were unfounded or much exaggerated (European Commission 2006; Kawecka-Wyrzykowska *et al.* 2005; Kawecka-Wyrzykowska *et al.* 2006).

The above described changes in the rules and conditions of trade resulting from the accession to the European Union, influenced the development of the trade of Poland, both in relation to the EU-15 countries, the new Member States, as well as with third countries. Most important trends have been revealed in the reciprocal trade of the EU-10 countries. This is confirmed by the data summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Foreign trade of Poland in comparison to the EU-10* in 2000-2010, according to product groups and groups of countries - average annual change in %, current prices based on Euro (Source: Author's calculation based on: Eurostat 2011)

	Eksport				**Import**			
	2000-2003	**2004-2007**	**2008-2010**	**2004-2010**	**2000-2003**	**2004-2007**	**2008-2010**	**2004-2010**
	Global trade							
Poland	16.0	21.0	5.5	14.1	9.2	19.2	3.8	12.3
EU-10	15.2	19.3	4.5	12.7	13.2	18.9	1.2	10.9
	Agri-food products							
Poland	12.5	26.1	10.1	19.0	3.0	22.9	10.5	17.4
EU-10	10.0	23.3	11.4	18.1	8.7	21.9	7.8	15.7
	Industrial products							
Poland	16.4	20.4	5.0	13.5	16.4	20.4	3.2	13.5
EU-10	15.6	19.0	3.9	12.3	15.6	19.0	0.7	12.3
	Trade with the EU 15							
Poland	15.0	18.5	5.7	12.8	7.5	20.1	2.3	12.1
EU-10	14.4	15.7	3.7	10.4	10.8	18.6	-1.2	9.7
	Agri-food products							
Poland	14.2	31.2	9.8	21.5	5.2	30.7	13.2	22.9
EU-10	11.3	26.1	10.7	19.3	9.6	27.1	8.6	18.8
	Industrial products							
Poland	15.0	17.4	5.2	12.0	15.0	17.4	1.2	12.0
EU-10	14.5	15.2	3.2	9.9	14.5	15.2	-2.0	9.9
	Trade with the EU-10							
Poland	22.0	27.1	5.6	17.4	13.2	23.9	6.0	15.9
EU-10	17.1	29.3	4.7	18.2	16.4	29.4	3.7	17.7
	Agri-food products							
Poland	16.0	32.0	8.5	21.4	7.7	25.1	5.5	16.3
EU-10	12.5	29.5	11.3	21.4	13.2	29.8	8.9	20.4
	Industrial products							
Poland	22.9	26.5	5.1	16.8	22.9	26.5	6.0	16.8
EU-10	17.8	29.3	3.9	17.7	17.8	29.3	3.0	17.7
	Trade with third countries							
Poland	16.1	25.0	5.1	16.0	11.8	15.8	6.3	11.6
EU-10	16.8	22.6	6.2	15.3	16.8	14.7	4.3	10.1

End of Tabele 1

	Eksport				Import			
	2000-2003	**2004-2007**	**2008-2010**	**2004-2010**	**2000-2003**	**2004-2007**	**2008-2010**	**2004-2010**
	Agri-food products							
Poland	8.4	11.8	12.7	12.2	-0.7	7.6	4.3	6.2
EU-10	6.5	12.3	13.2	12.6	5.1	4.3	2.9	3.7
	Industrial products							
Poland	17.8	27.0	4.2	16.7	17.8	27.0	6.4	16.7
EU-10	18.3	23.7	5.6	15.6	18.3	23.7	4.4	15.6

***** In order to ensure comparability of data for the EU-10 for the period 2004-2006 also Bulgaria and Romania are included**.**

3.1. Export

According to the data in Table 1, during 2004-2007 Poland (as well as the EU-10 countries) reported a distinct acceleration in export dynamics (calculated on the basis of Euro) compared to previous years. The average annual growth rate reached 21.0% compared to 16.0% in the pre-accession period (2000-2003). The increase of growth was much higher than in the EU-10 countries (from 15.2% to 19.3%). Particularly rapid growth took place in the case of agri-food products (from 12.5% to 26.1%). Exports of industrial goods were increasing but at a rate similar to the one recorded in the total trade.

