



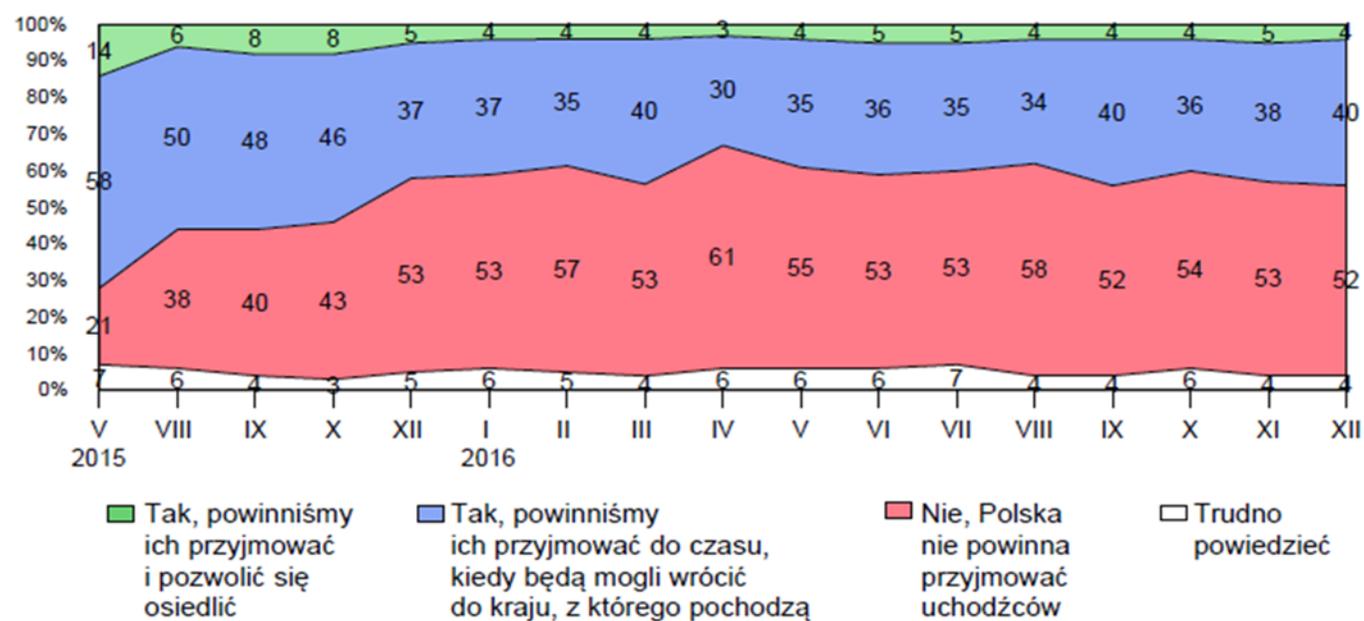
Politics of fear and securitization of refugees in Poland

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Key theses

- *Although Poland has been experiencing an inflow of migrants applying for international protection since early 1990 (Ząbek & Łodziński 2008, Górny et al. 2017), this phenomenon was only occasionally a subject of public debates and never politicized, securitized and racialized to the level that took place in between the presidential and parliamentary elections in 2015 and in their aftermath.*
- *Discursive and policy securitization has led to the creation of moral panic around the supposed arrival of 'Muslim refugees' to Poland and transformation of societal attitudes towards refugees in the country.*

RYS. 1. Czy, Pana(i) zdaniem, Polska powinna przyjmować uchodźców z krajów objętych konfliktami zbrojnymi?



