

European solidarity: perceptions and declarations of party leaders in Poland

Jakub Klepański, *University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn
(Olsztyn, Poland)*

E-mail: jakub.klepanski@gmail.com

<https://www.orcid.org/0000-0002-3470-7288>

Maciej Hartliński, *University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn
(Olsztyn, Poland)*

E-mail: maciej.hartlinski@uwm.edu.pl

<https://www.orcid.org/0000-0003-3099-5806>

Abstract

The research presented in this article is the attempt to analyse Polish parliamentary discourse concerning the European solidarity. The European solidarity is one of the greatest challenges of the second decade of the 21st century. This phenomenon can be analysed from the perspective of three dimensions: its roots in the EU treaties – as values and principles; institutionalised solidarity mechanisms – measures against internal shocks, cohesion policy, social policy; *ad hoc* solidarity in moments of crisis – e.g. migration crisis, COVID-19 crisis.

This article addresses the issue of European solidarity from the perspective of political leaders. The analysed utterances allow us to conclude that the problem of European solidarity does not dominate in the parliamentary discourse of the most important Polish politicians. The parliamentary speeches of the Polish party leaders revealed various aspects of the perception of the title concept, especially in the context of shared values, although perceived in different ways. Good relations between EU countries, a common social and economic policy, as well as the sustainable development of Europe proved to be important.

Keywords: European Union, Poland, political parties, political leaders, parliamentary discourse, European solidarity

Solidarność europejska: postrzeganie i deklaracje liderów partii politycznych w Polsce

Streszczenie

Badania przedstawione w niniejszym artykule stanowią próbę analizy polskiego dyskursu parlamentarnego na temat solidarności europejskiej. Solidarność europejska jest jednym z największych wyzwań drugiej dekady XXI wieku. Zjawisko to można analizować z perspektywy trzech wymiarów: korzeni solidarności w traktatach UE – jako wartości i zasad; zinstytucjonalizowanych mechanizmów solidarnościowych – takich jak działania przeciw szokom wewnętrznym, polityka spójności, polityka społeczna; solidarność *ad hoc* w momentach kryzysu – np. kryzys migracyjny, kryzys związany z Covid-19.

Niniejsze badanie podejmuje problematykę solidarności europejskiej z perspektywy przywódców politycznych. Przenalizowane wypowiedzi pozwalają sądzić, że omawiana problematyka nie dominuje w dyskursie parlamentarnym najważniejszych polskich polityków. Wystąpienia parlamentarne liderów polskich partii ukazały różne aspekty postrzegania tytułowej koncepcji, zwłaszcza w kontekście wspólnych wartości, choć postrzeganych w różny sposób. Ważne okazały się dobre relacje pomiędzy krajami UE, wspólna polityka społeczna i gospodarcza oraz zrównoważony rozwój Europy.

Słowa kluczowe: Unia Europejska, Polska, partie polityczne, liderzy polityczni, dyskurs parlamentarny, solidarność europejska

The European solidarity is one of the greatest challenges of the second decade of the 21st century. It is important to thoroughly scrutinise the position and arguments of the Polish government as well as Polish opposition parties. The research presented in this article constitutes the attempt of analysing Polish parliamentary discourse concerning the European solidarity. The problem mentioned in the title has not been so far thoroughly investigated, and that is why the present text will be a valuable contribution to the knowledge on particular attitudes towards the crisis and possible concepts of solving it, as well as its impact on the public opinion in Poland.

The concept of solidarity has been mentioned in the documents of the European Union (EU) since its inception and developed over time in legal acts (Sangiovanni 2013). European solidarity has its origins in the law and practice of sharing resources between citizens (Ross 2010; De Witte 2012; Eberl 2018).

The notion 'solidarity' can be found in the preamble of the Treaty on European Union (TEU). The signatories of the treaty wish "to deepen the solidarity between their peoples while respecting their history, their culture and their traditions" (TEU: Preamble). It is also mentioned in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union as a core value: "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" (TEU: art. 2). The analysed notion is also used for solidarity between generations, solidarity among the Member States, solidarity and mutual respect among peoples. The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) addresses this issue by stating that the policies of the Union and their implementation

shall be governed by the principle of solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility, including its financial implications, between the Member States. In the context of legislation, solidarity between the Member States is also related to ensuring the functioning of the energy market and the security of energy supply in the European Union, as well as promoting energy efficiency, energy saving, the development of new and renewable forms of energy and the interconnection of energy networks. Another significant case, when solidarity is of utmost importance, is the threat of terrorist attacks and natural disasters (TFEU: art. 222). What should be emphasised in this respect, is Poland's declaration of "having regard to the tradition of social movement of 'Solidarity' and its significant contribution to the struggle for social and labour rights, it fully respects social and labour rights, as established by European Union law, and in particular those reaffirmed in Title IV of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union" (TFEU: Declaration no. 62). In the context of relations between states, we can also distinguish between direct reciprocity, as exemplified by the EU Solidarity Fund, and enlightened self-interest,¹ as in the case of cohesion policy (Fernandes, Rubio 2012). What is also worth mentioning, is the European Solidarity Corps initiative (see: Regulation (EU) 2021/888).