A peculiar situation took place in relation with the EU-15 countries. The average annual growth rate of exports during 2004-2007 in the case of Poland (and the whole group of the EU-10) was only slightly higher than in 2000-2003. This was related to tendencies that occurred in trade in industrial goods (average annual growth rates of 17.4% and 15.0% respectively). It seems that this should be associated with the strategy of transnational corporations. They anticipated the entry of new countries into the EU in their activities much earlier, developing appropriate production and sales networks. This involved strengthening the role of their branches located in the new Member States and strengthening the links between them. At the same time, these branches have become, to a greater extent, producers of final products (partly taking over the role of companies from EU-15), selling products directly to the countries of destination. This, in turn, led to the increase of their share in exports to countries with high levels of domestic demand (new Member States, countries outside EU-25), at the expense of the EU-15 (Mroczek 2009).

It ought to be emphasized, that in relation with EU-15 countries, a significant acceleration of exports of agri-food products was recorded in 2004-2007 (average annual rate of 31.2%, compared to 14.2% in the previous period). Such acceleration was observed also in most of the EU-10 countries, which should be explained by the removal of previously existing trade barriers.

Relatively high rate of growth in exports occurred during 2004-2007 in trade with the EU-10 countries (average: 27.1%, and 22.0% in 2000-2003). Particularly rapid growth was recorded in the export of agri-food products (from 16.0% in 2000-2003 to 32.0% in 2004–2007). Acceleration of exports to the EU-10 countries should be attributed mainly to the removal, after 1st of May 2004, of the previously existing barriers to trade between countries (conditioned protection instruments in agricultural trade as well as physical, technical and fiscal barriers to trade in industrial goods). This facilitated an increase in sales, especially to the new Member States. It should be stressed, that the growth rate of exports of agri-food products to the EU-15 countries shows that the manufacturers from the EU-10 countries were ready to compete in the demanding single market. It should be noted that the gradual introduction of the liberalization of trade in goods, both in relation with the EU-15 countries as well as in relation with the EU-10 countries, facilitated the preparation process.

The strengthened position of third countries (outside EU-25) in Polish exports during the analysed period should also be considered as beneficial. This means some increase in the diversification of markets, which was caused by the change in conditions of trade after 1st of May 2004 (Paszyński 2006) (resulting from the adoption of the principles of the Common Trade Policy).

It should be also emphasized that the rate of growth of Polish exports of agri-food products during 2004-2010, in a period characterized by the consequences of the global financial and economic crisis in relations with the EU-15 countries and with third countries, exceeded the indices recorded during 2000-2003 and 2004-2007. Those products were much less sensitive than industrial goods to the turmoil in global markets[2].

3.2. Import

According to the data summarized in Table 1,during the years 2004-2007 a significant increase in import growth was also observed, compared to the period before the accession (respectively 19.2% and 9.2%). It is also characteristic that during the analysed period, imports from EU-10 countries grew much faster (average 23.9%) than imports from EU-15 countries (20.1%). In relations with third countries, the average annual rate has only slightly accelerated (from 11.8% to 15.8%). Similar trends have also occurred in most of the EU-10 countries.

Significant acceleration of the annual average growth rate of imports of agri-food products during 2004-2007, compared with the pre-accession period (from 3.0% to 22.9%) has to be noted. This acceleration was particularly evident in relation with EU-15 countries (from 5.2% to 30.7%) and with EU-10 countries (from 17.7% to 25.1%). This should be explained primarily by the removal of many barriers, which applied in the agri-food trade between the EU-10 countries, as well as in relation with the EU-15 countries. The fact that the average tariffs on

[2] Analysis of the impact of the global economic and financial crisis on the development of foreign trade the countries goes far beyond the accepted framework of this study, so it will be skipped. For more on this topic, see: (Molendowski 2011).

imports of agricultural products, prior to the accession, were significantly higher in the EU-10 countries than in the EU-15 countries has also some importance. It is worth noting that the data for 2008-2010 shows that in the period following the outbreak of the global financial and economic crisis the relatively largest decline in imports was recorded in relation with the EU-15 countries.

In conclusion, it should be emphasized that the accession of Poland to the EU brought about a strong “trade diversion effect” of the current import directions in favour of the increased purchases in the EU Member States, in particular in the EU-10. This can be a confirmation of the thesis that trade liberalization within the preferential area had a significant impact on reciprocal trade flows between the partners forming this area. Rapid growth of imports was the result on the one hand of a clear acceleration of economic growth in the analysed countries (Matkowski, Rapacki 2005; Molendowski 2007b), and on the other hand - the result of increased purchases by importers, who anticipated changes in certain market conditions after the accession. Abolition of border controls between the new Member States and the EU-15 countries was a very important factor facilitating imports.