Shift in Polish society's attitudes towards refugees

May 2015

cautious openness



April 2016

rejection of asylum seekers

(CBOS, 2015, 2016)

REFUGEES WELCOME INDEX

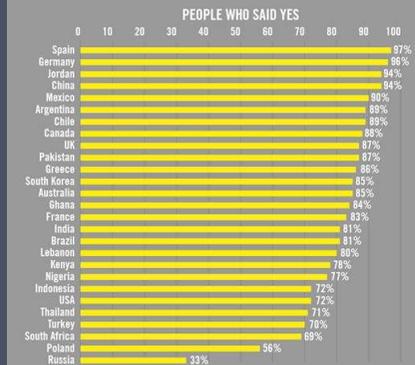
MOST WELCOMING



LEAST WELCOMING

REFUGEES WELCOME SURVEY

WOULD YOU PERSONALLY ACCEPT PEOPLE FLEEING WAR OR PERSECUTION INTO YOUR COUNTRY?



(Amnesty International, 2016)

KP7

Slajd 4

KP7

dodałem jeszcze ten obrazek - ty Polska przed ostatnia - dobrze pokazuje sytuację

Konrad Pędziwiatr; 2016-09-01

PRESENTATION STRUCTURE

1. Analytical framework
2. Poland and migration crisis
3. PIS & PO narratives on migration crisis and refugees
4. Conclusions

Theoretical inspirations I

- The term 'folk devil' has been popularised in social science by Stanley Cohen who used it to refer to groups perceived by the mainstream society as deviants, delinquents, wrong-doers, who disturb social order causing anxiety among the public (1972).
- Here, the term is used as “the personification of evil (...) that is stripped of all favourable characteristics and imparted with exclusively negative ones”(Goode and Ben-Yehuda, 1994).
- Key features of moral panic according to Goode and Ben-Yehuda who systematized the concept coined by Cohen are:
 - a strong concern over the behaviour of a certain group or category and the consequences which this behaviour presumably causes to the rest of society;
 - an increased level of hostility towards that particular group implying a division between 'us' and 'them';
 - a remarkable consensus between stakeholders who usually hold widely divergent views (such as journalists, politicians, scientists, and security forces);
 - and an exaggerated representation of the threats and a disproportionate reaction to them, and a certain volatility.

Theoretical inspirations 2

- Numerous researchers have identified the existence of grassroots xenophobia as well as other forms of hostility towards 'the Other' (e.g. Bilewicz and Krzeminski, 2010; Bilewicz, Marchlewski, Soral and Winiewski 2014; Nowicka 1995).
- Yet less attention seems to have been paid to analysing the role of the elite – especially political elites – in initiating, channeling and strengthening such attitudes. As van Dijk points out, elites 'initiate, monitor and control' most influential forms of public discourse (1991: 4).
- It is the elites who have preferential access - due to their position in the social structure - to discursive resources which enable them to influence social attitudes. They are able to impose their own interpretations of events and phenomena more efficiently than other non-elite social groups, also by delegitimizing and marginalizing other interpretative frames, in particular those they identify as the ones that could work against their interests (van Dijk 1991, 1993).
- In case of politicians, the preferential access to public discourse is further intensified during pre-election periods. Access to mass communication channels boosts the potential impact of the message, which on the other hand, is not automatically internalized by recipients into their worldview but is rather subjected.
- The rise in of anti-refugee attitudes in the society can be traced to the mechanism described within the framework of '**elite racism**' (van Dijk, 1990).

Politicization of the Migration

- The emergence of the refugee figure in Polish political debate meant it has become a part not only of policy discourse but also politics discourse (Czyżewski, Kowalski and Piotrowski 2010).
- Politicization of migration is connected with going beyond problematising the phenomenon as a policy issue that is to be solved or alleviated through political activity and certain bureaucratic and technical practices .
- It also indicates adding a discursive dimension to it. Thus, an opportunity is created to give the phenomenon a new interpretative frame and convince the largest possible audience to accept it as its legitimate representation in order to mobilise social support and either change or reproduce the power structure.