Therefore, European solidarity can be analysed in at least two dimensions, namely the ties that bind together European citizens and the Member States, on the one hand, and the idea of Europeanness in political and social terms, on the other hand (Tava 2021). Contemporary understanding and evolution of this concept in academic discourse includes social and political issues (Karagiannis 2007; Schmale 2017; Lahusen, Grasso 2018; Hobbach 2021), in particular as analytical tool for deconstructing it, showing its meaning both in historical terms and in terms of the current practice of citizens and institutions (Greiner 2017).

Accordingly, solidarity within the European Union can be analysed from the perspective of three dimensions: its roots in the EU treaties – as values and principles; institutionalised solidarity mechanisms – measures against internal shocks, cohesion policy, social policy; *ad hoc* solidarity in moments of crises – e.g. migration crisis, COVID-19 crisis (Ferrara, Burelli 2019; Gerhards et al. 2019; Pornschlegel 2021; Miró 2022; Salvati 2023; Kyriazi et al. 2023). European solidarity can also be examined from the perspective of its level of impact, which allows us the identification of the macro-structural level with principles and laws, meso-level with activities of social organisations, as well as micro-level including the implementation of the main principles by citizens (Ciornei, Ross 2021).

The concept of European solidarity is not precisely defined, although it can be generally said that it refers to mutual cooperation between people and the Member States, and can be understood as simply refraining from harming the interests of the EU (Grosse, Hetnarowicz 2016).

¹ Enlightened self-interest is a philosophy in ethics, which assumes that individuals who act to advance the interests of others (or the interests of the group, to which they belong) ultimately serve their own self-interest.

This article addresses the issue of European solidarity from the perspective of political leaders. Its aim is to provide the missing information on the perception of this concept by key Polish politicians.² The research is also justified in terms of a broader international context, representing the academic and public discourse concerning attitudes towards the European Union, as well as the identification and perception of contemporary challenges by state leaders, including the way, in which they define and perceive European solidarity and the words that they use to describe it. The conclusions of the research will be useful for comparative studies, both theoretical, focusing on the definition of the concept, and empirical ones, analysing statements by state leaders from other countries.

Previous analyses of parliamentary discourse in Poland did not address the title issue, although they are related to many interesting issues (Siewierska-Chmaj 2006; Żukiewicz 2009; Zimny, Żukiewicz 2010; Radiukiewicz 2017; Kwiatkowska 2017; Hartliński, Klepański 2022). European solidarity in the title context has so far received little attention from researchers, although many studies have appeared in the context of the migration crisis (Potyrała 2015; Adamczyk 2017; Klepański et al. 2023).

Research methodology and materials

We propose to reframe and highlight the issue of European solidarity from the perspective of Polish political leaders. The utterances are examined considering the research questions:

- How do they define European solidarity?
- Which actions, attitudes and motivations do they qualify as European solidarity?

The study is based on quantitative and qualitative analysis, thanks to which it is possible to compare the frequency of utterances concerning the European solidarity. A comparative analysis of the positions and statements of key Polish politicians will identify how they perceive and understand the title concept.

The authors of this study analysed parliamentary speeches of party leaders since the beginning of the 3rd term of the Polish Sejm (1997) till the end of 8th term (2019). The choice of the time frame for the study was based on parliamentary terms: from the beginning of intensified preparation for Poland's accession to the European Union and the preparation of the National Integration Strategy, which coincided with the beginning of the new parliamentary term to the end of the 8th term, when material collection was finalised and the actual research process began.

The research process was based on quantitative analysis, that is getting to know the figures concerning speeches of the analysed politicians. Particular steps of the process were aimed at: determining the number of speeches of the analysed politicians in the selected period of time (1997–2019); determining the number of speeches with fragments

² See below Table 1.

addressed the analysed issue; calculating the frequency, with which the politicians in question talked about the analysed issue.

The study employs methods and techniques used in research on similar subject matter. The research material consists of 1287 speeches, which were presented by 16 political leaders representing four major Polish parties. The references to the issue of European solidarity were found in 92 speeches. The research material for analysis was collected mainly from the Sejm sessions records available on its official website³.

This research broadens knowledge about perception of the concept of European solidarity and brings new content in the context of Polish political leaders' positions and declarations on the issue. Thus, the research reveals diverse arguments and perceptions of what European solidarity means to them, which may become a reference point for researchers analysing similar issues in their research projects. It is also an important evidence of the attitudes and statements in the public debate.

Quantitative analysis

In the qualitative analysis, we present compiled data on the number and frequency of Polish political leaders' speeches concerning European solidarity. We also found it relevant and interesting to make a division in terms of individual leaders, as well as political party. This will make it possible to demonstrate the different levels of activity of individuals and entire groups in the context of European solidarity. Therefore, we used two indicators: the total number of speeches (TNS) as well as the number of speeches concerning the issue of European solidarity (NSES). Finally, the proportion of TNS to NSES was determined.

