

CZECH-POLISH FORUM – YEAR 2024

INTERPARLIAMENTARY SECURITY ACADEMY

POLICY REPORT

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Introduction

The Czech Republic and Poland have a long-standing history of collaboration that has grown from the establishment of diplomatic relations into a strong partnership across economic, cultural, and security domains. Anchored by their shared EU and NATO membership, both nations have built a strong foundation to address common foreign and security policy challenges. This report synthesizes the outcomes of bilateral discussions conducted within the meetings between the Czech and Polish parliamentary assistants (in May 2024 in Warsaw and November 2024 in Prague) and offers recommendations to enhance Czech-Polish parliamentary cooperation in addressing these challenges effectively.

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The views expressed in this report are those of the editor, based on the bilateral discussions, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the donors and partners.

Common Challenges and Opportunities

Security and Defense Cooperation

Czechia and Poland share security concerns on NATO's eastern frontier, including hybrid threats and regional instability. Poland's military modernization program and

increased defense spending present opportunities for collaboration with Czech defense companies in areas such as joint weapon production and NATO exercises. Strengthening military cooperation could include expanding joint exercises to address cyber-defense scenarios, increasing Czech participation in Poland's "Shield East" project, and creating a bilateral parliamentary working group to streamline defense procurement processes.

Energy Transition and Security

Both nations are navigating energy transitions, with Poland prioritizing nuclear energy development, including small modular reactors (SMRs), and green hydrogen. Czech expertise in nuclear technology and renewable energy offers opportunities for collaboration. Developing a bilateral framework for energy cooperation, co-hosting annual forums to share best practices, and advocating for EU funding for regional energy infrastructure could enhance resilience and sustainability in both countries.

Transport Infrastructure and Connectivity

Improving transportation links is vital for boosting trade and mobility between Poland and Czechia. Projects such as the Baltic Express and high-speed rail systems are essential for regional connections but face logistical and financial challenges. Accelerating the high-speed rail link, creating a task force to address export barriers, and fostering public-private partnerships could modernize transportation networks and support economic growth.

Public and Media Engagement

Addressing disinformation and (misinformation) and rebuilding public trust in media are critical for maintaining public support, particularly for policies related to Ukraine. Collaborative efforts could include launching joint campaigns to improve understanding of Czech-Polish cooperation, creating cross-border media projects to counter disinformation and (misinformation), and establishing youth outreach programs to foster political engagement and awareness of shared goals.

Shared Vision for Regional and EU Cooperation

Strengthening the Visegrad Group (V4)

Poland and Czechia, despite differences within the V4, align on key issues such as supporting Ukraine and addressing Russian aggression. Joint leadership within the group could foster cohesion and promote shared objectives, including advocating for unified policies on Ukraine's reconstruction and EU integration and developing a regional energy security strategy.

Enhancing EU Contributions

The Czech Republic's 2022 EU Council Presidency offers valuable insights for Poland's 2025 term. Both nations can collaborate on sustainable energy policies, defense cooperation, and Ukraine's EU candidacy. Leveraging Czechia's presidency experience to shape Poland's agenda, strengthening cooperation on climate policy reforms, and addressing shared concerns such as the implementation of ETS2 (EU emission Trading System) could align their efforts within the EU.

Strengthening Parliamentary Collaboration

Institutionalizing Cooperation

Building stronger ties between the two countries is mostly dependent on parliamentary engagement. Building on existing mechanisms like the Polish-Czech parliamentary group, deeper institutional collaboration can be achieved through expanded exchanges, roundtable discussions on key policy challenges, and improved communication channels between members of parliament and their assistants.

Youth and Civil Society Engagement

Engaging younger generations and civil society is essential for ensuring the sustainability of Czech-Polish relations. Establishing youth-oriented programs, internships, and involving civil society organizations in parliamentary initiatives could foster grassroots support and long-term bilateral collaboration.

Conclusion

The Czech Republic and Poland have significant opportunities to deepen their partnership, particularly in foreign and security policy. By addressing shared challenges and implementing the proposed recommendations, both nations can strengthen their relationship, enhance regional stability, and contribute to EU cohesion and global security.

Immediate next steps include sharing this report across parliamentary platforms, convening follow-up meetings to prioritize action items, and developing a communication strategy to raise public awareness of joint initiatives. Sustained collaboration and mutual commitment will enable Czechia and Poland to achieve lasting progress in their shared foreign and security policy objectives.