Securitization of the immigration

- Securitization of immigration has two dimensions.
 - On the one hand it emerges from the correlation between some successful speech acts of political leaders, the mobilization they create for and against some groups of people, and the specific field of security professionals.
 - On the other hand it results also from a range of administrative practices such as population profiling, risk assessment, statistical calculation, category creation, proactive preparation, and what may be termed a specific habitus of the 'security professional' with its ethos of secrecy and concern for the management of fear or unease." (Bigo 2002: 65-66).
- Insecurity as consequence of the immigration processes is both socially and politically constructed phenomenon. (Bigo 2000: 194, Leonard 2010: 235)
- As research shows, fueling the fear towards 'the Other' has always been an important tool used to mobilize and consolidate political capital. Although overtly racist, xenophobic attitudes, funded on the 19th century race theories, were delegitimized as well as criminalized and in consequence marginalized in the public discourse, new forms of racialisation and xenophobia emerged.

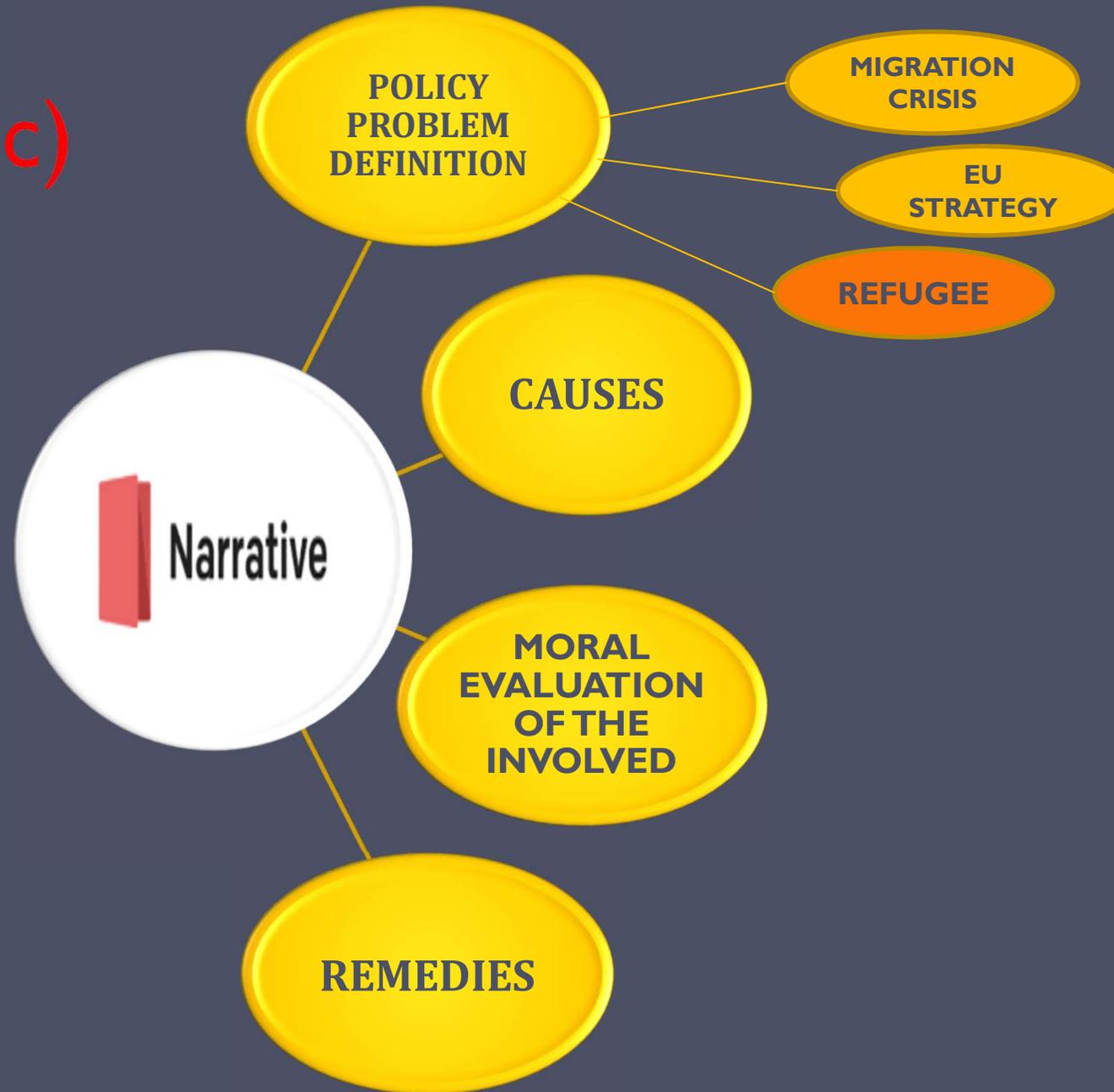
Migrations and new racism

- *Currently, the xenophobic messages are very frequently nuanced and expressed only implicitly (van Dijk 1993).*
- *The 'new racism' targets above all immigrants and refugees. Hostility towards them is framed by making reference to the existence of allegedly insurmountable barriers that render integration of minority cultures impossible (Pankowski 2006).*