Regarding the years included in the research, it can clearly be seen that the topic of European solidarity was most often addressed by leaders of *Civic Platform* (pl. *Platforma Obywatelska*, PO). The issue appeared in 17% of their utterances. Leaders of the remaining parties referenced the topic rather more rarely (SLD – 7%; PiS – 6%; PSL – 3%). The figures in *Table 1* demonstrate that the topic appeared most often in the speeches of Donald Tusk (27 times). It was mentioned by others less often: Leszek Miller addressed it 17, while Jarosław Kaczyński – 14 times. The topic was never considered in the parliament by Lech Kaczyński, Krzysztof Janik and Grzegorz Napieralski.

When it comes to the temporal distribution of the topic of European solidarity in the analysed speeches, it varied for particular periods. The greatest number of references appeared in the period of negotiations preceding Polish accession to the European Union. Moreover, the topic tends to become an issue during electoral campaigns. Then, European matters become essential for politicians. This concerns especially politicians of *Civic Platform*, who support the idea of European integration, and oppose the Eurosceptic position adopted by *Law and Justice* (pl. *Prawo i Sprawiedliwość*, PiS).

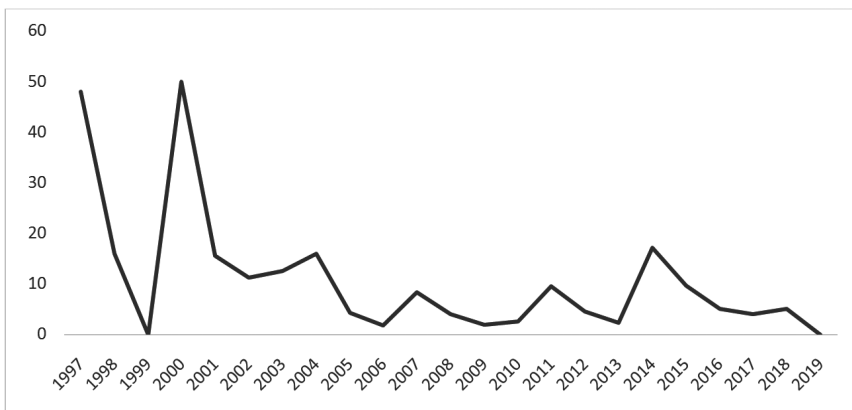
³ <https://www.sejm.gov.pl>

Table 1: Total number of speeches, and number of speeches concerning the issue of European solidarity.

Political party	Leader	1997-2019					
		TNS	NSES	%	TNS	NSES	%
PiS	L. Kaczyński	15	0	0	236	14	5,93
	J. Kaczyński	221	14	6,33			
PO	Plażyński	10	4	40	236	40	16,95
	Tusk	198	27	13,6			
	Kopacz	9	3	33,33			
	Schetyna	19	6	31,6			
PSL	Kalinowski	54	5	9,26	464	14	3,01
	Wojciechowski	3	1	33,33			
	Pawlak	205	4	1,95			
	Piechociński	28	1	3,6			
	Kosiniak-Kamysz	174	3	1,72			
SLD	Miller	132	17	12,87	351	24	6,84
	Janik	16	0	0			
	Oleksy	3	1	33,33			
	Olejniczak	105	6	5,7			
	Napieralski	95	0	0			
Total		1287	92	7,14			
Average		80,44	5,75	-			

Source: authors' own elaboration based on research materials.

The same trend is visible considering the percentage of utterances including references to European solidarity in all speeches made by the party leaders analysed for the purpose of this study (see: *Figure 1*). Proportionally, this topic was addressed most often

Figure 1: Average percent of speeches concerning the issue of European solidarity.

Source: authors' own elaboration based on research materials.

in the pre-accession period and during the Ukrainian crisis (2013–2014) and the European migrant crisis (2015–2016). This can be said, although the trend is slightly distorted because of a small number of utterances in 2000, with 3 out of 6 concerning the topic in question.

Another significant aspect of quantitative analysis is the number and type of words used in the studied speeches (see: *Table 2*). A given keyword was included in the table only if it was uttered in relation to the European context, and was used in a fragment of speech concerning the analysed topic. This means that the presented numbers of keywords concern only those fragments of speeches, in which the analysed topic is mentioned. All forms of a given keyword were considered, e.g. the category of "Europe" included also its derivatives, such as "European", "Europeanness", "Europeanisation" etc.

Table 2: The number and type of words used in the studied speeches.