4. Changes in the intensity of intra-industry trade

Contemporary international trade is based mainly on intra-industry specialization which is based on substitutability rather than on complementary factors. Intra-industry trade is also an important form of exchange in the single market of the European Union (Czarny 2002; Misala 2005; Misala, Pluciński 2000; Zielińska-Głębocka 1996). In this respect, it seems important to examine to what extent the current trade links of Poland with the new Member States (EU-10) and with the EU-15 countries are the result of the development of intra-industry specialization (Molendowski, Polan 2009).

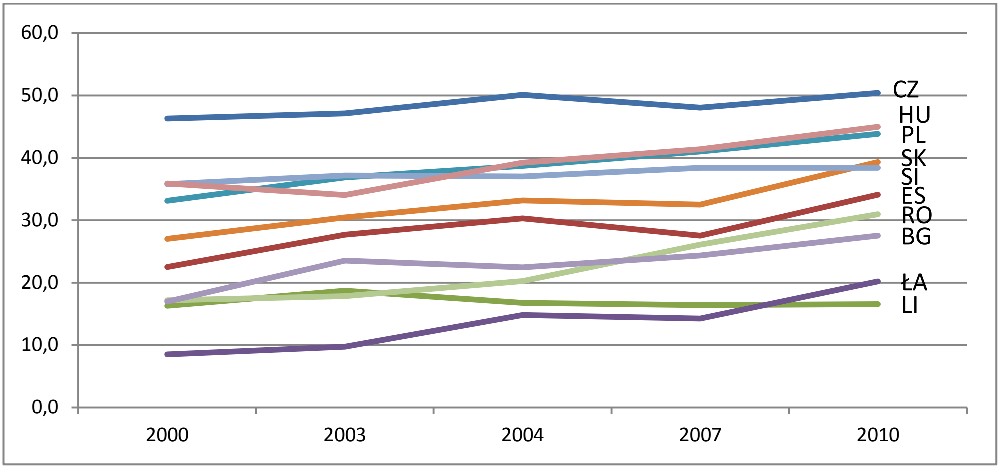
The share of intra-industry trade in relations with the EU-10 and EU-15 countries was determined on the basis of Grubel-Lloyd (Molendowski 2007a) IIT indicators and calculated at the 6-digit CN codes[3] level in accordance with the following formula (1):

$$GL = \frac{\sum_i (\sum_j X_{ij} + \sum_j M_{ij}) - \sum_i \left| \sum_j X_{ij} - \sum_j M_{ij} \right|}{\sum_i (\sum_j X_{ij} + \sum_j M_{ij})} \tag{1}$$

where Xij and Mij, stand respectively for export and import value for the i-th branch in trade of country j. Indicators calculated this way were presented in Figure 1.

[3] This corresponds to the theoretical concept of branches and satisfies the condition that only a deep disaggregation of data provides a comparison of the same products, it can determine the actual degree of overlap between the values of exports and imports, i.e. the real level of intensity of intra-industry trade. This view is shared by, among others A. Cieślik: (Cieślik 2003).