- *It is not a phenotypically conceived 'race' but rather categories such as culture, mentality, tradition and religion are used to express new forms of contemporary racism (Barker 1981; Gordon 1989; Taguieff 1988).*
- *It manifests itself, for example, powerfully in the form of islamophobia understood as generalized negative attitudes or feelings towards Islam and Muslims (Bleich 2011).*
- *These anti-Muslim positions are a form of a racism since their view Muslim 'culture' in an entirely deterministic and essentialised way, making it into a functional equivalent of biologically understood 'race'.*

Empirical Analysis

- *Discursive strategies of the two leading political parties*
- *Analysis of account of discursive acts of leading politicians from the Civic Platform (PO) and the coalition of right wing parties (Zjednoczona Prawica), in particular the strongest among them –the Law and Justice Party (PiS).*
- *Period of analysis: May 2015 till end of 2016*

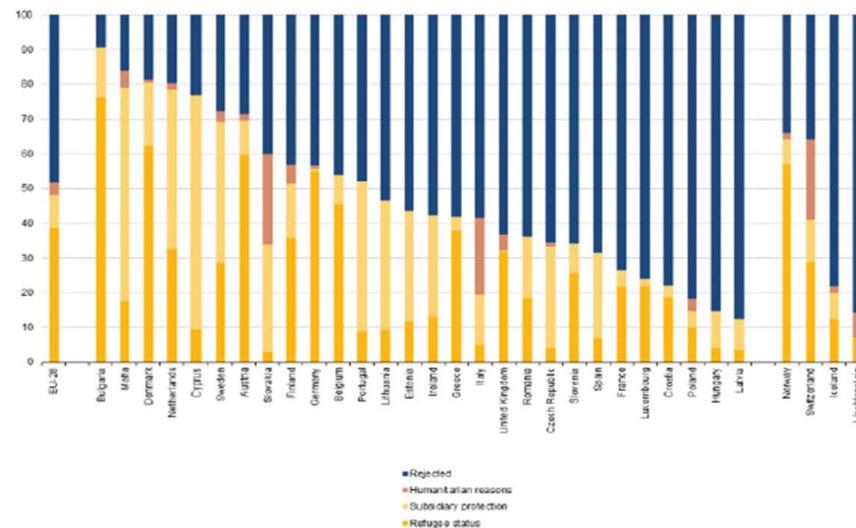
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Entman (2004). *Projections of Power: Framing News, Public Opinion and U.S. Foreign Policy*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Poland and asylum seekers

File:Distribution of first instance decisions on (non-EU) asylum applications, 2015 (1) (%) YB16.png



At the same time by the end of 2016 circa $\frac{1}{4}$ milion foreign citizens formally registered in Poland - from Ukraine (84,000), Germany (23,000), Belarus (11,000), Russia (10,000) Vietnam (9,000) (UDSC 2016)

Ukrainian refugees in Poland

'Poland has received about a milion refugees from Ukraine. A milion people who nobody wanted to help' (Szydło, 20.01.16).