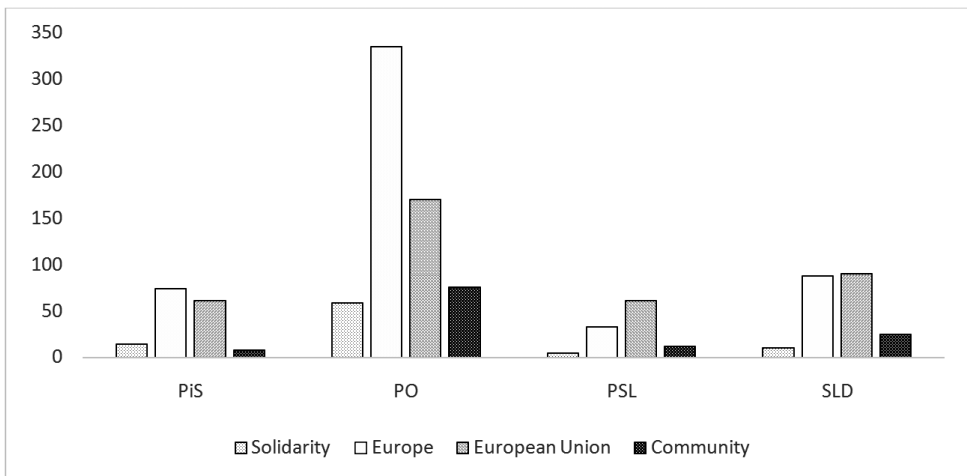
Political party	Leader	European solidarity	Europe	Integration	Collaboration	Community	Co-responsibility	European Union	Alliance	Partnership	friendship	Loyalty	Aid	Total
PiS	L. Kaczyński	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	175
	J. Kaczyński	14	74	0	6	8	0	61	2	1	0	2	7	
PO	Piłażyński	4	10	9	0	4	1	23	1	1	0	0	0	53
	Tusk	36	265	15	18	60	0	104	8	13	11	0	12	542
	Kopacz	17	18	0	0	1	0	9	0	3	0	0	4	52
	Schetyna	2	42	3	3	11	0	34	7	14	10	0	1	127
PSL	Kalinowski	0	2	18	0	1	0	14	0	0	0	0	1	36
	Wojciechowski	0	4	0	0	0	0	12	0	1	0	0	0	17
	Pawlak	1	22	0	1	6	0	13	0	0	0	0	6	49
	Piechociński	2	5	0	2	2	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	14
	Kosiniak-Kamysz	2	0	2	0	3	0	20	0	0	0	0	1	28
SLD	Miller	8	72	22	8	23	2	62	0	1	2	0	2	202
	Janik	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Oleky	1	1	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	5
	Olejniczak	1	15	0	13	2	0	25	5	2	0	0	0	63
	Napieralski	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total		88	530	69	51	121	3	382	23	36	24	2	34	1363

Source: authors' own elaboration based on research materials.

The words which were used most frequently by party leaders in their parliamentary speeches include: Europe (530), the European Union (382), community (121) and European solidarity (88). The least often used words are: loyalty (2), co-responsibility (3), alliance (23), and friendship (24). The collected data demonstrates that the keywords were used decidedly most often by *Civic Platform's* leaders (774). On the other end of the spectrum there are: *Polish People's Party*⁴ (144) and *Law and Justice* (175), whose leaders used words related to European solidarity rather sparingly.

The analysis of the most frequently selected words demonstrates that "Europe" and "the European Union" are used mainly by leaders of *Civic Platform*, while very rarely by leaders of *Law and Justice* (see: *Figure 2*).

Figure 2: The most frequently selected words.



Source: authors' own elaboration based on research materials.

The quantitative analysis unambiguously shows differences between leaders of *Law and Justice*, as well as *Civic Platform*. Through the utterances of their leaders, these two most important political parties demonstrate disparate levels of interest in the issue of European solidarity – in their speeches they use different words with different frequency.

Qualitative analysis

The next stage of the research is an analysis of the content of speeches addressed the issue of European solidarity, as well as comparing views and declarations of party leaders. However, it is worth recalling a selection of statements that illustrate the diverse approaches to European solidarity. There is often a lot said about the disputes and sub-

⁴ pl. *Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe*, PSL.

jects of public debate at the time, but also about the wider context and perception of the European Union.

Jarostaw Kaczyński does not pay much attention to European issues in his parliamentary speeches. The last speeches, where he mentioned them, were from 2014 and 2015. Considering their content, it can be said that he referenced mainly the idea of cooperation of nation states and their shared cultural heritage. Despite a number of reservations towards the functioning of the EU, he maintained that: "The key indicator of our position is our participation in the European Union. We want to be in the European Union, I'd like to emphasise this really strongly. We want to participate in all the activities, which can help overcome the present crisis in the European Union, [...] to find a new basic solution [...]. Within the EU's solutions we must keep the ability to take our own decisions, just like many other countries which enjoy it, in matters which are related to our unique historical and geopolitical situation. This is simply a sort of necessity, a necessity which is resulted from, for instance, the issue of energy, and that is why we are definitely going to have it granted".⁵

J. Kaczyński also spoke about the principle of solidarity, while stressing that this principle should apply to strong nation states: "...there is also the question of the shape of Europe, one that suits our interests, our views. A Europe based on tradition, not rejecting tradition, not undermining traditional social institutions, a Europe of nation states bound firmly to the principle of solidarity, which unfortunately did not find full expression in the Polish Accession Treaty. This is the Europe we should aspire to".⁶