Trade with the EU-15 countries



Trade with the EU-10 countries

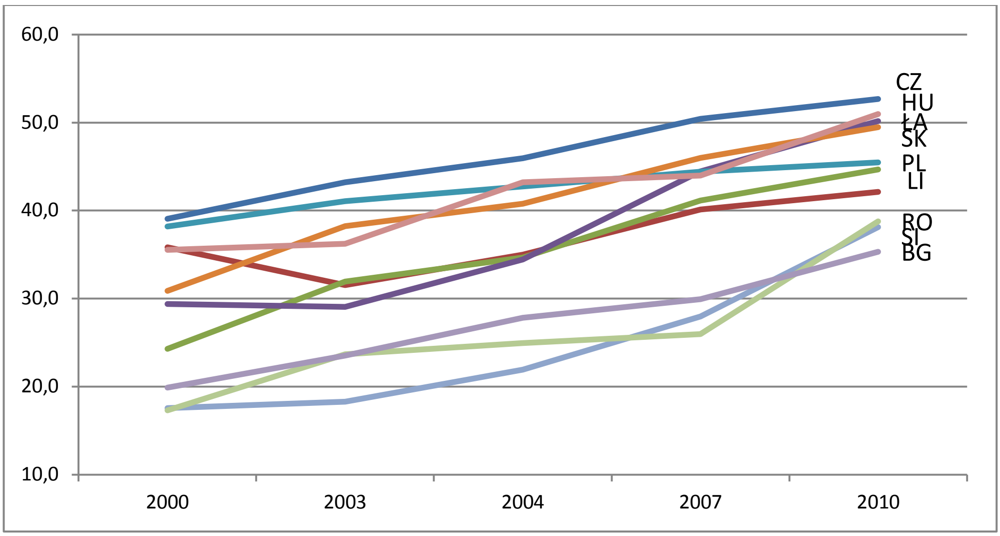


Fig. 1. Intra-industry trade index (G-L) in the trade of Poland with the EU-10 and EU-15 countries during 2000-2010 (Source: Author's calculations based on: Eurostat 2011)

The analysis of the value of intra-industry trade indices of Poland summarized in Figure 1, both in trade of Poland with the EU-10 and EU-15 countries, confirms that during the analysed period the index increased significantly (from 33.1% to 43.8% and from 38.2% and 45.5%). It can be stated that during the analysed period a significant increase in the share of intra- industry trade took place in Poland, similarly to most of the EU-10 countries. The presented IIT indicators also show that regardless of the appearing upward trend in the intensity of intra-industry trade, an important form of exchange of Poland and other EU-10 countries was still the inter-industry trade.

It is worth noting that in the period 2000-2010, a significant growth of intra-industry trade share in reciprocal trade within the EU-10 could be observed. A conclusion can be made, that compared to the years before the accession of the EU-10 countries, in the post-accession period (2004-2010) there were more positive structural changes in the reciprocal trade of the EU-10 compared to trade of these countries with the EU-15. This stems mainly from the fact that before the accession, the scope of trade liberalization – resulting from regional free trade agreements - between the EU-10 countries was smaller than between each of these countries and the countries of the European Union - which in turn was the result of the implementation of the provisions of the Association Agreements. The removal of barriers to reciprocal trade of the EU-10 countries after their accession to the EU, made it also possible to change the intensity of intra-industry trade.

The share of intra-industry trade of EU-10 countries with EU-15 countries and in reciprocal trade within the EU-10 of almost all countries, is still at a relatively low level. Intra-industry trade exceeded 50% only in the case of the Czech Republic (with the EU-15 and EU-10 countries) and in the case of Hungary and Latvia (with the EU-10).

5. Conclusions

After 1st of May 2004 significant changes occurred in the conditions of trade of Poland in relation with other new Member States (EU-10), as well as with the EU-15 countries and third countries. The first years of the membership of Poland and of the other EU-10 countries in the European Union already provide the basis for the assessment that the hitherto preparation processes in these countries to full participation and benefit from the advantages of the single market provide measurable positive results .

The analysis of statistical data shows that in the period 2004-2007 there was a clear acceleration in the growth of foreign trade of Poland. This trend occurred most significantly in trade with the EU-10 countries. In the analysed period, trade in agri-food products with EU-15 and EU-10 countries increased much faster than during previous years. It can be concluded, that the progressive liberalization of trade was one of the many factors facilitating the preparation of Polish companies to compete in the demanding single market of the European Union. Although during 2008-2009, the growth rate of trade was significantly weakened, in 2010, the value of the trade with the majority of the analyzed countries have reached or exceeded the level of 2007.

The analysis also revealed that significant changes have occurred in relation to the level and intensity of intra-industry trade. The most important of them include the significant increase in the share of intra-industry trade in the trade of Poland and almost in all EU-10, EU-15 countries, and particularly in reciprocal trade between the EU-10 countries. Moreover, compared to the years before the accession to the EU, in the period after accession, there were more positive structural changes in the reciprocal trade of the EU-10 countries than in the trade of these countries with the EU-15. It seems that this is due to the fact that before the accession, the scope of trade liberalization resulting from regional free trade agreements between the EU-10 countries was significantly smaller than between each of these countries and the EU-15 countries. Therefore, removing barriers to reciprocal trade of the EU-10 countries had a significant impact on the development of dynamics and structure of their reciprocal trade and with the EU-15 countries.

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