	2013	2014	2015	2016 (1.01- 28.08)
Asylum seekers applications	46	2318	2305	855
Refugee status	2	0	2	16
Subsidiary protection	5	6	24	27
Humanitarian reasons	8	11	6	1

Source: own work on the basis of UDSC (2016). *Raport na temat obywateli Ukrainy (według stanu na 28.08.2016).*

Poland and the migration crisis

- Participation in:

I Relocation Plan 2000 people

II Relocation Plan 9 287* people

- Veto to permanent mechanism of relocation
- Estera Foundation - ca.150 Syrian Christians

„Today Christians who are persecuted in a barbaric way deserve so that a Christian country such as Poland reacts quickly and offers help” (Kopacz, 26.05.15).

- Humanitarian help - 3mln € declared
- Technical support in border management
- *Initial willingness to implement the relocation deal but from 2016 dismissing both the relocation as well as the idea of humanitarian corridors (Pędziwiatr 2018)*

Initial securitization – May- July/August 2015



We should not hurry to see the suburbs of Warsaw to resemble the suburbs of London or Paris (Brudziński, 14.09.15)

Contestation of the relocation scheme proposed by the European Commission

Poles have greatly benefited from the European solidarity in the past. Today this solidarity is needed from Poland with regards to people who arrive to Europe (Kopacz 15.05.2015)

A tragedy which claims hundreds of lives needs our attention (Śledzińska-Katarasińska, 27.06.15)

Reluctant efforts to implement the relocation scheme

Electoral campaign – Sept/Oct 2015



We have a moral obligation to Poles and their descendants (...) in Kazakstan (Brudziński, 14.09.15).

*There is a serious danger that a process will start which goes on like this: first, foreigners grow in numbers, than (...) declare they do not want to follow our ways (...) later, or simultaneously, they impose on us their sensitivity and their requirements in public sphere (...) and that happens in a violent and aggressive way (Kaczyński, 16.09.15)
„Refugees and dangerous diseases” (Kaczyński, 16.09.15)*



Relocating refugees into particular countries is not a solution. (Kopacz, 10.09.15).

It is my duty as the Prime Minister it is above all solidarity with my own nation and country (...) ensuring that citizens, our compatriots, are safe (Kopacz, 23.09.15)

Poland has declared [to take in] such a group that we can handle so that it is safe for Poland and for the migrants, so that they could assimilate (Kidawa-Błońska, 23.09.15).

After the elections – Nov 2015 onwards



Who created the magnet, the great magnet, the powerful social magnet that attracts economic emigrants? Germany. And so it is their problem.(...) Simply enough it is their problem, not ours. (Kaczyński, 16.11.15)

Decisions that were made about receiving a given number of people in the EU, those were bad decisions (Szydło, 7.01.16).

Initiative of Kukiz 15 to organize a referendum on the reception of refugees obsolete in the situation of refusal of the government to implement the relocation scheme

Civic Platform in the defensive – by and large silent on the issues of refugees

I am against their (refugees) coming to Poland. Yes, yes, the Platform is not in support of receiving the refugees. (Schetyna 09.05.2017)

We opt for Poland as well as the European Union to become engaged in humanitarian help to victims of war. The Polish government had undertaken such type of activity before. Yet we will not receive illegal immigrants (Schetyna 10.05.2017)

Conclusions 1

- *We should not overstate the level of the anti-Muslim sentiments in Poland to warrant a discussion about a moral panic, although there is a fertile ground for development of such a panic in the future. (Pędziwiatr 2011).*
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- **Important role of ‘National media’ - major Polish tv and radio channels (TVP1, TVP2, TVP and Polish Radio) as key institutions normalizing and „thickening” (Minkenbergh 2015) nationalist populism in which the figure of “Muslim refugee” has been playing pivotal role and thus strengthening the narrative about the refugees as “the problem” and “security issue”.)**

CONCLUSIONS 2

- **The political elites' narratives differ in:**
 - degree of heterogeneity
 - how overtly xenophobic they are;
- **They bear a crucial resemblance in framing the refugee as:**
 - a threat to public security
 - a disruption of 'our ways' of life