J. Kaczynski also referred to the issue of decision-making processes and decisions concerning finances in the context of European solidarity. About the decision-making processes, he pointed out that: "What we received in Nice, was an expression of historical justice, it was a kind of reparation for everything that happened in our country in the last few decades, what happened at the end of the Second World War [...]. It was a decision in favour of all the smaller, weaker countries of the European Union. It was a decision in favour of European solidarity, that principle, thanks to which within 46 years it has been possible to build this great and extraordinary construction, given the history of Europe and the history of mankind".⁷

In the context of finances, on the other hand, J. Kaczyński pointed out that: "We wanted to enter Europe that would be the Europe without hegemony, because that's how it was constructed and, of course, with some deviations, because life is life, politics is politics, that's how it was for many years. And it was at the same time a Europe of solidarity. The aid that Ireland, Greece received, on a *per capita* basis, was an expression

⁵ Source of the empirical material: *Wypowiedzi na posiedzeniach Sejmu RP V kadencji*, 5th term, 22nd session, 2nd day (19/07/2006), Prezes Rady Ministrów Jarostaw Kaczyński, <https://orka2.sejm.gov.pl/Debata5.nsf> (own authors' translation of the quoted fragment, from Polish to English).

⁶ Source of the empirical material: *Wypowiedzi na posiedzeniach Sejmu RP IV kadencji*, 4th term, 40th session, 2nd day (22/01/2003), Poseł Jarostaw Kaczyński, <https://orka2.sejm.gov.pl/Debata4.nsf> (own authors' translation of the quoted fragment, from Polish to English).

⁷ Source of the empirical material: *Wypowiedzi na posiedzeniach Sejmu RP IV kadencji*, 4th term, 67th session, 2nd day (21/01/2004), Poseł Jarostaw Kaczyński, <https://orka2.sejm.gov.pl/Debata4.nsf> (own authors' translation of the quoted fragment, from Polish to English).

of solidarity. If we were to receive such assistance today, it would indeed be a very, very serious change for the better in terms of our development possibilities, in terms of our ability to catch up with historical backwardness. But today we see a Europe, in which solidarity is in short supply, while hegemony is clearly constructed".⁸

Donald Tusk is a leader, who addressed the European Union most often and most positively. In his speeches he usually quoted common economic policy and strengthening the economic integration. Among the main priorities, he mentioned the position of Poland: "Why am I talking about this so much on the eve of the Polish Presidency? Because these six months of the Polish Presidency may also be a key moment of a positive breakthrough as regards, on the one hand, the atmosphere of scepticism, the turning of Europeans themselves away from the European Union, and, on the other hand, the current trend that Poland is trying to represent effectively, of the revitalisation of belief that the Union makes sense and that European solidarity, especially in a time of crisis, should be something to be protected and strengthened, not only in the interests of countries like Poland – I am convinced of this – but also of the entire European Union".⁹

D. Tusk also referred to solidarity as a value that is particularly important for Poles, but also for the functioning of the European Union: "We can speak – and we will speak very loudly as the Polish Presidency – about the fundamental values, on which the European Union is founded, because history has made them the values that are of particular importance for Poles. In the first place will undoubtedly be solidarity, because it is also understood as the willingness to sacrifice one's own egoistic interest or part of it for the benefit of the weaker ones, especially in critical moments. This is something that the Poles have practiced over the last few decades with good results, and it is something that still needs to be taught to some in Europe, but which is already accepted and recognised by Europeans today as one of the main principles that the Union should follow. The principle of solidarity as the foundation of the European Union is a challenge for Poland, but also, I believe, an opportunity to push this way of thinking in the most credible way".¹⁰

D. Tusk also recognised the economic dimension of solidarity, both in bearing the benefits and the negative consequences: "I want to say that it is directly in the interest of Poland, the Polish taxpayer and the Polish borrower that Europe as a whole also finds the readiness to equip institutions such as the International Monetary Fund with this tool for rapid action when needed. [...] I say this because recent months have demonstrated that even a crisis or perturbation in a relatively small country like Hungary has a direct impact on our region. [...] Whether we want it or not, for a long time global financial markets will assess not precisely Poland, but the entire region. This region is Central and Eastern

⁸ Source of the empirical material: *Wypowiedzi na posiedzeniach Sejmu RP IV kadencji*, 4th term, 57th session, 3rd day (18/09/2003), Poseł Jarostaw Kaczyński, <https://orka2.sejm.gov.pl/Debata4.nsf> (own authors' translation of the quoted fragment, from Polish to English).

⁹ Source of the empirical material: *Wypowiedzi na posiedzeniach Sejmu RP VI kadencji*, 6th term, 95th session, 1st day (28/06/2011), Prezes Rady Ministrów Donald Tusk, <https://orka2.sejm.gov.pl/Debata6.nsf> (own authors' translation of the quoted fragment, from Polish to English).

¹⁰ Source of the empirical material: *Wypowiedzi na posiedzeniach Sejmu RP VI kadencji*, 6th term, 95th session, 1st day (28/06/2011), Prezes Rady Ministrów Donald Tusk, <https://orka2.sejm.gov.pl/Debata6.nsf> (own authors' translation of the quoted fragment, from Polish to English).

