

Jerzy Wilkin

## FOREWORD

Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) states that: ***“The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail.”***

The provision articulates the axiological foundations upon which the European Union (EU) is based and the policies it pursues.

Propagated and implemented by the EU, the values enshrined in this article provide the foundations upon which the EU rests and determine the appeal it holds both for its existing members and for consecutive candidate countries. In this report, we should like to stress very strongly that the EU is above all a community of values, because values provide a basis upon which all other forms of integration and common action are built, especially on economic, social, political, and cultural issues.

This report has been written in response to increasing violations of these values in Poland, which involve undermining the foundations for the functioning of the EU, which we joined in 2004. By striking at these foundations, we are both weakening the whole of the EU and moving farther away from its core. We are moving towards the fringes of this common house of European values of our own volition, simultaneously becoming a troublesome member. This runs counter to Poland’s interests and the will of most members of the Polish public, who declare themselves to be supporters of the EU.

Many scientists observe and analyse the processes related to the functioning of the EU and Poland’s place in this community as part of

their professional interests, and the scientific community is signalling growing concerns about the phenomena that are taking place in the relations between Poland and the EU. The proposal to compile a report on these phenomena and relations has met with a widespread response and support. It was simultaneously noted that there was a need to mobilize the scientific community in the public discourse on the most important topics related to the functioning, reforms, and development of the country as well the dissemination of knowledge in this field on a broader scale than has been so far the case.

In May 2017, Prof., Stanisław Filipowicz, Dean of Division One of the Polish Academy of Sciences (PAS), set up a team to draft a position statement on the achievements and prospects of European integration and Poland's place in this process. Led by Prof. Jerzy Wilkin, the team consisted of representatives of eight PAS-affiliated scientific committees: Prof. Michał Bilewicz (the Committee on Psychology), Prof. Robert Grzeszczak (the Committee on Legal Sciences), Prof. Krzysztof Jajuga (the Committee on Economic Sciences), Prof. Grzegorz Janusz (the Committee on Political Sciences), Prof. Dorota Praszalowicz (the Committee on Human Migration Research), Prof. Andrzej Rychard (the Committee on Sociology), Prof. Bogusław Śliwerski (the Committee on Pedagogical Sciences), and Prof. Andrzej Wojtyna (the Committee on Economic Sciences).

In line with suggestions made by some members of the PAS's Division One: Humanities and Social Sciences, this report offers answers to 20 questions that are related to European integration and have been formulated in the media, in scientific discussions, and sometimes in everyday conversations between members of the public. Due to the complexity of the issues related to the functioning of the EU and the relations between Poland and the EU and the difficulty posed by the full assessment of the costs and benefits of integration as well as numerous other complex issues, we have been unable to provide simple and accessible answers to all of the EU-related questions that are of interest to the Polish public. **Nonetheless, we have selected those that we find particularly important, topical, and prone to generate numerous disputes and frequently also lead to misunderstandings. These pertain, above all, to institutional issues.**

As a team, we have assumed that the answers to all questions should be relatively short and accessible. Also, they are formulated in the authors' own words, with the head of the team and simultaneously the editor of the report making only necessary abbreviations and minor additions as well as formulating questions and arranging them in the order in which they appear in the report. As the initiator of this project, the head of the team feels responsible for its course.

The interest in the report that we have observed over the year or so since its publication, reprints of its fragments in the mass media, and the discussions that we have held in different groups all prompt us to take the next step in its promotion by preparing a supplemented, updated, and slightly broadened version of the report in English. We hope that this will make it accessible also to readers in other countries. **Questions and problems related to European integration and discussed in our report have been likewise formulated and debated in other member states, especially those that previously belonged to the socialist bloc.**

The report expresses the position of not the whole of the Academy but only a group of scientists selected by the PAS governing bodies, especially those from Division One: Social Sciences and Humanities. Nevertheless, it expresses concerns and care on the part of many members of the PAS community and most probably also members of the academic milieu in Poland in the important sphere of the functioning of Poland formed by its relations with the EU, its place in the EU, and the future of the EU. We therefore believe that it is our duty as citizens and scientists to speak out on these issues.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> In 2019, many valuable studies were published that focused on the achievements made over the 15 years of Poland's membership in the EU. These studies touched upon problems that also included matters discussed in this report. Particular attention should be paid to the following reports: the CASE report *Nasza Europa: 15 lat Polski w Unii Europejskiej* [Our Europe: 15 Years of Poland's Presence in the European Union] (CASE 2019); *Czas na euro* [Time for the Euro], edited by W. M. Orłowski, the Bronisław Komorowski Institute (Orłowski 2019); *15 lat Polski w Unii Europejskiej: Raport* [Fifteen Years of Poland's Presence in the European Union: A Report], edited by Anna Radwan-Röhrenscheff (Instytut In.Europa 2019); and *Jestem obywatelem Unii Europejskiej* [I Am a Citizen of the European Union], edited by Roman Kuźniar (Kuźniar 2019).