

Country: Republic of Poland

Commission: European Union Court of Justice

Problematic: EU Zero Violence 2030: How to eliminate conflicts related to sexism, homophobia, xenophobia, racism, and anti-Semitism on a European scale?

Poland, situated in Central Europe, is a nation steeped in history and culture. It emerged from decades of communist rule in 1989, coinciding with the dissolution of the Soviet Union. A decade later, in 1999, it joined NATO, followed by accession to the European Union in 2004. Despite being an EU member, Poland has not adopted the euro as its currency and has often caused tension within the Union due to its nationalist and conservative policies.

Currently, Poland is undergoing significant political upheaval following an October election that ended the eight-year reign of the right-wing Law and Justice Party.

Under the leadership of former EU chief Donald Tusk, the pro-EU coalition government aims to reverse the nationalist policies put in place by the ruling Law and Justice (PiS) party since 2015.

The former government frequently clashed with Brussels on various issues, notably regarding the rule of law and migration.

Despite the change in government, the new administration's efforts to enact change have been stymied by Poland's right-wing President Andrzej Duda, who holds the authority to approve new laws.

Recent attempts to reform reproductive rights and the judiciary have underscored the deep-seated political divisions persisting in the country.

On reproductive rights, Poland is embroiled in a contentious debate between progressive forces seeking to liberalise laws and conservatives, including the Catholic Church, staunchly opposing such measures. A recent endeavour to make emergency contraception available without a prescription was thwarted by conservative President Andrzej Duda, a PiS ally, highlighting the ongoing tensions between traditional values and progressive aspirations.

Regarding relations with the EU, Poland is striving to restore its international reputation by implementing judicial reforms aligned with EU principles. Recent steps to address conflicts concerning judicial independence have led to the release of frozen EU funds and a commitment to upholding European democratic values.

However, numerous challenges remain. The rise of the far right and internal conservative alliances complicate the government's efforts to promote progressive reforms. Nonetheless, Poland is showing signs of willingness to collaborate with other EU member states, including agreeing to participate in the European Public Prosecutor's Office tasked with combating cross-border crime.

In conclusion, Poland stands at a critical political crossroads, seeking to reconcile its conservative heritage with the democratic values and norms of the European Union. As the country navigates these turbulent waters, its political future remains uncertain, but its commitment to the EU and its principles offers promising prospects for collaboration and progress.