Europe. Therefore, it is not only a requirement of solidarity, but also the cold interest of the Polish taxpayer that Europe equips the various institutions with solid response tools where needed".¹¹

Grzegorz Schetyna's numerous speeches were focused on solidarity and cooperation in foreign policy. In one speech, he pointed out that: "The responsibility of Polish foreign policy, European alliances, wise alliances, bilateral, built in common relations, the European Union, the most important partners. Not looking for enemies, adversaries, but those with whom we can be side by side, speak a common language, build a common belief, influence politics with them [...]. We should not be afraid to talk about difficult things, also in Europe, we should not be afraid to talk about solidarity when it comes to refugee issues, we should not be afraid to talk about the eurozone. These are the challenges we need to talk about. You can't plug your ears and say that we are not interested in it, because we are here and now, because we are getting up from our knees".¹²

Ewa Kopacz drew attention to the important issue of solidarity, which should work in a variety of conditions and on both sides. In the context of the migration crisis, she pointed out that: "Today, of course, we will hear voices from one side and the other. Somebody will say: we should accept everyone, others will say: no one. Demons will be born. I am just asking: Does solidarity today only work one way? Today, do Europe and our partners in Europe, but above all these people who are fleeing death, deserve the solidarity of the Polish nation? [...] So, I ask all those who are the elected people of Poland here in the Sejm: Can we today afford to make a gesture of solidarity towards those who are actually fleeing their country simply because they are afraid of losing their health or their lives? Can a nation of 40 million afford a gesture of solidarity towards those people who need this help? At the same time, I would like to say that we are weighing Poland's credibility in the European Union on one scale and the real fears of the Polish people on the other. Therefore, the government in this situation has to be responsible, it has to be credible, it has to be prepared to take the decisions...".¹³

Włodzisław Kosiniak-Kamysz pointed to values as issues that build solidarity: "A new Europe will not be created immediately or in its entirety. It can only arise through action that first builds genuine solidarity. Today, we need a pact of Europeans, of European unity and community, a pact based on solidarity and respect for the universal values, on which the Union was founded. Only on this basis we can rebuild the community. Only in this way we can overcome the fear and apprehension accompanying Europeans of the

¹¹ Source of the empirical material: *Wypowiedzi na posiedzeniach Sejmu*, 7th term, 3rd session, 2nd day (15/12/2011), Prezes Rady Ministrów Donald Tusk, <https://www.sejm.gov.pl/sejm7.nsf/wypowiedz.xsp?posiedzenie=3&dzien=2&wyp=2&view=4> (own authors' translation of the quoted fragment, from Polish to English).

¹² Source of the empirical material: *Wypowiedzi na posiedzeniach Sejmu*, 8th term, 60th session, 2nd day (21/03/2018), Poseł Grzegorz Schetyna, <https://www.sejm.gov.pl/sejm8.nsf/wypowiedz.xsp?posiedzenie=60&dzien=2&wyp=5&view=3> (own authors' translation of the quoted fragment, from Polish to English).

¹³ Source of the empirical material: *Wypowiedzi na posiedzeniach Sejmu*, 7th term, 99th session, 3rd day (11/09/2015), Prezes Rady Ministrów Ewa Kopacz, <https://www.sejm.gov.pl/sejm7.nsf/wypowiedz.xsp?posiedzenie=99&dzien=3&wyp=3&view=4> (own authors' translation of the quoted fragment, from Polish to English).

future". He said that "the European Union is also a cohesion policy, it is a support for other countries, not just a free market agreement. If we reduce the European Union to just a common market and trade, and migration of people, then it has absolutely none of the characteristics of the Union that Schuman envisaged".¹⁴

Long-time PSL's president Waldemar Pawlak also pointed to values: "If we are talking about Europe, Europe cannot be reduced to currency alone. Europe is a common Christian heritage, it is a culture, it is an economy, it is diversity, but diversity united by common values. In economic terms, we are talking about four freedoms: the movement of people, the movement of goods, the movement of services, and the movement of capital. These freedoms creates the European space, and in this space various additional support measures are taken, such as a common currency on some part, such as the European patent, where everything has been agreed, only one thing cannot be agreed: whether the main patent court will be in Paris, Munich or London. This is a European problem. I wish we only had such European problems in Poland that you only have to agree on seats, and everything else goes well. In this context, it is important that, when we talk about Europe, we also look at it in a way that is imaginative and relevant to today".¹⁵ He also declared earlier: "The PSL proposes a European Declaration for the people and a treaty for the institutions. The European Declaration should encapsulate all core values. While we appreciate the importance of solidarity in this symbolic and practical dimension, we emphasise that it is also necessary to mention values, such as subsidiarity or proportionality, for these types of principles guarantee that Poland will be a subject in the European Union and not an object of decisions".¹⁶

The PSL' leaders mainly highlighted issues related to equal treatment, particularly in agriculture. Jarostaw Kalinowski emphasised, years before accession: "Another problem is the costly adjustments to integration into European structures with the limited own financial capacity of farms and budget, and the short time available to build the necessary institutions and systems. From the point of view of Poland's integration into the European Union, the countryside and agriculture is a specific and sensitive area. On the one hand, an enormous effort and high adjustment costs are required, because around 40% of the EU *acquis* is related to the agricultural sector. The costs of adjustment across the agricultural-food sector will include farms, the processing sector, the administration. On the other hand, integration presents a huge opportunity for agriculture because of the general economic improvement and the potential benefits created by the Common Agricultural Policy".¹⁷

¹⁴ Source of the empirical material: *Wypowiedzi na posiedzeniach Sejmu*, 8th term, 23rd session, 3rd day (21/07/2016), Poseł Władysław Kosiniak-Kamysz, <https://www.sejm.gov.pl/sejm8.nsf/wypowiedz.xsp?posiedzenie=23&dzien=3&wyp=151&view=3> (own authors' translation of the quoted fragment, from Polish to English).

¹⁵ Source of the empirical material: *Wypowiedzi na posiedzeniach Sejmu*, 7th term, 3rd session, 2nd day (15/12/2011), Poseł Waldemar Pawlak, <https://www.sejm.gov.pl/sejm7.nsf/wypowiedz.xsp?posiedzenie=3&dzien=2&wyp=14&view=3> (own authors' translation of the quoted fragment, from Polish to English).

¹⁶ Source of the empirical material: *Wypowiedzi na posiedzeniach Sejmu RP V kadencji*, 5th term, 41th session, 4th day (11/05/2007), Poseł Waldemar Pawlak, <https://orka2.sejm.gov.pl/Debata5.nsf> (own authors' translation of the quoted fragment, from Polish to English).

¹⁷ Source of the empirical material: *Wypowiedzi na posiedzeniach Sejmu RP IV kadencji*, 4th term, 15th session, 1st day (27/02/2002), Wiceprezes Rady Ministrów Minister Rolnictwa i Rozwoju Wsi Jarostaw

Janusz Wojciechowski pointed out that: "Today, the European Union, invoking Article 23, is unilaterally changing these rules. If such policy on the part of the Union is pursued, it will be difficult to convince the Polish people to support the European Constitution. This is why we appeal to the Polish government, as well as to the EU side, to treat Poland as a partner and full member of the Union, not as second-class members in all those instruments that were not included in the negotiations".¹⁸

Leszek Miller drew attention to, among other things, security solidarity: "In order to effectively confront global terrorism, it is necessary to strengthen our European solidarity, cooperation and unity, European security. I am convinced that the adoption of the Constitutional Treaty will be an important fact leading to the achievement of this objective. This treaty has the potential to make the Union more united, more solidary, more transparent and more agile".¹⁹

The politician also pointed out some contradictions regarding solidarity: "European unity was built on a substance, without which it will collapse. This substance is moderation and a willingness to seek constructive solutions. Poland is moving further and further away from the EU's centre of gravity. This is the answer to the question of why Poland is not participating in the most important talks about Ukraine. Our language, often confrontational, and ideas, in response to which many people in Europe are tapping their foreheads, created the image of irresponsible state. If Poland does not exercise restraint, if it does not start behaving responsibly, it will unfortunately lead to the disintegration of European unity".²⁰

Józef Oleksy, for example, drew attention to pragmatism and the play of interests in achieving goals and benefits for individual states: "This magical thinking that just joining the EU takes care of everything for Poland – is a misunderstanding. The European Union is a playing field of interests. With all the solidarity that we exhort for, with all the support for cohesion policy, for regionalism, for equalising disparities, the Union is still a field of a game of interests, in which the stronger one tend to dominate the weaker one, and the weaker ones must group together or skillfully manage their own affairs to win".²¹

Therefore, it can be concluded that the statements and positions of the party leaders exemplify the diverse perceptions and invocations of European solidarity. Particularly noticeable is the aspect of how individual statements fit into current issues and the shape of parliamentary discourse. The following table presents the positions and declarations

Kalinowski, <https://orka2.sejm.gov.pl/Debata4.nsf> (own authors' translation of the quoted fragment, from Polish to English).

¹⁸ Source of the empirical material: *Wypowiedzi na posiedzeniach Sejmu RP IV kadencji*, 4th term, 72th session, 4th day (02/04/2004), Poseł Janusz Wojciechowski, <https://orka2.sejm.gov.pl/Debata4.nsf> (own authors' translation of the quoted fragment, from Polish to English).

¹⁹ Source: *Wypowiedzi na posiedzeniach Sejmu RP IV kadencji*, 4th term, 72th session, 4th day (02/04/2004), Prezes Rady Ministrów Leszek Miller, <https://orka2.sejm.gov.pl/Debata4.nsf> (own authors' translation of the quoted fragment, from Polish to English).

²⁰ Source: *Wypowiedzi na posiedzeniach Sejmu*, <https://www.sejm.gov.pl/sejm7.nsf/wypowiedz.xsp?posiedzenie-g1&dzien=2&wyp=41&view=3> (own authors' translation of the quoted fragment, from Polish to English).

²¹ Source: *Wypowiedzi na posiedzeniach Sejmu RP IV kadencji*, 4th term, 96th session, 3rd day (21/01/2005), Poseł Józef Oleksy, <https://orka2.sejm.gov.pl/Debata4.nsf> (own authors' translation of the quoted fragment, from Polish to English).

of the analysed politicians on the issue (see: *Table 3*). The qualitative analysis of the collected utterances referring to European solidarity indicates that it is perceived differently by different party leaders presented in the study.

Table 3: Declarations of party leaders concerning the issue of European solidarity.

Political party	Name	European solidarity as...					
		Common social and economic policy, etc.	Good relations with EU countries	Help for people in need	Sustainable development of Europe	Common historical and cultural heritage, etc.	Coexistence and cooperation of nation states
PiS	L. Kaczyński						
	J. Kaczyński			+	+	+	+
PO	Pażyński		+		+		
	Tusk	+	+	+	+		
	Kopacz	+	+	+			
	Schetyna	+	+				
PSL	Kalinowski		+		+		
	Wojciechowski				+		
	Pawlak	+		+	+	+	
	Piechociński				+	+	
	Kosiniak-Kamysz	+	+		+	+	
SLD	Miller		+	+		+	
	Janik						
	Oleksy	+	+		+		
	Olejniczak	+	+				
	Napieralski						

Source: authors' own elaboration based on research materials.

It can be concluded that the leaders of PiS and PSL have made the greatest reference in their arguments to common historical and cultural heritage, as well as support for sustainable development. The leaders of PO and SLD have emphasised the values of common social and economic policy, as well as good relations with EU countries. The conducted analysis demonstrates that leaders of political parties in Poland use the concept of European solidarity in parliamentary debate according to general understanding, however, with a focus on its different aspects. On the one hand, they emphasise the EU's principles of economic support and social development. On the other hand, they refer to a common history and shared values leading to sustainable development. What is noticeable, is ideological division in the parliamentary discourse between leaders and political parties, into the centre-right (PSL, PiS) and the centre-left (PO, SLD).

Conclusions

The assessment of the concept of European solidarity through the quantitative and qualitative analysis of party leaders' utterances made it possible to draw some conclusions. First of all, it is necessary to point out that European solidarity is not a crucial motif of party leaders' speeches. The analysis of 1287 parliamentary speeches presented by 16 party leaders led to identifying 92 speeches concerned broadly understood European solidarity. The temporal perspective demonstrated that the issue in question was referenced most often in relation to the election campaign to the Polish Sejm and Senate. Moreover, the most intensive period coincided with the time preceding Polish accession to the European Union (before 2004), the crisis in Ukraine in 2013–2014, and the European migrant crisis in 2015–2016.

As regards the quantitative approach, the issues related to European solidarity were mentioned most often by Donald Tusk as a single politician²² and *Civic Platform's* leaders as party representatives. They were addressed least often by *Law and Justice*, as well as *Polish People's Party*.

The most frequently used terms included "Europe" and "the European Union," which were also most often mentioned by *Civic Platform's* leaders.

The issue of European solidarity is not perceived in a unanimous manner. A clear division into two groups is discernible. *Civic Platform* and *Democratic Left Alliance*²³ emphasise the need of further integration in Europe and common social and economic policies. On the contrary, *Law and Justice* as well as *Polish People's Party* foreground the shared historical and cultural heritage.

Further research seems crucial in the context of the above-mentioned conclusions. The results of the analysis contribute to the literature on the subject, providing new knowledge, as well as indicating next steps that should lead to a more thorough understanding of the problem posed in the title. It is especially important to consider two new directions of research. Firstly, analyses of activities should be extended to include other political leaders (president, prime minister, minister of foreign affairs) on various levels of public debate or parliamentary work. This would allow researchers to gain a deeper insight into the way political leaders use "European solidarity" for their own purposes. Secondly, it is worth paying more attention to the behaviour of voters in the context of "European integration".

Jakub Klepański – PhD student at the Institute of Political Science, University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn. Research interests: parliamentary discourse and political leaders.

Jakub Klepański – doktorant w Instytucie Nauk Politycznych, Uniwersytet Warmińsko-Mazurski w Olsztynie. Zainteresowania naukowe: dyskurs parlamentarny oraz przywództwo polityczne.

²² See research results presented in Table 2: the biggest number of speeches – 542 by D.Tusk.

²³ pl. *Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej*, SLD.

Maciej Hartliński – PhD, D.Sc., professor at the Institute of Political Science, University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn. His research focuses on political parties and political leadership.

Maciej Hartliński – doktor habilitowany, profesor uczelni, Instytut Nauk Politycznych, Uniwersytet Warmińsko-Mazurski w Olsztynie. Zainteresowania naukowe koncentrują się wokół partii politycznych i przywództwa politycznego.

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